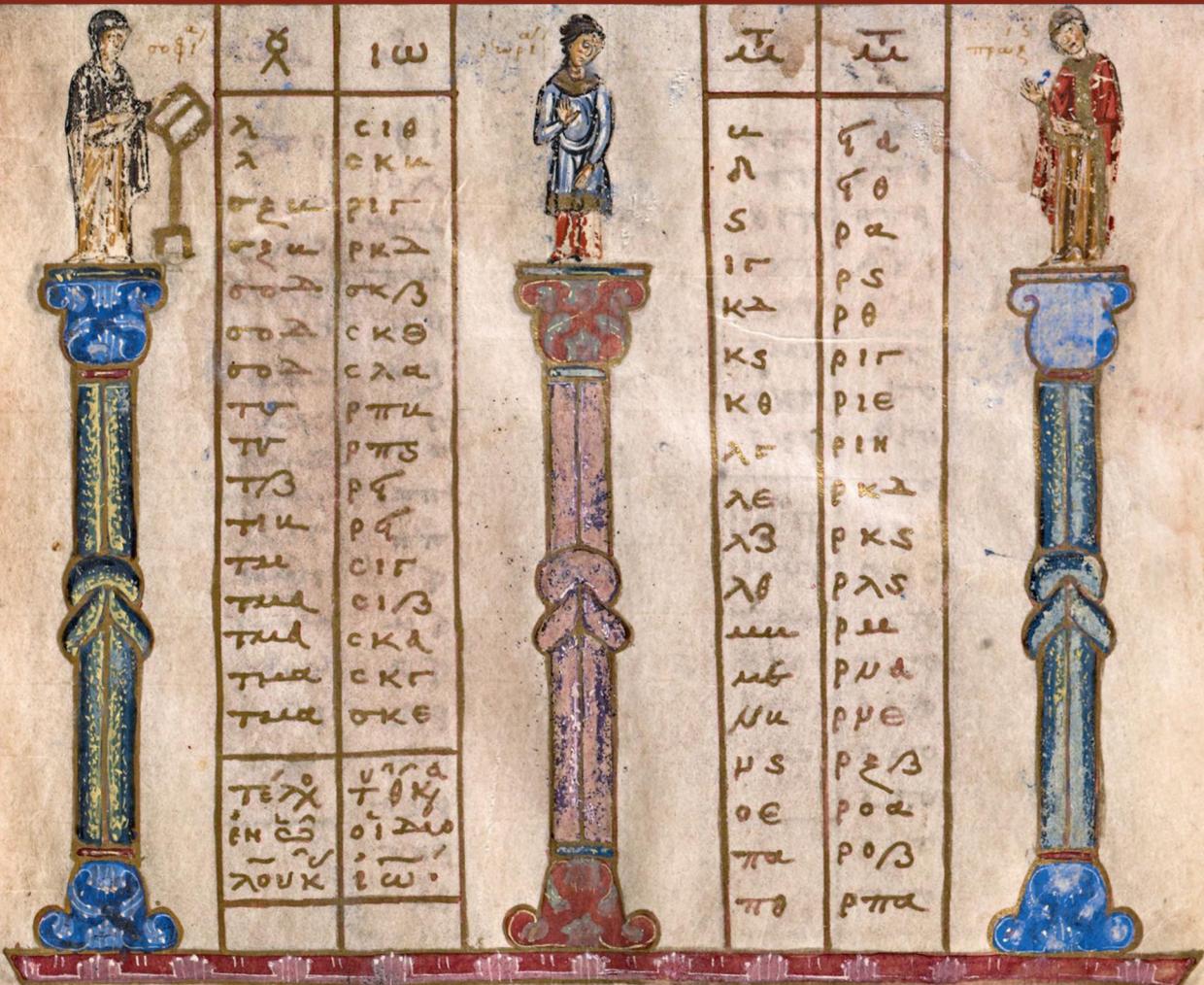


Sources for Byzantine Art History

VOLUME 3

The Visual Culture of Later Byzantium (C.1081–C.1350)

EDITED BY FOTEINI SPINGOU



Sources for Byzantine Art History

Volume 3: The Visual Culture of Later Byzantium (c.1081–c.1350)

In this book the beauty and meaning of Byzantine art and its aesthetics are for the first time made accessible through the original sources. More than 150 medieval texts are translated from nine medieval languages into English, with commentaries from over seventy leading scholars. These include theories of art, discussions of patronage and understandings of iconography, practical recipes for artistic supplies, expressions of devotion, and descriptions of cities. The volume reveals the cultural plurality and the interconnectivity of Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean from the late eleventh to the mid fourteenth centuries. Part I uncovers salient aspects of Byzantine artistic production and its aesthetic reception, while Part II turns a spotlight on particular ways of expressing admiration and of interpreting the visual.

FOTEINI SPINGOU is a Research Associate in Byzantine Intellectual/Cultural History at the University of Edinburgh. She is the author of a forthcoming monograph on twelfth-century Byzantine poetry and has written numerous articles on collections, cultural memory, reciprocity and patronage, manuscripts, and mathematics in Medieval Europe.

Sources for Byzantine Art History



Volume 3

The Visual Culture of Later Byzantium
(c.1081–c.1350)

I

EDITED BY

Foteini Spingou

The University of Edinburgh



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Series Editor's Note

CHARLES BARBER

This volume of translations of texts pertinent to an understanding of art and aesthetics in Later Byzantium is the first in a planned series of four volumes. These will provide readers with an introduction to the variety and wealth of Medieval Byzantine and Early Modern Orthodox perceptions of both art and natural beauty. The first of these volumes will include materials from the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, and will encompass and reach beyond the debates on the validity of the Christian images that dominated that period. The second volume will address writings from the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, arguably the apogee of Medieval Byzantium. The third volume is this one, which focuses upon works from the later eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and early fourteenth centuries. The fourth volume considers the legacy of Byzantium that survived the political demise of that Empire and so gathers together texts from the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. This corpus will introduce its readers to the Byzantium that both continues and differs from Antiquity, showing how the classical tradition continues to develop in a self-conscious and complex manner throughout this era.

This volume is an exemplar of the goals set out for this series: the presentation of documents in original languages alongside their translations; the gathering together of a wide range of textual genres; discussion of these texts as literature, as well as resources for recovering perceptions of works of art; an expansion of the materials readily available for both scholars and students. All of the credit for achieving these goals must go to the editor, Foteini Spingou, who has brought together the translations that can give us a new understanding of both the art and aesthetics of Later Byzantium. The international network of scholars she has developed embodies the generosity and collaboration that can encourage the field of Byzantine Studies to continue to thrive in the future. Further volumes in this series will build upon both this spirit and this model.

Acknowledgments

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Glossary

<i>acheiropoieton</i>	(<i>acheiropoieta</i> , pl.) Relics that came into existence miraculously, not made by human hands; the most important <i>acheiropoieta</i> are the <i>Mandyllion</i> , the <i>keramion</i> , and the <i>kamoulianai</i> Christ
<i>aer</i>	Liturgical veil often embroidered with images of the Dead Christ, angels, and symbols of the evangelists (L. Bender)
<i>akolouthia</i>	The ritual or sequence of elements in a particular rite or office; the term also refers to the <i>Asmatike akolouthia</i> , the Byzantine cathedral office (mainly matins and vespers)
<i>Anthologia Palatina</i>	The most important extant collection of Greek poems, especially epigrams, compiled in Constantinople in the tenth century and largely based on earlier (now lost) collections of ancient and early medieval epigrams; the name refers to the Palatine Library in Heidelberg, where the manuscript was rediscovered in the early seventeenth century (K. Demoen)
<i>caesar</i>	The title was initially related to the emperor himself and later to his son; at the time of Alexios I the rank was degraded and came below that of <i>sebastokrator</i>
<i>character</i>	Understood as the distinguishing and visible characteristics or features of a person; the term <i>χαρακτήρ/character</i> also encompasses both the outward appearance of a person, one which may or may not have ethical implications, and the re-presentation or impression of this appearance into some other medium (translated as portrait) (C. Barber and D. Jenkins)
<i>chartophylax</i>	High-ranking church official with archival and chancery-related duties
<i>chrysopoia</i>	Literally meaning “gold making”; in Medieval Byzantium, <i>chrysopoia</i> referred to a range of activities pertaining to tinting metals, the term encompassing technical practices such as gilding and alloying, as well as attempts to actually transmute metals and minerals into gold (S. Steiner)

<i>colophon</i>	A statement at the end of a book or manuscript, typically offering information on the scribe and/or on the date and place of the production of the manuscript; see also <i>subscription</i> (K. Demoen)
<i>cryptography</i>	Literally “secret writing,” the practice of using secret codes in writing (e.g. the substitution of other letters for the intended ones) (K. Demoen)
<i>decapentasyllable</i>	Also known as “political verse,” an unrhymed line with fifteen syllables that creates a rhythmical effect
<i>despotes</i>	Title created in the twelfth century and placed just below the emperor and the co-emperor; the epithet was often used for <i>sebastokrators</i>
<i>didaskalia</i>	Rhetorical speech delivered by a <i>didaskalos</i> : often exegetical but also inaugural, supplicatory, etc. (R. Ceulemans)
<i>didaskalos</i>	Collective term that denotes a group of functionaries (with internal hierarchy) appointed by the patriarch (esp. in the twelfth century) and charged with the teaching of the Scriptures (R. Ceulemans)
<i>didaskalos tou apostolou</i>	A functionary appointed by the patriarch to teach Scripture (and the Pauline epistles in particular); one of the three highest ranks as a <i>didaskalos</i> (R. Ceulemans)
<i>didaskalos tou psalteriou</i>	A functionary appointed by the patriarch to teach Scripture (and the Psalter in particular); one of the three highest ranks as a <i>didaskalos</i> (R. Ceulemans)
<i>dodecasyllable</i>	A basic line of twelve syllables, developed out of the ancient iambic trimeter
<i>doux</i>	Initially identified the military commander of a larger district; by the twelfth century it signified the governors of small <i>themes</i>
<i>droungarios</i>	By the eleventh century, the equivalent rank to that of the <i>komes</i> ; previously, a high-ranked official in the <i>themes</i>
<i>encheirion</i>	Also referred to as a “peplon;” a woven hanging dedicated to icons
<i>encolpion</i>	A small pendant made to be worn around the neck, usually in the form of a cross, an icon, or a reliquary (I. Drpić)
<i>endyté</i>	An altar cloth
<i>exagion</i>	1/72 of a <i>litra</i> ; Gr. τὸ ἕξάγιον (L. Bender). See <i>litra</i>
<i>hapax legomenon</i>	A word known thanks to a single attestation
<i>Hegoumenos</i>	The abbot of a monastery
<i>horos</i>	A decree or doctrinal definition of a subject
<i>kaisar</i>	See <i>Caesar</i>

<i>kephalaia</i>	A collection of sayings or “chapters,” arranged thematically, that reflect not only traditional ideas, but also the personal views of the author (K. Stewart)
<i>komes</i>	Honorary title for the highest civil functionaries and later used in combination with other words to identify officials with various functions; also used for officers of lower status within the army or navy. See also <i>Droungarios</i>
<i>kyr</i>	A person of distinction and wide recognition (D. Manolova)
<i>laudatory book epigram</i>	Laudatory book epigrams are poems praising the author of the text they accompany (R. Ricceri)
<i>litra</i>	A Byzantine weight, equal to c.12 ounces
<i>logos</i>	A protean term that refers to any form of verbal communication. It roughly coincides with the modern term “literature”
<i>logothetes tou dromou</i>	First attested in the seventh century, the <i>logothetes tou dromou</i> was in charge of the emperor’s protection, the collection of information, and the oversight of foreign affairs; in the twelfth century, the <i>logothetes tou dromou</i> became the emperor’s closest advisor. (D. Manolova and F. Leonte)
<i>logothetes tou genikou</i>	Head of the court’s major fiscal department; after 1204, the term was only titular
<i>megas logothetes</i>	A high office established by Alexios I (r.1081–1118); the <i>megas logothetes</i> was responsible for the entire civil administration (D. Manolova)
<i>menologion</i>	A collection of lives of saints arranged according to the date of the feast of a saint in the liturgical calendar
<i>mononostich</i>	Literally “one line”; a poem consisting of a single verse (K. Demoen)
<i>nomophylax</i>	The president of the law school in Constantinople; the office was introduced by Constantine IX Monomachos (r.1042–55).
<i>parakoimomenos</i>	The senior guardian of the imperial bedchamber and the highest court office for a eunuch
<i>paratext</i>	Any kind of text in manuscripts or books that is found beside (Greek παρά) the main text; these include prefaces, dedications, titles, and colophons (K. Demoen)
<i>paronomasia</i>	A literary device involving puns and play on similar-sounding words (I. Drpić)
<i>phiale</i>	Fountain placed either in an open court or an atrium preceding a church, or an open area within a palace

<i>Planoudean Anthology</i>	A collection of epigrams compiled around the year 1300 by the Constantinopolitan monk and scholar Maximos Planoudes; along with the <i>Anthologia Palatina</i> , it constitutes the so-called “Greek Anthology” (K. Demoen)
<i>polykandelon</i>	(<i>polykandela</i> , pl.) A lighting device with sockets for glass lamps (L. Bender)
<i>praetor</i>	The civil administrator of a province; the term fell out of use after 1204
<i>proedros</i>	A high-ranking title, popular in the eleventh century, but had disappeared by the middle of the twelfth century; the wife of a <i>proedros</i> was named <i>proedrissa</i>
<i>proskynesis</i>	Ceremonial gesture of submission, supplication, and reverence addressed especially to the Byzantine Emperor; the term was also employed to indicate prostration before the Holy as an expression of intense prayer, penance, and/or veneration
<i>protasekretes</i>	The first of the private secretaries of the Emperor
<i>protosebastos</i>	A high court title signifying the first of the <i>sebastoi</i> (honorific)
<i>Quinisext Council</i>	Or the Council <i>in Trullo</i> : the name of the Council means literally the “fifth–sixth” Council as it completed the work of the Fifth and the Sixth Councils; it was held in the imperial palace at Constantinople in 692 and primarily addressed issues of ecclesiastical discipline
<i>schedos</i>	(<i>schede</i> , pl.) “Sketches” or “improvisations” are school exercises that trained Byzantine students to recognize and correct ancient grammar and syntax (N. Zagklas)
<i>sebastokrator</i>	Title created by the emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118); under the Komnenoi it was used for the emperor’s immediate family, such as his sons and brothers
<i>sebastokratorissa</i>	Wife of a <i>sebastokrator</i>
<i>sekreton</i>	A bureau, a chamber or department
<i>semeioma</i>	Written report of a decision or verdict, usually judicial
<i>skete</i>	A small monastery (L. Bender)
<i>skeuophylax</i>	An ecclesiastical official entrusted with administering and safeguarding liturgical vessels, reliquaries, and other sacred objects in a church (I. Drpić)
<i>stauropegion</i>	A cross fixed by a bishop on the site of the erection of a new church building; the term also signifies a patriarchal monastery

<i>staurotheke</i>	A modern term – from the Greek “stauros” (cross) and “theke” (container), designated for reliquaries that contain wood of the True Cross (B. Hostetler)
<i>subscription</i>	Literally “something written at the end,” a text, usually short, written at the end of a manuscript, often functioning as a kind of signature. See also <i>colophon</i> (K. Demoen)
<i>templon</i>	Screen separating the nave from the sanctuary
<i>theme</i>	An area of the empire defined for military purposes; the system began to crumble in the eleventh century, but survived until the last quarter of the twelfth century
<i>trisagion</i>	The hymn: ἅγιος ὁ Θεός, ἅγιος ἰσχυρός, ἅγιος ἀθάνατος, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς (“Holy is God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal! Have mercy on us!”)
<i>zeugma</i>	Figure of speech: a word (usually, verb or adjective) that modifies or governs two or more words (nouns) usually in such a manner that it applies to each of them in a different sense or is relevant only to one of them (L. Andriollo)
<i>ziyārah</i>	An Arabic term referring to places of pilgrimage associated with Muhammad and other venerable figures in Islam (T. A. Carlson)

Abbreviations

Journals, Series, and Works Cited

AASS	<i>Acta Sanctorum</i> (Paris, 1863–1940)
AB	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
ACO	<i>Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum</i> , eds. E. Schwartz and J. Straub (Berlin, 1914–)
AIS	A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, <i>Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας</i> , 5 vols. (St Petersburg, 1891–98, repr. Brussels, 1963)
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
Angelov, <i>Church and Society</i>	D. Angelov, ed., <i>Church and Society in Late Byzantium: Studies in Medieval Culture</i> (Kalamazoo, Mich., 2009)
Angold, <i>Byzantine Aristocracy</i>	M. Angold, ed., <i>The Byzantine Aristocracy IX to XIII Centuries</i> , B.A.R. International Series 221 (Oxford, 1984)
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<i>Anthologia Marciana, Sylloge C</i>	F. Spingou, <i>Poetry for the Komnenoi; The Anthologia Marciana: Syllogae B & C</i> (Oxford, forthcoming)
AOC	Archives de l'Orient Chrétien
<i>Asinou Across Time</i>	<i>Asinou Across Time: Studies in the Architecture and Murals of the Panagia Phorbiotissa, Cyprus</i> , eds. A. Weyl Carr and A. Nicolaïdès, DOS 43 (Washington, DC, 2012)
BAV	<i>Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana</i>
BEIÜ 1	A. Rhoby and R. Stefec, <i>Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung. Band 1: Byzantinische Epigramme auf</i>

- Fresken und Mosaiken*, DenkWien
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- BEIÜ 3 A. Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung. Band 3: Byzantinische Epigramme auf Stein nebst Addenda zu den Bänden 1 und 2*, DenkWien 474/Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 35 (Vienna, 2014)
- BEIÜ 4 A. Rhoby and R. Stefec, *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung. Band 4: Byzantinische Epigramme in illuminierte Handschriften. Epigramme und ihr "inschriftlicher" Gebrauch in Codices des 9. bis 15. Jahrhunderts*, DenkWien 504/Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 42 (Vienna, 2018)
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- BF *Byzantinische Forschungen*
- BHG *Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca*, 3rd edition, ed. F. Halkin, SubsHag 47 (Brussels, 1957; repr. 1969)
- BMFD *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' "Typika" and Testaments*, eds. J. Thomas and A. C. Hero (Washington, D.C., 2000)
- BMGS *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*
- BML *Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana*
- BMQ *The British Museum Quarterly*
- BnF *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*
- BNJ *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher*
- BollGrott *Bollettino della Badia greca di Grottaferrata*
- Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder* E. Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder: Epigramme des Manuel Philes auf bildliche Darstellungen*, DenkWien 416/Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung (Vienna, 2010)

- Browning, “The Patriarchal School”
BSI
BT
- Buckler and Buckler, “Dated Wall Paintings”
Byz
ByzAD
- ByzArch
 ByzAus
ByzF
ByzSt
BZ
CahArch
 CCSG
 CFHB
 Cheynet, *Pouvoir*
- Choniates, *History*
- CPG*
- CSHB
CTh
- DBBE*
- DenkWien
- R. Browning, “The Patriarchal School at Constantinople in the Twelfth Century,” *Byz* 32 (1962), 167–201
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 K. Demoen et al., *Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams* (ongoing); www.dbbe.ugent.be
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DNP	<i>Der Neue Pauly</i>
DOCat	<i>Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection</i> , vols. 1–2, M. C. Ross (Washington, D.C., 1962–65); vol. 3, K. Weitzmann (1972) [2nd edition of vol. 2 published 2005]
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DOP	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Studies
DOSeals	N. Oikonomides and J. Nesbitt, eds., <i>Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art</i> (Washington, D.C., 1991–)
DOT	Dumbarton Oaks Texts
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ΔΧΑΕ	Δελτίον τῆς Χριστιανικῆς ἀρχαιολογικῆς ἐταιρείας
EBE	Εθνική Βιβλιοθήκη της Ελλάδας
ΕΕΒΣ	Ἐπετηρίς ἐταιρείας βυζαντινῶν σπουδῶν
EHB	<i>The Economic History of Byzantium: From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century</i> , ed. A. Laiou, DOS 39, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C., 2002)
EKEE	Ἐπετηρίς τοῦ κέντρου ἐπιστημονικῶν ἐρευνῶν
ΕκκΑ	Ἐκκλησιαστική ἀλήθεια
ΕκκΦ	Ἐκκλησιαστικός Φάρος
EO	Échos d'Orient
ΕΦΣ	Ὁ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Ἑλληνικὸς φιλολογικὸς σύλλογος
Gerstel, <i>Rural Lives</i>	S. E. J. Gerstel, <i>Rural Lives and Landscapes in Late Byzantium: Art, Archaeology, and Ethnography</i> (New York, 2015)
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies</i>
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- HUKSt *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*
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- IRAIK *Izvestiia Russkogo arkheologicheskogo instituta v Konstantinopole*
- IstMitt *Istanbuler Mitteilungen*, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Istanbul
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- JHS *Journal of Hellenic Studies*
- JÖB *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*
- JÖBG *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft*
- Kallikles, *Poems* Nicholas Kallikles, *Poems*, ed. R. Romano, *Nicolaus Callicles: Carmi, Byzantina et Neo-Hellenica Neapolitana* 8 (Naples, 1980)
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- LBG E. Trapp, *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität besonders des 9.–12. Jahrhunderts* (Vienna, 1994–2017)
- Loeb Loeb Classical Library
- LSJ H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, H. S. Jones *et al.*, *A Greek–English Lexicon* (Oxford, 1997)
- LThK *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 10 vols. (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1957–65)
- MAAR *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*
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- MEG
Medioevo Greco
- Migne
See PG
- Mitylenaios, *Poems*
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- ΜΧρον
Μακεδονικά χρονικά
- NE
Νέος Έλληνομνημων
- Necipoglu, *Byzantine Constantinople*
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I. C. Nessleris, *Η παιδεία στην Κωνσταντινούπολη κατά τον 12ο αιώνα* (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Ioannina, 2014)
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- OC
Oriens christianus
- OCA
Orientalia christiana analecta
- OCD
Oxford Classical Dictionary
- OCP
Orientalia christiana periodica
- ODB
The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium, ed. A. Kazhdan et al. (New York and Oxford, 1991)
- OHBS
E. Jeffreys, J. Haldon, and R. Cormack, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford, 2008)

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OLP	<i>Orientalia Lovaniensia periodica</i>
ÖNB	<i>Österreichische Nationalbibliothek</i>
OrChr	<i>Orientalia christiana</i>
Papageorghiou, “Βυζαντινή ἐπιγραφική”	A. Papageorghiou, “Βυζαντινή ἐπιγραφική στήν Κύπρο,” in <i>Κύπρος: τὸ πολιτιστικὸ τῆς πρόσωπο διὰ μέσου τῶν αἰώνων: Πρακτικὰ συμποσίου, Λευκωσία, 19–21 Ἀπριλίου 2001</i> , ed. I. Theocharides (Nicosia, 2003), 97–119
Papageorghiou, <i>Christian Art</i>	A. Papageorghiou, <i>Christian Art in the Turkish-Occupied Part of Cyprus</i> (Nicosia, 2010)
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Parani, <i>Reconstructing</i>	M. Parani, <i>Reconstructing the Reality of Images: Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography 11th–15th Centuries</i> (Leiden, 2003)
PBW	<i>Prosopography of the Byzantine World</i> ; http://pbw2016.kcl.ac.uk
Pentcheva, <i>Icons and Power</i>	B. Pentcheva, <i>Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium</i> (University Park, Penn., 2006)
Pentcheva, <i>The Sensual Icon</i>	B. Pentcheva, <i>The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual, and the Senses in Byzantium</i> (University Park, Penn., 2010)
PG	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris, 1857–66)
PGL	<i>Patristic Greek Lexicon</i> see Lampe
PL	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus, Series latina</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris, 1844–80)
PLP	<i>Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit</i> , ed. E. Trapp et al. (Vienna, 1976–96)
PmbZ	R. J. Lilie et al., <i>Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit. Erste Abteilung (641–867)</i> , 6 vols. (Berlin and New York, 1998–2002)
PO	<i>Patrologia orientalis</i>
Polemis, <i>Doukai</i>	D. Polemis, <i>The Doukai: A Contribution to Byzantine</i>

	<i>Prosopography</i> , University of London Historical Studies 22 (London, 1968)
RA	<i>Revue archéologique</i>
RAC	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i>
REB	<i>Revue des études byzantines</i>
REpigr	<i>Revue épigraphique</i>
Rhalles and Potles, <i>Σύνταγμα</i>	G. Rhalles and M. Potles, eds., <i>Σύνταγμα τῶν θεῶν καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων</i> , 6 vols. (Athens, 1852–59)
RHE	<i>Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique</i>
RNB	Rossijskaja Nacional'naja biblioteka
Roilos, <i>Amphoteroglossia</i>	P. Roilos, <i>Amphoteroglossia: A Poetics of the Twelfth-Century Medieval Greek Novel</i> (Washington, D.C., 2005)
RSDN	<i>Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici</i>
SBN	<i>Studi bizantini e neoellenici</i>
SC	Sources chrétiennes
Sophocles	E. A. Sophocles, <i>Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods, from B.C. 146 to A.D. 1100</i> (New York, 1957)
Spatharakis, <i>Portrait</i>	I. Spatharakis, <i>The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts</i> (Leiden, 1976)
Spier, <i>Rings</i>	J. Spier, <i>Late Byzantine Rings, 1204–1453</i> (Wiesbaden, 2013)
Spingou, <i>Devotion and Propaganda</i>	<i>See Anthologia Marciana</i>
Spingou, <i>Words and Artworks</i>	F. Spingou, <i>Words and Artworks in the Twelfth Century and Beyond: The Thirteenth-Century Manuscript Marcianus gr. 524 and the Twelfth-century Dedicatory Epigrams on Works of Art</i> (University of Oxford, 2013), published: <i>Words and Artworks in the Twelfth Century and Beyond. Byzantine Poetry on Art from ms. Marcianus Gr. 524</i> (Tolworth, 2021).
ST	Studi e testi
StP	<i>Studia patristica</i>
Stylianou and Stylianou, “Donors and Dedicatory Inscriptions”	A. Stylianou and J. A. Stylianou, “Donors and Dedicatory Inscriptions, Supplicants and Supplications in the Painted Churches of Cyprus,” <i>JÖBG</i> 9 (1960), 97–128
Stylianou and Stylianou, <i>Painted Churches</i>	A. Stylianou and J. A. Stylianou, <i>The Painted Churches of Cyprus: Masterpieces of Byzantine Art</i> , 2nd edition (Nicosia, 1997)
SubsHag	Subsidia hagiographica

<i>Suida</i>	<i>Suidae lexicon</i> , ed. A. Adler, 4 vols. (Leipzig, 1928–35)
<i>Synaxarium CP</i>	<i>Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae: Propylaeum ad Acta sanctorum Novembris</i> , ed. H. Delehaye (Brussels, 1902)
TAPA	<i>Transactions [and Proceedings] of the American Philological Association</i>
TAPS	<i>Transactions of the American Philosophical Society</i>
Teubner	Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana
TFByzNgPhil	Texte und Forschungen zur byzantinisch-neugriechischen Philologie
<i>The Book of Ceremonies</i>	<i>The Book of Ceremonies</i> , ed. A. Vogt, <i>Le livre des cérémonies</i> , Collection Byzantine (Paris, 1935), transl. A. Moffatt, and M. Tall, <i>The Book of Ceremonies</i> (Canberra, 2012)
Theodore Prodromos, <i>Historical Poems</i>	W. Hörandner, <i>Theodoros Prodromos, Historische Gedichte</i> (Vienna, 1974)
Theodore Prodromos, <i>Neglected Poems</i>	N. Zagklas, <i>Theodore Prodromos: The Neglected Poems and Epigrams (Edition, Commentary and Translation)</i> (unpublished PhD dissertation, Vienna, 2014)
TIB	<i>Tabula imperii byzantini</i> , ed. H. Hunger (Vienna, 1976–)
TLG	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Graecae</i>
TM	<i>Travaux et mémoires</i>
Varzos, <i>Γενεαλογία</i>	K. Varzos, <i>Ἡ γενεαλογία τῶν Κομνηνῶν</i> , 2 vols. (Thessaloniki, 1984)
VChr	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>
Veikou, <i>Epirus</i>	M. Veikou, <i>Byzantine Epirus: A Topography of Transformation: Settlements of the Seventh– Twelfth Centuries in Southern Epirus and Aetoloacarnania, Greece, The Medieval Mediterranean 95</i> (Leiden, 2012)
<i>Villes de toute beauté</i>	P. Odorico and C. Messis, eds., <i>Villes de toute Beauté; l'ekphrasis des cités dans les littératures byzantine et byzantino-slaves. Actes du colloque international, Prague, 25–26 novembre 2011, Dossiers Byzantins 12</i> (Paris, 2012)
WByzSt	Wiener byzantinistische Studien
Wilson, <i>Scholars</i>	N. Wilson, <i>Scholars of Byzantium</i> , 2nd rev. edition (London, 1996)
WSt	<i>Wiener Studien</i>

Zagklas, <i>Neglected Poems</i>	See Theodore Prodromos, <i>Neglected Poems and Epigrams. Edition, Translation, Commentary</i> , (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Vienna, 2014)
ZRVI	<i>Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta</i>
<i>ΧρονΠ</i>	<i>Χρονικά τοῦ Πόντου</i>

Septuagint and New Testament

Septuagint

1 Esdrae	1Esdr.
1 Paralipomenon	1Paral.
1 Samuelis also known as 1 Regum	1Reg.
2 Paralipomenon	2Paral.
2 Samuelis also known as 2 Regum	2Reg.
3 Regum	3Reg.
4 Regum	4Reg.
Adiae	Adiae
Aggaei	Agg.
Amos	Amos
Canticum Canticorum	Cant. Cant.
Danielis 1,1 – 3,23; 3,9–12,13	Dan.
Deuteronomium	Deut.
Ecclesiastes	Eccl.
Esther 1,1–10,3	Esther
Exodus	Ex.
Ezechielis	Ezech.
Genesis	Gen.
Habacuc	Hab.
Isaiae	Is.
Jeremiae	Jer.
Job	Job
Joel	Joel
Jonae	Jonae
Josue	Jos.
Judices	Jud.
Lamentationes	Lam.
Leviticus	Lev.
Malachiae	Mal.
Michaeae	Mich.
Nahum	Nah.

Nehemiae also known as 2 Esdrae	2Esdr.
Numeri	Num.
Osee	Osee
Proverbia	Prov.
Psalmi	Ps.
Ruth	Ruth
Sophoniae	Soph.
Zachariae	Zach.
Macc.	Maccabees
Sap. Sol.	Sapientia Solomonis

New Testament

secundum Matthæum	Mt.
secundum Marcum	Mc.
secundum Lucam	Lc.
secundum Ioannem	Jn.
Acta	Ac.
ad Romanos	adRom.
1 ad Corinthios	1Cor.
2 ad Corinthios	2Cor.
ad Galatas	Gal.
ad Ephesios	Eph.
ad Philippenses	Phil.
ad Colossenses	Col.
1 ad Thessalonicenses	1Thes.
2 ad Thessalonicenses	2Thes.
1 ad Timotheum	1Tim.
2 ad Timotheum	2Tim.
ad Titum	adTit.
ad Philemonem	adPhil.
ad Hebræos	adHebr.
Jacobi	Jac.
1 Petri	1Pt.
2 Petri	2Pt.
1 Ioannis	1Jn.
2 Ioannis	2Jn.
3 Ioannis	3Jn.
Judæ	Jud.
Apocalypsis	Apoc.

Introduction

FOTEINI SPINGOU

This volume presents 182 written testimonies attesting to an aesthetic culture that can only be partially reconstructed. They demonstrate how word and image could be yoked together to overcome their inherited limitations as communication media, evoking the one through the other, without attempting to represent or replace one another. Both participate in an oral culture framed by rhetorical tropes that permits each medium, at times, to become saturated by the other. In particular, it is the texts that evoke works of art that reveal perceptions and responses to these paintings, buildings, and so on, that can lead us to begin to understand the art of this period better and in more appropriate terms. Yet, texts have now also become “monuments” in their own right, aesthetic objects that reveal glimpses of a pre-modern past.

The reader of this volume will not find texts that offer the often illusory promise that they will allow us to recover the “reality” of Byzantine material culture. Rather, the focus is upon texts that elaborate contemplations of the appearances of objects, bodies, and scenes and that offer far more than a narrow description of these things. The reader is invited to explore the intersections between two artistic languages (the visual and the textual) that raise a common set of questions concerning the relation between creator and audience, aesthetics and materials, emotional impact and rational symbolism, influence and *mimesis*, as well as the nature of the medium, of emulation, of interpretation, of originality, and of narrative.

The chronological span covered by this volume may strike as being unusual, as the limits suggested (c.1081–c.1350) do not correspond to most modern narratives of Byzantine history. Usually the events of 1204 (the sack of Constantinople by the Crusaders) and/or 1261 (the return of the Byzantines to the city) are chosen to mark the end of “Middle” Byzantium, and the year 1453 (the sack of Constantinople by the Ottomans) that of “late” Byzantium. This is a chronology drawn from a narrative based in political history. Given that this volume is focused upon aspects of cultural and intellectual history, an area that is not necessarily strongly affected by political events, we have decided to work with a different and, we hope, more apt chronological framework. In what follows, it is suggested that textual and visual cultures between c.1081 and c.1350 present a common set of cultural characteristics that reflects the tastes of a living community of intellectuals that continued to steer the dominant culture of this era. It is argued that the arrival of the Komnenian family into power in 1081 shaped the conditions for intellectual life in the centuries to come, lasting until these conditions were dismantled following the ascension of Andronikos III to the imperial throne in 1328. While the dates used here to mark “later

Byzantium” have inevitably been borrowed from the political history of Byzantium, they should be considered an approximate boundary for the cultural and intellectual interests of this volume. Cultural changes do not happen overnight. As will be discussed below, the second half of the reign of Alexios I is perhaps most relevant to the cultural phenomena described in the volume, while the group of intellectuals surrounding Andronikos III was only truly affected by political events some years after his coming to power, that is in the 1350s. Hence, the dates that mark the chronological boundaries of this volume should not be read as rigid demarcations, but rather as porous indicators of the boundaries of a period defined by a common and consistent intellectual horizon.

Cultural Trends in Later Byzantium

Any periodization, while necessary to grasp the shape of the human past, is inevitably accidental, haphazard, circumstantial, and arbitrary. It is argued here that the literary and visual culture of “Later Byzantium” bears a certain consistency. This consistency leads to a periodization supported by the material itself, as there are a number of “signature” literary modes that become most prominent between 1081 and 1350. “Signature” does not presuppose originality or period particularity. Some of these modes existed before 1081, and others remained current after 1350. Nonetheless, these signatures appear to operate simultaneously and to develop in parallel throughout the era covered by this volume. In what follows, we will try to describe this culture and in so doing provide a context to assist the reader’s understanding of the perceptions set out in the texts translated in this volume. As such we will focus upon the textuality of the writings that define their world for us.

In the domain of sophisticated written production, identified as *logoi* by the Byzantines, the epigram was the most distinguished genre of this period. The epigrammatic mode had been rediscovered and redefined, first in Palestine and then in Constantinople, at the beginning of the ninth century after a hiatus of two centuries.¹ In later Byzantium, there was an epigram for every occasion and new opportunities for using epigrams were explored: dedicatory epigrams celebrate a donation; the amplification of epigrams on works of art indicate a reading of the object for the viewer;² book epigrams adorn and reveal the secrets of books;³ in the first half of the period in question, metrical inscriptions indicate the owners of seals and metrical *prefaces* (introductions) were performed before

This Introduction has greatly benefitted from the comments of all those who kindly attended my lectures in King’s College London (March 10, 2017), at Oxford (July 3, 2018) and Edinburgh (May 10, 2018). I am indebted to Tassos Papacostas, Ida Toth, and Niels Gaul for their invitations. I am very grateful indeed to Charles Barber, Averil Cameron, and Marc Lauxtermann for their acute and most helpful comments. I am also grateful to Vivien Prigent, Michael Angold, and Peter Frankopan who read and commented on earlier versions of this text.

1 Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 138–47.

2 On epigrams on works of art and dedicatory epigrams see F. Spingou, II.4 and on tomb epigrams see II.7 in this volume. On inscriptional epigrams see I. Toth, II. 6 in this volume.

3 On book epigrams see K. Demoen, II.5 in this volume.

the reading of a homily or an hagiographical text in a church.⁴ The prevalence of epigrams in this period has been aptly branded as an “epigrammatic trend.”⁵

The sizeable production of epigrams also reveals a preference for “lettered” and “private” devotion at this period. Verse dedications were meant to work concomitantly with the materiality of an artwork, expressing their donors’ wishes in the form of a text in verse attached to a material gift.⁶ Metaphors and parallels drawn from the Scriptures, references to patristic literature (and more rarely to Hellenic *paideia*), the use of unique words and stock images display the education of the donor and his/her familiarity with the literary trends of the period. At the same time, vocabulary drawn from public and easily recognizable forms of texts, such as liturgical hymns, could be mixed with personal and highly emotional prayers to create a private experience for the donor, the owner, and the viewer of an object.

In fact, poetry is the form of expression that bloomed the most in later Byzantium. An eloquent example of this vigorous poetic production is the invention of a totally new form of ceremonial poetry under the Komnenians, that of deme-hymns.⁷ Wolfram Hörandner defines the formal characteristics of the genre as the decapentasyllable verse,⁸ with a division into strophes and the partial use of an alphabetical acrostich.⁹ Michael Jeffreys associated this poetic form with the invention of a new type of ceremony under the Komnenoi, that of the *prokypsis*,¹⁰ thanks to a close examination of repetitive vocabulary and mottos in these hymns.¹¹ The trends that facilitated the invention of the deme-hymns are also apparent in the numerous examples of public poetry written to celebrate events related to transitional moments in the course of a human life (wedding, birth, and death).¹²

A strong preference for highly rhetorical forms of texts, such as *ekphraseis* and *ethopoiiai* is also apparent in this period. The production of such texts develops from a robust theoretical tradition from the time of the Second Sophistic and Late Antiquity. *Ekphraseis* are not “descriptions” of works of art, intended to render the physical characteristics of things, persons and landscapes in words; instead, they reveal rhetorical responses to an appearance or a mental image.¹³ *Ethopoiiai* also come from a highly theorized tradition,

4 *Metrical prefaces* appear in the twelfth century and disappear by the middle of the fourteenth; see Antonopoulou 2010; Kominis 1966: 42–44. About metrical seals cf. the observations regarding chronology in Wassiliou-Seibt 2011: 33–35 and the corpus in Wassiliou-Seibt 2015 and 2011. I owe this reference to Vivien Prigent.

5 Magdalino 2011: 32.

6 See I. Toth II.6 and F. Spingou, II.4 in this volume.

7 Hörandner 2003: 77–79.

8 This rhythmical form is based exclusively on accent regulation and the earliest examples date are placed at the beginning of the tenth century, but it is more widely attested in the twelfth century and later. It was recognized as a metrical form from Byzantine rhetoricians only in the thirteenth century. See Jeffreys 1974; Lauxtermann 1999.

9 Hörandner 2003: 77; Hörandner 1996: 117.

10 The ceremony of *prokypsis* involved the ceremonial appearance of the emperor and his family on an elevated platform. The seminal study on *prokypsis* remains that of Heisenberg 1920: 85–132.

11 Jeffreys 1987.

12 See above, n. 7.

13 On *Ekphraseis* see I. Nilsson, II.2 in this volume.

that flourished at the same time as that related to the rhetorical form of *ekphrasis*. In contrast to *ekphrasis*, which has some relation to reality, by definition, *ethopoiiai* are bound to a fictive episode and they seek to express what a certain person would have said on a particular occasion.¹⁴ Given these distinctions, both *ekphraseis* and *ethopoiiai* are highly expressive literary texts purporting to put in words the emotional response of the narrator to a particular situation.

From the beginning of this era (and slightly earlier), there is a demonstrable and creative relation with what can be called “the classics.” Ancient genres such as novels/romances and dialogues re-emerge as autonomous entities. Both exemplify a preference for highly rhetorical texts with a long tradition, features of which existed in previous eras in different textual forms, such as hagiographical tales or homilies, but in later Byzantium they stand alone and become highly reminiscent of texts dating to the Second Sophistic.¹⁵

The terms “novel” and “romance” are nearly synonymous; modern scholarship, however, has established that the term “novel” refers to fictional narratives of essentially love stories from the twelfth century, while the term “romance” refers to similar ones from the fourteenth century. The former drew from ancient examples, such as Achilles Tatius, Heliodorus, Longus, and Chariton; while the latter demonstrated an additional influence from Western and Eastern sources.¹⁶

The revival of dialogue in this period has only recently begun to be explored.¹⁷ The dialogic form in later Byzantium mainly echoes the playfulness of Lucian and, less often, the robust argumentation of the Platonic dialogues.¹⁸ The form was in wide use in Late Antiquity,¹⁹ but disappeared after the seventh century, only to return after the mid eleventh century (although the accurate dating of such texts is particularly precarious, with a number of pseudepigraphs having infiltrated the corpus). Dialogues, which present themselves as re-enactments, share the highly emotive tone of *ekphraseis* and *ethopoiiai* and also the complex narrative form of the romances and novels.

Changes in monastic patronage also gave rise to certain types of text. The late tenth-century institution of *charistike* was deemed problematic under the Komnenoi and fell out of fashion (but not entirely out of use).²⁰ Indeed, a wave of lay patronage for monasteries led to the foundation and re-foundation of monasteries by prominent members of society.²¹ Such

14 On *Ethopoiiai* see E. Jeffreys, II.3.

15 On the case of the novel in particular see Nilsson 2014: 48–57; see also E. Jeffreys, I.7.6 in this volume. Agapitos 2004 (incl. the responses by Carolina Cupane, Martin Hinterberger, Elizabeth Jeffreys, Marc Lauxtermann, Ulrich Moennig, Ingela Nilsson, Paolo Odorico, and Eustratios Papaioannou) on romance in general. On the relation with “the classics” after the year 1000 see also Magdalino 2017 and Roilos 2018.

16 Jeffreys 2012: ix–xi; Cupane 2004; Beaton 1996; Agapitos 1991.

17 See Cameron 2016; Marciniak 2016, 2017, 2019; Migliorini 2007, Cameron and Gaul, eds., 2017, especially the essays by A. Bucossi, E. Cullhed, N. Gaul, D. Manolova, and F. Spingou.

18 Cameron 2016: 10–11.

19 On late antique dialogues see Cameron 2014 and Rigolio 2019.

20 The *charistike* was introduced in the late tenth century as a bold form of lay patronage designed to help impoverished monasteries through their hardship, but the abuse of the institution allowed patrons to even draw income from monasteries, making the need for reform urgent; Thomas 1987: 167–213.

21 On the reform movement see Thomas 1987 and, more recently, Krausmüller 2011.

monasteries were independent (*autodespota*) and were regulated by a *typikon*, their foundation document. A *typikon* offers rules regarding worship and the structure of the monastic community in general, and, often, detailed inventory lists that describe the movable and immovable property of the monastery.²² In later Byzantium, *typika* were often combined with founder's testaments, which tend to contain a certain amount of autobiographical components.

The *logoi* – the Byzantine term for what we currently roughly call literature – introduced above are marked by modes of creative communication (not just systems of communication), and as such their expressions contain distinctive aesthetic features. Among the most relevant for understanding the development of “later Byzantine culture,” we can single out the following:

- (a) There is a preference for the appreciation of physicality and of earthly beauty. In texts, this preference finds expression in the flourishing role played by *ekphraseis* and in the direct references to material and visual aspects of objects in epigrams. None of the above textual forms attempts to describe an object in full detail, but rather aims to give an account of its effect upon the viewer. Admiration for bodily beauty was also incorporated in different kinds of writing, especially novels and romances.²³
- (b) The vivid expression of intense emotions can be identified. In *logoi*, one observes the prominence in the production of self-standing *ethopoiiai* and the *ethopoietic* elements often embedded in narratives. Texts in this form aimed to highlight the character and ethos of a figure.
- (c) A taste for fictional and vivid, nearly theatrical, narratives is also evident. A number of modes of literary expression re-emerged in this period after a silence of more than six centuries. The primary characteristic of these rejuvenated modes is narrative complexity, which is evident in novels, romances, and dialogues.
- (d) Great attention is also paid to the patron's self. Dedicatory epigrams mention the one responsible for the creation of an object. That “maker” is usually to be identified with the one who has paid for the object, rather the actual artist or craftsman. Also, patrons' portraits remain particularly prominent in this period.²⁴ As discussed above, the appearance of monastic *typika* combined with the founder's testament and the creation of impressive funerary monuments are related to the emphasis on the role of the monastic patron in Later Byzantium.
- (e) A willingness to experiment can also be noted. The appearance of a number of novel textual modes that have been highlighted above is telling of this trend, which is particularly prominent in the twelfth century,²⁵ and it remains current in the late thirteenth

22 On *typika* and inventory lists see M. Parani, II.1 in this volume. On monastic patronage under the Komnenoi in particular see Simpson 2015; Angold, *Church and Society*, 332–45, with further bibliography.

23 For the eleventh century see Papaioannou, *Psellos*, 169, esp. no. 12. For developments in the subsequent centuries (summary) see F. Spingou, Introduction, I.8 in this volume.

24 On patrons and donors see F. Spingou, Introduction, I.2 in this volume.

25 On this subject for especially the twelfth century see Nilsson 2003.

century when we find a number of texts that are difficult to place in a category that matches traditional literary modes.²⁶ A further aspect of experimentation is the introduction of vernacular language in the writing of literary texts. As recent studies have highlighted, “vernacular” in Byzantine Greek does not necessarily mean popular and has only a vague correspondence to the concurrent appearance of romance languages in medieval Western Europe. Instead, the term indicates a number of novel linguistic features that enter the language of educated officials and the literati, creating a mixed literary language that includes forms and vocabulary from the spoken language and the *koine*.²⁷ This “vernacular” literary language appeared under the Komnenoi, but flourished in the fourteenth century.

- (f) There is also a loyalty to a playful expression of an aesthetic Hellenism. Stratis Papaioannou has noted that “the association of ‘Hellenism’ with paganism had lost [its] urgency [in Early Medieval Byzantium],” resulting in “sustained interest in classical and classicizing texts after the eighth century.”²⁸ Furthermore, as Averil Cameron suggests, references to Hellenic culture in the eleventh century (and remaining relevant for the entire period in question) became the “sociolect for the educated elite.”²⁹ Textual sources, such as epigrams on works of art, suggest that there was no lack of objects in the later period with a subject matter inspired from beyond Christianity.³⁰

While many of these aesthetic qualities can be found to a lesser or greater degree in earlier and later eras, it is their combination and prominence that characterizes “later Byzantium.” Furthermore, the manifestations of these aesthetic features are not static throughout the period defined by this volume. Cultural change at this time is neither transcendental nor a product of sudden violent shifts in a culture. Rather, it is built upon the selection of a different path or a different trait from *within* the framework of this cultural horizon.³¹ This selection is manifested in a variety of cultural products that rose to prominence or were newly developed in these years.

The “Culturally Dominant Group”

Understanding the social networks that produced the patrons, makers, and consumers of works of art and literature is an important step towards understanding later Byzantine culture. Much work remains to be done in compiling a comprehensive prosopographical database of the Byzantine world and in interpreting the connections between individuals

²⁶ See, for example, the dialogue between Panagiotes and an Azymite, that hardly corresponds to any of the known literary modes of expression, discussed here by V. Marinis, I.8.10 in this volume.

²⁷ For an overview see Hinterberger 2006.

²⁸ Papaioannou, *Psellos*, 169.

²⁹ Cameron 2016: 93.

³⁰ See, e.g., the epigrams by Theodore Balsamon, transl. by A. Rhoby, I.7.7 in this volume.

³¹ Mesoudi 2011: 85–134. On “cultural evolution” in general see also Mesoudi 2016.

and their groups.³² A single volume – even as extensive as this one – or any individual study can contribute to this goal, but cannot claim a comprehensive grasp of the topic. To begin with, it has to be acknowledged that what is mostly represented here are the cultural achievements of the higher and middle social echelons of Constantinople.³³ This community had both the financial and the cultural capital to support the production of commissioned literary works and artworks. Inevitably, we need to rely on forms of textuality produced by such an exclusive and small group to illuminate various aspects of contemporary collective lives, including those of peasants, populations living in the periphery, traders and craftsmen, the lower echelons of urban society, many non-Greek speakers and minority ethnic groups, such as the flourishing Jewish one.³⁴ The cultural achievement of the latter groups is overshadowed or masked by the cultural achievements of the “culturally dominant group.” It should be noted that the epithet “dominant” is not used here as an evaluative term, but as a descriptive one, which underlines trends in the record of the surviving evidence.

The connection of the community to Constantinople is understandable. This is not simply a matter of wealth or power, for it also concerns the availability of education. The female and male members of this culturally dominant group were well versed in different forms of *paideia*. A high level of rhetorical education is the main characteristic that separates the group from the rest of the cultural groups in the Byzantine empire.³⁵ Additionally, following the loss of Anatolia to the conquests by the Seljuks in the eleventh century, the upper aristocracy primarily resided in the City.³⁶ Furthermore, the upper

32 Such a database is currently being developed for the ERC-funded research program “PAIXUE: Classicising learning in mediaeval imperial systems: Cross-cultural approaches to Byzantine *paideia* and Tang/Song *xue*,” headed by Niels Gaul and hosted by the University of Edinburgh (2017–22). See: <http://dbl.shca.ed.ac.uk>.

33 On the importance of Constantinople see Magdalino 2010. Note on the terminology: An intellectual community is a group dependent on participation to literary, philosophical, and theological discourses debates of their time. The term approximates Brian Stock’s “textual communities,” defined as “groups dependent on oral participation in religion” (Stock 1983: 90). See also the use of the term “intellectuals” in Gaul 2011. On the challenges related to the terminology for describing the Byzantine society see Cheynet 2006a; Magdalino 2009: 219–20; Antonopoulou 2002; Angold 1975, esp. p. 67. Both terms “aristocracy” and “ruling elite” or their equivalent were not used in Byzantium and thus they are often seen as problematic to define. I follow here a modified version of the terminology set by Kazhdan and McCormick 1997: 167, in order to meet the needs of describing the social reality during and after the Komnenoi. The term “ruling class” is understood as describing a “legally and economically diverse group that holds, especially, administrative power.” “Aristocracy” is a legally defined group through titles and it is connected hereditarily to the “ruling elite.” Both terms describe the upper crust of the society in relation to their position within the imperial administration and family. For Magdalino 2009: 213, the term “court society” designates “the sum of the people who lived[in] or frequented the imperial palace.” On the problematic nature of the concept of “court,” see Magdalino 1997: 143; Magdalino 2009: 213. On the representation of the “aristocracy” in literary sources from between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries see Grünbart 2015, esp. 171–89.

34 On the flourishing trade activity in the period in question see Laiou 2002: 1152–53, 1156–57, 1159, with further references.

35 For a wider consideration of Byzantine literacy (incl. provinces) see the fundamental studies by Oikonomides (1988, 1993, 1995a, 1995b). For a sober evaluation of Oikonomides’ results and a general discussion about literacy in Byzantium see Jeffreys 2008: 796–82, esp. 797–98. For the case of Crete in particular see Loukaki 2008; see also Cavallo 2003 for general considerations about literacy in the center and the periphery.

36 I owe this remark to Vivien Prigent; see, e.g., Ahrweiler 1976.

and middle tiers of Constantinopolitan society were highly endogamous, perpetuating the upper social ranks within the capital.³⁷ Moreover, even if members of that community were educated in the capital, they often traveled within and beyond the ever-changing borders of Byzantium. Educated bureaucrats, church officials, and army officers were the most mobile group of the Empire. Still, they retained contact with Constantinople thanks to the network they had developed when they received their education.

In what follows, it is argued that the prominence of the cultural elements discussed above is related to the interests of the culturally dominant group of the time. This group is characterized by similar provenance and social status as well as similar educational priorities and resources. The financial resources of this group are wholly relevant to this discussion because while other groups, such as the merchants, had started to accumulate wealth, they did not impact the production of literature to the same degree as the “Constantinopolitan” elite did, although they may be seen to have engaged more widely with works of art.³⁸

The patrons and audience for texts written and performed in Byzantine Greek – the artificial literary language of the *logoi*³⁹ – come mainly from this “culturally dominant group.” The purpose of most of this level of writing remained the same, with the texts being destined to be performed in a rhetorical “theatron,” a term encompassing various forms of literary gatherings, in which members of the imperial family, bureaucrats of all levels, rhetors, teachers, and pupils would participate.⁴⁰ Therefore, the texts were intended to address a single interconnected group of individuals, with closer or more distant links to the emperor, for whom literature counted as social capital.⁴¹

The Evidence

Modern hermeneutical theoretical tools can only partially help to describe and explain the phenomenon of the appearance and disappearance of cultural traits within a pre-modern culture. For example, if one were to follow Fernand Braudel and the second generation of the school of the *Annales*, one would say that the cultural traits we described above come from the level of *événements* (the events of history, facts and people) while the aesthetic values come from the level of *conjonctures* (the history of notions and ideas). But any attempt by us to analyze the structures of *longue durée* in Byzantium is precluded. The latter is too abstract and our research tools – such as an inclusive prosopographical database – are not sufficiently robust. Instead, the cultural domain of our “dominant” group may be partially observed and described and only tentatively explained.

A further methodological comment and a note of caution should be drawn regarding the limitations and opportunities when studying the surviving corpus of Byzantine

37 A further precious comment by Vivien Prigent.

38 Cf. the related discussion of court ceremonies and financial capital in Magdalino 2011.

39 “Logos” corresponds roughly to what now falls under the umbrella of the modern term “literature.”

40 On rhetorical *theatra* see, e.g., Mullett 1984; Fatouros and Grünbart (eds.) 2007; Gaul 2011: 17–53.

41 See Gaul 2016, 2011; Magdalino, *Manuel*, 316–412; Grünbart 2015: 171–89.

textual and visual artefacts. It is indeed true that the majority of the remains of Byzantine visual and textual culture is fragmentary and without a context. This may lead to an emphasis upon individual works and their relationship to the individuals immediately associated with these works. Such a focus would be consistent with the general observation made above regarding the emergence of the individual at the beginning of the period in question.⁴² The available evidence, though, creates a consistent narrative, when we consider the things that connect the surviving literary and visual artistic evidence: they mostly represent a group of interconnected individuals, who can be placed within a single cultural network with different degrees of affinities. Thus, it is safe to assume that they constitute a single cultural group.⁴³

Moreover, the fragmentation of the textual and artistic evidence from Byzantium is an opportunity rather than a limitation. In an oral culture, only texts that could have had some sort of utility for their readers were copied and collected. Readers were using manuscripts either to find examples of rhetorical artistry or to refer to past knowledge. In other words, most literary works of Byzantium were either never put on paper or vellum, or they were not subsequently copied. Those that were copied, although they seem to be out of context, in fact do have a context: that is the context of their preservation. They survived because they were selected for survival according to the preferences of a particular group. Manuscripts can be considered the repositories of knowledge for an oral society and thus an active archive, which contemporaries could consult.⁴⁴ Such a preservation process does not readily accommodate traditions from the periphery, unless these are re-appropriated for this elite urban audience. An illustrative example is the story of Digenis Akritis – the man from two races – which was first developed as an orally transmitted ballad, but then was written down as a novel to meet the expectations of Constantinopolitan intellectuals. It is thanks to this intervention and “translation” that the story survived.⁴⁵

The Year 1081

The year 1081 marks the ascension of Alexios I Komnenos to the Byzantine throne, but it is only in the second half of his reign that the significant social and cultural developments that began to be implemented from the beginning of his rule became solidified. These are found first in administrative changes. Alexios was responsible for reshaping the administrative elite into a new homogeneous and culturally dominant group. The main change

⁴² Kazhdan and Epstein, *Change*, 220–30.

⁴³ Network studies is a relatively new field of study for Byzantinists: see, e.g., the studies by Mullett 1997; Grünbart 2015; Gaul 2016. Prosopography has also developed greatly over the last three decades with the compilation of large prosopographical databases (PBW, PLP), and new studies on families and individuals (mentioned especially in seals – see, e.g., the recent volumes of the journal *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*).

⁴⁴ On this point, see below lx–lxi. On “functional memory,” which is similar to the “active archive” mentioned above see, e.g., Assmann 2011: 396 and on archive in general *ibid.*: 327–32.

⁴⁵ On Digenis Akritis see E. Jeffreys I.5.11 and I.8.14 in this volume.

comes from the fact that Alexios promoted his relatives, who were antagonistic towards, yet seeking to assimilate with, a pre-existing flourishing community of Constantinopolitan-based intellectuals.⁴⁶ The most prominent members of this new aristocratic group (together with some foreigners) were adorned with the title of *sebastos* and were placed at the top of the elite echelons.⁴⁷ Kinship became the main criterion for social promotion. Upward social mobility was confined to a select few who were related by blood or marriage to the ruling dynasty. This new aristocracy had the funds to support the intellectual community that was drawn from members of pre-existing groups of literati, members of the administrative elite, and new aristocrats.

Two interconnected events demonstrate Alexios' lively interest in the cultural developments of his time and his willingness to engage with, and perhaps tame and shape, the existing culturally dominant group. The first of these was the second trial of John Italos. The second of them was a fervent debate over the status and veneration of icons. The so-called "Reform Edict" of the year 1107 then continued the path set by these earlier disputes.

John Italos, a student of Michael Psellos and "a consul of the philosophers" (*hypatos ton philosophon*), was a Neo-Platonist who wished to expand the boundaries of traditional philosophy. Perhaps unsurprisingly, he was eventually convicted of heresy. His first trial took place in the year 1077,⁴⁸ but having the support of the reigning emperor at the time, the ecclesiastical court did not pursue the charges. A second trial occurred under very different circumstances. In April 1082 (that is less than a year after Alexios had assumed power), a mixed court of laymen and churchmen, led by the emperor himself, tried Italos anew for heresy. He was found guilty on eleven counts. One of the main accusations was that of misleading his students with his teachings. Another related to his beliefs regarding the veneration of the icons, which sparked the longest, but inconclusive examination by the Synod.

At the same time, Alexios was desperate to finance his campaign against the Normans, who had invaded the Byzantine mainland, so he sought the expropriation of church treasures. A prominent churchman, Leo, metropolitan of Chalcedon, spoke out against the emperor's actions, claiming that the materials from which holy images are made, remain a "holy object" as they effectively contain the *character* of Christ, Mary, or a Saint. After thirteen years of debate, exile, and synodal action Leo admitted "his mistake."⁴⁹ It was the first time since the Iconoclastic era of the eighth and ninth centuries that the status of the icon and visual representation had been so extensively examined and debated.⁵⁰

46 Cheynet 2006b suggests that a system of land aristocracy was in place already in the eleventh century, while great estates had started being formed already from the ninth century. Alexios also introduced a number of fiscal changes but these are not explored here as they are considered secondary in importance in (re-) shaping the dominant cultural group – see, e.g., Smyrlis 2017 and on the coinage reform see Hendy 1969: 14–25, 39–49.

47 On *sebastoi* see Magdalino 2009: 226–27.

48 For a discussion of Italos' trial see Browning 1975: 14–16; Clucas 1981; Angold, *Church and Society*, 50–54; Barber 2007: 117–28; Kaldellis 2007: 228–29; on this point see Cameron 2014: 99–101.

49 On the related events see C. Barber and D. Jenkins, I.1.1 in this volume.

50 See C. Barber and D. Jenkins I.1.1 in this volume.

The active involvement of Alexios in both events demonstrates his effort to promote himself as the defender of Orthodoxy.⁵¹ Such a role would allow him to police contemporary intellectual movements, not by suppressing them but by engaging with them.⁵² Indeed, in July of the year 1107, he issued the so-called “Reform Edict.”⁵³ The edict sought the reformation of the education of the clergy and established three *didaskaloi* (a *didaskalos* of the Psalter, of the Apostles, and of the Gospels) to oversee education in Constantinople. The text of the edict claims a pressing need for such reform. The text starts *ex abrupto*:

Ἀγιώτατέ μου δέσποτα καὶ ἡ θεία καὶ ἱερὰ σύνοδος, εἰ καὶ ἀφρονέστερός εἰμι πάντων, ἀλλὰ γε ἐπὶ τῇ ὑποθέσει τῆς ἐκκλησίας μὴ ὡς ἄφρονα λογίσθητε· ἦψατο γὰρ τῆς καρδίας μου ὁ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἤδη ὑφωρόμενος κίνδυνος.

My most holy lords, holy and sacred Synod, even if I am the most foolish of all, do not consider me a fool on the issue of the Church, for my heart is burning because of the danger that is already visible for the church.⁵⁴

Curiously enough this urgent need, which resulted in the issuing of an edict without its most important part, the prolog, was never identified in the text. Nonetheless, that mysterious and pressing need is highlighted over and over again in the document.⁵⁵ In fact, it is possible that no particular event incited this imperial urgency. Rather, the urgent character of the edict should be connected to an imperial effort to shape the intellectual climate and so establish the Emperor as a major actor among the culturally dominant group.⁵⁶

The decisive reforms proposed by the edict led Robert Browning to postulate the existence of a “Patriarchal School.”⁵⁷ According to Browning, Alexios I was responsible for the establishment of a new academic institution, which resembled modern universities and their faculties. Browning’s list of teachers connected to the “Patriarchal School” is crucial for this volume (and the suggested periodization) since at least five of the twelfth-century authors whose works are included here appear in his list of teachers in that so-called “Patriarchal School”, while several more authors can be related to other teachers from there. Recent scholarship has convincingly cast doubt on whether a Patriarchal School ever existed as an institution;⁵⁸ instead, higher education in Constantinople should be understood as a web of private and public schools that included the possible

51 Cf. the concept of the “guardians of the orthodoxy” as expressed by Magdalino, *Manuel*, 316–412.

52 Cf. the statement that the problem is common and should be tackled by all as a group, Alexios I, *Conciliar Edict of 1107*, 183.66–68 and 83–87. The events are related to the opposition against the *charistike* as Leo condemned all lay appropriation of church property.

53 For the text see Alexios I, *Conciliar Edict of 1107*, with further discussion in Magdalino 1996.

54 Alexios I, *Conciliar Edict of 1107*, 179, 1–3.

55 On the universal need see Alexios I, *Conciliar Edict of 1107*, 183, 66–67, 85. On the emperor see *ibid.*, 197, 290–306.

56 Cf. the references to the effective reaction of the emperor in words and deeds; see Alexios I, *Conciliar Edict of 1107*, 195, 263 and 197, 306.

57 Browning, “The Patriarchal School” (cf. Fuchs 1926). See also A. Kazhdan and R. Browning, *ODB*, s.v. “Patriarchal School.” The connection with the Reform Edict was drawn by Beck 1959: 117.

58 See Magdalino, *Manuel*, 325–30 and Angold, *Church and Society*, 93–95. For a different point of view see Darrouzès 1970: 66–79; Criscuolo 1975.

sponsoring of “professorial” chairs or simply the establishment of leaders in that network (the *didaskaloi*).⁵⁹

Byzantine authors whose works are to be found in this volume were members of a social network that had pre-existed but was redefined by Alexios’ reforms. As Paul Magdalino notes, the term “Patriarchal School” is “useful insofar as it reflects the extent to which the old secular teaching structures . . . had become affiliated to the Great Church.”⁶⁰ Most importantly, the teachers were connected with the Patriarchate and although there is a little evidence for censoring, even in later decades, Alexios I made the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate a reference point for those highly educated individuals who were not part of the Palace and the imperial administration.⁶¹ With the reforms, Alexios I could supervise (but not necessarily control) any intellectual movement that challenged his newly founded reign. The emperor did not constrain or silence these intellectuals; instead, they debated with him and his entourage.

Orthodox East, Catholic West, and the Crusader Mediterranean

Political developments in Europe and the broader East Mediterranean region forced Greek-speaking Byzantium and the Latin-speaking West to enter into dialogue with each other from the later eleventh century. The Crusades brought the West to the East. At the same time, Byzantium had to deal with the aggressive expansion of the Seljuks into Asia Minor. The few sources from this period can hardly provide a comprehensive image of those cultural exchanges. Still, the surviving record reveals that the burgeoning field of theology became a fertile ground for cultivating such communication.

At the very beginning of our period, one finds Alexios I Komnenos actively seeking to reconcile the Orthodox and Catholic Churches and to smooth out the differences between the Pope and the Constantinopolitan Patriarch that had been sharpened by the events of 1054. Whether the mutual excommunication of Patriarch Keroularios and Cardinal Humbert of Silva Candida in 1054 can truly be said to amount to a “Schism” is a matter of debate.⁶² The breakdown did, however, accentuate cultural differences between the Eastern and Western Roman worlds, setting in train an irreversible division.

The outcome of a Synod that met in 1089 offered modest signs of reconciliation, with the Orthodox accepting the Catholic view of the *azymes* (the use of unleavened bread in the Eucharist), while the Catholics tacitly accepted the absence of any direct reference to the primacy of the Pope. Although Pope Urban II (1088–1099) never confirmed the agreement, East and West remained in contact, and six years later Pope Urban initiated

59 See Loukaki 1998 on the question of the twelve *didaskaloi* and Stone 2008: 253–54 (esp. related to the question of the *didaskalos ton ethnon*); see also Katsaros 1988: 163–209. For an overview of educational institutions in the twelfth century see Grünbart 2014.

60 Magdalino, *Manuel*, 327. For the role of the church in the organization of the education see also Angold, *Church and Society*, 93–95; Miller 2003: 233–34 (on the orphanage in particular).

61 See also Angold, *Church and Society*, 59–60.

62 For different approaches on the subject see Chrysos 2004; Kaplan 1995; Mamagkakis 2017.

the First Crusade at the Council of Clermont in 1095 in response to the Byzantine emperor's request for help against the Seljuk Turks. Unfortunately, in 1098, the Crusade resulted in the first truly schismatic act: the Patriarch of Antioch was sent into exile and a Latin Patriarch was appointed to his see. Despite this, East and West continued talking to one another, mainly because Byzantine Constantinople was in the path to the new Crusader states in the Eastern Mediterranean, because Byzantine interests in the eastern Mediterranean were fenced, and because the Empire had various political and economic ties to the burgeoning states and duchies in West Europe.

The Pope's representatives continued flowing to Constantinople, but they were treated with skepticism and animosity. The problematic relationship between East and West is best illustrated by the opening lines of a dialogue that was composed in Constantinople, but staged in Jerusalem. The dialogue is said to come from the pen of the exiled Patriarch of Jerusalem, John VIII.⁶³ As in many such dialogues, the interlocutors are described as a "Latin" (Catholic Westerner) and a "Greek" (Orthodox Byzantine),⁶⁴ but in fact correspond to John VIII and Peter Grossolano. Grossolano is known to have visited Constantinople in 1112 – when on his way to the Crusader states – and to have engaged in a number of debates while there. Like his predecessor, John VIII had also been driven into exile by the Crusaders and was living in Constantinople.⁶⁵ The dialogue is mainly concerned with the issue of the *azymes*. In an enigmatic metaphor at the very beginning of the dialogue "the Latin" is compared to an octopus:

Τὸ πολὺπουν φασὶ τὸ παράπαν μὴ χαίρειν τῷ πόντῳ τοῦ βορρᾶ, ἐχθρὰ δ' ἠγεῖσθαι τὰ ἐκεῖ, καὶ μήτε γενέσθαι, μήτε ἐπιδημεῖν τοῖς θαλαττίοις ἐκείνοις ὕδροις. αἰτία δὲ, ὅτι τὰ γλυκέα τούτῳ οὐκ ἔστι φίλια ὡς ὀλέθρια. σφόδρα γὰρ ἐκλύει αὐτοῦ τὴν δύναμιν ὕδωρ γλυκύτερον καταχθέν. ὁ πόντος δὲ ἐκείνοις πολλοῖς τοῖς ποταμοῖς κατακλύζεται, ἐφ' οἷς ἐχθρὸς ἐστὶ τῷ πολὺποδι ἵνα δὲ γνῶς τὸ πρὸς τὰ γλυκέα τῶν ὑδάτων τοῦ ζώου τούτου ἀπὸστροφον, ὁ θηρατῆς αὐτοῦ ἐκδιδάσκει σε. πέτρα γὰρ προσφύς ὁ ἰχθύς, ἄρπαξ ἔχεται καὶ οὐκ ἐκεῖθεν ἀποσπασθεῖ ῥαδίως, ὕδατος δ' ἐπιχεθέντος γλυκέος, ὁ μὲν τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ἐξίσταται φύσεως, ὁ δ' ἐπιχέας τὸ ὕδωρ ἔχει τὸ θήραμα. τοῦτο τὸ ζῶον πλεῖστοι μεμίμηται, καὶ τοῖς γλυκέσι τῆς ἀληθείας οὐ χαίρουσιν ὕδασιν. ἔνθεν οὐ παρὰ τῆ ἐκκλησίᾳ διάγουσιν [...] ἀλλ' ἐκεῖθεν πρὸς ἄλλην τρέπονται, ὅποι κἂν εἰσβάλωσι ποταμοί, ἀλλὰ πολλῇ τῇ ἀλμυρότητι ἀναφύρονται κατὰ τὸν πολὺπουν.

63 The title of the text in Greek reads: Ἰωάννου τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου πατριάρχου Ἱεροσολύμων λόγος περὶ ἀζύμων, ὃν συνεγράψατο ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις κατὰ τὴν διάλεξιν ἣν πρὸς τινος λατίνου φιλοσόφου ἐποιήσατο. In manuscript Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lincoln 7 (f. 115v–35) the title reads Λόγος διαλεκτικός μετὰ τινός λατίνου φιλοσόφου. The text shouts for a new edition. The only modern edition dates to the late seventeenth century (Dositheos Hierosolymon 1698, p. 527–38). The database *Pinakes* attests thirteen late medieval and early modern manuscripts to include this text (though the text cannot be found in ms. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Canonicus 21). A new critical edition may also solve issues related to the text's authorship, as passages from the dialogue are quoted in the acts of the Synod of 1157 and attributed there to Eustratios of Nicaea. On the problem of the authorship see Petit 1972: 766–67; see also Beck 1959: 518.

64 Cameron 2016: 12.

65 About the patriarchs in exile see Spingou 2016; Pitsakis 1991.

They say, that the octopus does not enjoy the northern sea at all, as it considers those waters hostile, and it is not born nor lives in those sea waters. For fresh water is not friendly [to the octopus], but destructive. For, when fresh water is poured on to the animal, it loses much of its power. That open sea is filled with [the water of] many rivers, and therefore it is an enemy for the octopus. As the hunter is familiar with the animal's aversion to sweet waters, you [reader] can learn from him the following: when the fish [i.e., the octopus] attaches itself to a rock, it holds fast to it with pertinacity and it cannot be detached easily. But when fresh [water] is poured onto it, its very nature is altered, and the water-pourer catches his prey. Many [people] are similar to that animal, and they do not take pleasure in the fresh waters of truth.⁶⁶ For this reason, they do not stay with the Church . . . but they go somewhere else, where even if there are rivers flowing [into the sea], they mix with very salty currents like the octopus does.⁶⁷

With this admittedly strained metaphor, the author tells the unnamed Latin that his "wicked nature" makes it impossible for him to follow Christian teachings ("sweet waters"). The anonymity of the interlocutors suggests that the accusations are not only directed against Grossolano, but also any Latin (Catholic). Most importantly, having attributed error to a "wicked nature," the author of the dialogue removes the possibility of reconciliation. Such positions did not prevent papal representatives and envoys from continuing to come and go in even greater numbers throughout the twelfth century, thus stimulating intellectual exchange.

The exchange of books is mentioned in a different dialogue. These discussions are said to have taken place in Thessaloniki in October 1154 and the main two interlocutors were Basil Achridenos, the local archbishop, and Anselm of Havelberg, the envoy of Frederick Barbarossa and a famous author of theological tracts.⁶⁸ They discussed multiple issues related to ritual practices and theological differences between the two churches. At a time when knowledge of the Latin language among Byzantine scholars was restricted, Basil remarkably makes a direct reference to the writings of Saints Augustine and Jerome.⁶⁹ Anselm asks in return for copies of the acts of the ecumenical councils.⁷⁰

A further example of intellectual exchange is linked to one of the dogmatic disputes under Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80). In 1166, emperor Manuel I Komnenos called for

66 Literal translation, "sweet waters," cf. the sweet words of the divine Logos, Ps. 118 (119): 103.

67 Note the double meaning of the word ἀναφύρω, that when in the active voice is also used in the meaning of "mix with leaven" (Lampe, s.v.).

68 Basil Achridenos, *Dialogue*, p. 47 (the acts of ecumenical councils). The dialogue is published by Schmidt 1901: 34–51. Schmidt did not make use of all manuscripts preserving the text and a new edition is needed urgently. On the dialogue see Beck 1959: 626; Magdalino, *Manuel*, 60–61, 86–88. The famous scholar and bishop of Thessaloniki Eustathios refers to this dialogue; see Wirth 1999: 61, ll. 10–16.

69 Basil Achridenos, *Dialogue*, p. 51.

70 Basil Achridenos, *Dialogue*, p. 47.

a council to consider the meaning of Jn. 14:28 “For the Father is greater than I.” A few years earlier, a Byzantine ambassador, Demetrios of Lampe, had introduced the problem to the emperor, asking: “Is it not absurd to consider the Son both equal and inferior to the Father?” Manuel sought help from Hugo Eteriano, a pupil of Alberic in Paris and now a member of the imperial entourage in Constantinople, who criticized the method used and argued that the “Greek statements” were insufficiently supported by logic and dialectics.⁷¹

High-level contacts between the Byzantines and Latins, as well as Armenians, the strong interest in “Orthodox Dogma,” and most importantly the competitive character of the interactions within and beyond the “guardians of the Orthodoxy,” promoted the revival of an earlier, mainly Late Antique, mode of writing, the so-called *Dogmatic Panoply*. These panoplies were doctrinal compendia that were intended to equip, “arm,” the reader with arguments against heresy. They include patristic excerpts, dialogues, and syllogisms and represent normative theological positions on a wide array of matters, including those that pertain to visual culture.⁷²

Constantinople was the major junction that connected Asia, Europe, and East Africa, as well as one of the most important cities in the world at that time. Its importance has been rightly compared to New York, both for its size and its centrality in people’s minds.⁷³ The City drew refugees, merchants, crusaders, and pilgrims. The levels of interaction and intellectual exchange among these visitors and the local population is uncertain. Some refugees were integrated using the mechanisms that allowed an empire to function, while others were relocated in lands far away from Constantinople.⁷⁴ Merchants have left

71 The Western origins of the dispute are only reluctantly accepted in Byzantine sources. John Kinnamos does not even mention the presence of Hugo. See Kinnamos, *Deeds*, 251–57, transl. Brand, 189–93; Kolbaba 2017: 483–88.

72 Three “armaments for doctrines” are known to have been composed in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Two of these were dedicated to Komnenian emperors, while the last one to the author’s anonymous friend. The first of the three was written by Euthymios Zigabenos for Alexios I. Zigabenos followed the fifth-century *Panarion* by Epiphanius of Salamis and his work influenced subsequent compositions. Approximately seventy years later Andronikos Kamateros composed his arsenal, the *Sacred Arsenal*, for Manuel I. Kamateros. The content and the dedicatory page resembled the one found in the manuscripts of Zigabenos’ *Arsenal*. The last one, *Dogmatike Panoplia*, was composed in Nicaea after 1204 (probably in 1210) by Niketas Choniates. Choniates copied Zigabenos’ content and added further dogmatic doctrines which occurred in the reigns of John, Manuel and later. On Euthymios Zigabenos’ *Panoply* and the other armaments see Cameron 2016: 68–74; on Andronikos Kamateros’ *Arsenal* see Bucossi 2014, Bucossi 2009; about Choniates’ *Panoplia* see Simpson 2014: 36–50.

73 Magdalino 1991; see also F. Spingou, Introduction, I.5 in this volume.

74 About the mechanisms of integration see Laiou 1998. About the relocation of refugees see, e.g., the case of Vladislav “one of the principal persons in Russia,” who as soon as he asked refuge from Manuel I in 1165, was granted “a property along the Danube” (see Kinnamos, p. 236; Brand, *Deeds*, 178). In another instance, the emperor kept in the Palace the Hungarian Béla III, whom he (the emperor) recognized as the heir of the Hungarian throne and betrothed to his daughter (Mákk 1989: 886–89; on the events related to the betrothal see the detailed account offered in Panagopoulou 2006: 323–33). Following the Norman invasion, Anglo-Saxons asked Alexios I for refuge in Byzantium. According to a story, reported in an English chronicon and an Icelandic saga, Alexios granted them a place on the shore of the Black Sea, which was named “Nova Anglia” see Ciggaar 1981.

observations and records of their impressions,⁷⁵ as well as some, admittedly rare, references to direct interactions between visitors and local teachers.⁷⁶

The presence of Crusaders is described in a negative light in Byzantine sources. Their passage through the capital (and the territories of the Empire) had political consequences, which invited (and required) interaction at an official level. In fact, Empress Eirene-Bertha, wife of Manuel I, is said to have had direct correspondence with Eleanor of Aquitaine, when the latter accompanied her then husband Louis VII of France to the Holy Land in 1143.⁷⁷ In a world in which international politics relied on diplomatic weddings and brides were trained for their future role, such contacts must have been more frequent than are currently attested. It is also probable (but far from certain) that similar contacts encouraged parallel developments in the field of literature. For example, the contemporary flourishing of the Old French *Romans d'antiquité* and Byzantine romances sponsored by noble patrons and patronesses is suggestive.⁷⁸

The Year 1204

Modern scholars generally view the sack of Constantinople as an event of crucial importance, detonating a series of explosive political transformations and marking the beginning of a new phase in the political history of the Empire. In the cultural history of Byzantium, as we understand it, the year 1204 does not mark such a violent change. While the events may have impacted intellectual production, affecting the availability of material,⁷⁹ the dislocation of the cultural elite, and leading to the relocation of scholars outside of Constantinople,⁸⁰ there is no evidence that these consequences produced a violent and abrupt shift in the unfolding of Byzantium's cultural history. Our argument here is three-fold: (a) no evidence suggests that cultural production changed drastically immediately after the events of 1204, (b) the legacy of the Komnenian schools and teachers continued to shape Constantinopolitan intellectual life until the c.1350, and (c) those who returned

75 See, e.g., the text by Benjamin of Tudela, transl. L. Mordechai, I,5,6 in this volume.

76 See for example the case of Fibonacci, who in his *Liber Abaci*, records his interaction with Constantinopolitan teachers, discussed in Spingou 2014: 366–67.

77 Eleanor and Louis arrived in Constantinople in the context of the second crusade. They stayed outside the city walls for three weeks in October 1143. None of the letters exchanged allegedly between Bertha and Eleanor has survived. On Eleanor's experience in Constantinople see Jeffreys 1980: 467–74; see also Panagopoulou 2006: 270–72 for a summary list of the relations that Bertha-Eirene, a diplomatic bride, nourished while being with a Byzantine empress. Relevant to this visit is also the account about the Philopation, where the Crusaders stayed during their visit, that is described in the passages transl. G. Dinkova-Bruun, I,5,9 and M. Grünbart, I,5,10 in this volume. On the image of the Crusaders in Byzantine sources see, e.g., Laiou and Parviz Mottahedeh 2001, esp. the contributions of A. Kazhdan and E. and M. Jeffreys.

78 Jeffreys 1980; see also Jeffreys and Jeffreys 2001; and see Nilsson 2014: 57–86.

79 Papaioannou, *Psellos*, 260 suggests the possibility of the destruction of private libraries. Albeit the lack of evidence, that is very possible. Constantinople also suffered a number of great fires even before 1204 (the most famous ones are those of 1197 and 1203) that are said to have destroyed wealthy *oikoi*, with (presumably) privately owned books. On the destruction of Constantinople see the summary in Talbot 2013: 243–48; on the fires of 1203 and 1204 see Madden 1991/2.

80 Yet a number of intellectuals and well-off families are known to have remained in the City, especially after the first years following 1204; see Shawcross 2011.

to Constantinople after 1261 decided to consciously connect with the culture of the Komnenians, through surveying, restoring, and reviving texts and monuments.

Homiletic literature of high rhetorical merit had begun to flourish in the provinces in the twelfth century. While some early provincial homilists received their training in Constantinople, for others their relation to the Constantinopolitan educational system is unclear. Neophytos the Recluse (1134–1214) is exemplary.⁸¹ Neophytos was a hermit near Paphos, Cyprus, who claimed that he learned how to read at an advanced age and that he never received proper rhetorical training.⁸² Nonetheless, the thirty homilies collected in the first volume of his *Biblos Panegyrike* depend on current Constantinopolitan literary trends.⁸³ A second example is Philagathos of Cerami, an itinerant homilist, who wrote at least eighty homilies (including remarkable *ekphraseis*). Philagathos was active in Sicily under Roger II (r.1130–54).⁸⁴ Although it is not known if he received any training in Constantinople, Philagathos showed a remarkable awareness of the Komnenian interest in the novel, as he composed, in the form of a dialogue, an allegorical interpretation of Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*.⁸⁵ At least two more poets from Norman Sicily appear to be well acquainted with the Hellenic classics and contemporary literature in Greek.⁸⁶ Nicholaos-Nektarios of Otranto (1155/60–1235) offers a third instance. He wrote an *ekphrasis* in verse about the monastery of St. Paul in Otranto, epigrams on works of art, and even tetras-tichs “in der Manner des Theodoros Prodromos.”⁸⁷ He served as an interpreter for the papal legate to Constantinople in 1214–15, but his oeuvre was a product of southern Italy, where the Greek language and education were current, following the latest Constantinopolitan trends.⁸⁸

As suggested above, cultural and political decentralization had started before 1204.⁸⁹ The mobility of ecclesiastical or state administrative figures across all regions under Byzantine influence helped this development. After 1204, it is the movement of scholars from Constantinople to the new duchies and kingdoms that enhances literary and artistic activities outside of the City. These scholars, working as teachers, brought the elite culture of Constantinople to these new terrains. Nicaea provides the strongest example of this phenomenon, while the evidence from other areas is more fragmentary. For instance, John Apokaukos, whose prose writings date from the time he was in the Despotate of

81 On Neophytos and his *enkleistra*, see A. W. Carr, I.2.5 in this volume.

82 For a general introduction about the culture and the political events at Cyprus at the time of Neophytos (and beyond) see Nicolaou-Konnari and Schabel 2005.

83 Paschalidis 2011: 155.

84 The life and work of Philagathos is discussed by M. Duluş on numerous occasions (I.3.7, I.8.6, I.8.20, II.2.6 in this volume). Philagathos wrote and delivered his homilies in Messina.

85 See Philip the Philosopher (Philagathos of Cerami), *Essay on Heliodorus*; on the attribution to the pen of Philagathos see Duluş 2007.

86 Eugenios of Palermo and the anonymous author of a poem when he was exiled in Malta; see Lauxtermann 2014: 170–76 about Hellenic education in Norman Sicily with further references.

87 Hoeck and Loenertz 1965: 115. On Nicholaos-Nektarios see P. Van Deun, II.6.1 in this volume.

88 On the region and cultural peculiarities of the region see Safran 2014; see also L. Safran, II.6.5 and II.6.13. On Sicily see Angold 2020 (with further bibliography) and Johns, II.6.3 in this volume.

89 Cf. Shawcross 2011: 25.

Epirus, is often discussed in this volume. A further literatus from this region was Isaac, a monk in the Mesopotamos monastery,⁹⁰ who owned the largest collection of ephemeral poetry, letters, and orations from the twelfth century – now manuscript St Petersburg, RNB, gr. 250.⁹¹

Nonetheless, the example of Nicaea remains the most relevant one for a discussion focused upon the continuation of the “dominant culture” in Byzantium. Nicaea’s political and cultural systems shaped Constantinople after 1261. An example of this is offered by Manuel Philes (c.1260–c.1332/34 or mid 1340s), a court poet under Andronikos II, who was an acquaintance of Maximos Planoudes (c.1260–c.1305) and a prominent member of the Palaiologan court (until the 1310s).⁹² Philes’ teacher was George Pachymeres⁹³ (1242–c.1310), a leading teacher in the school of Hagia Sophia. Pachymeres can be linked to George Akropolites (1217–82), also a state official and a leading figure in education immediately after 1261.⁹⁴ In turn, Akropolites⁹⁵ was a pupil of the great scholar Nikephoros Blemmydes⁹⁶ (1197–c.1269), who was a leading intellectual and educator in the Empire of Nicaea. Blemmydes had been a student of a certain Prodrornos, who was living in Skamander at the time: this Prodrornos had been a pupil of Constantine Kaloethes (1198–c.1204), one of the most prominent teachers (“oikoumenikos didaskalos”) in the Komnenian system.⁹⁷ Thus, Manuel Philes could trace his intellectual ancestors to the Komnenian system of education. He was not the only one. Ihor Ševčenko has made a similar case for Theodore Metochites (1270–1332). Nikephoros Choumnos (c.1250/55–1327) can also boast an educational ancestry going back to Komnenian times.⁹⁸ Such genealogies indicate that the cultural elite preserved and perpetuated the culture of the City as it had existed before 1204.⁹⁹

A further witness to the close links between the pre-1204 and post-1261 intellectuals is indicated by the manuscripts that show that most Komnenian literature survives in manuscripts from the second half of the thirteenth century or the first half of the fourteenth. The pattern is particularly evident in orations, letters, and occasional poetry, as the major collections of such texts (and most often their unique copies) come from this period. Looking at such textual transmission is important, given that these kinds of texts were not written to be preserved, but to be used/performed and then discarded. The selected surviving texts assumed the role of an active archive to which authors of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries could refer to find inspiration for their work.

90 PLP 92105.

91 The same manuscript preserves the work of John Apokaukos, see the discussion in I.2.2 in this volume.

92 About Manuel Philes see A. Rhoby with additions by M. Bazzani, I.4.2 in this volume.

93 About Pachymeres see A.-M. Talbot, I.7.5 in this volume.

94 Constantinides 1982: 32.

95 About George Akropolites see D. Manolova and P. Magdalino, I.5.14 in this volume.

96 About Nikephoros Blemmydes see S. Steiner, I.4.5 in this volume.

97 Nikephoros Blemmydes’ life and education is documented in his *autobiography*, par. 3–8, p. 4–7; Constantinides 1982: 31.

98 On Theodore Metochites see I. Polemis, I.8.1 and I.8.9 in this volume; Ševčenko 1975: 19–20. On Theodore Choumnos, see A. Rhielo, I.8.22 in this volume.

99 On the restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII see Talbot 1993.

A few telling examples shall be mentioned here. The first is the collection in MS. Oxford, Bodleian, Barocci 131, which was copied in the second half of the thirteenth century and contains a vast number of twelfth-century letters.¹⁰⁰ MS Escorial, Real Biblioteca, Y.II.10 (de Andrés, 265) is our major source for twelfth-century orations. It is dated to the thirteenth century and is said to come from Nicaea. MS Vienna, ÖNB, philologicus graecus 321 is said to be from Constantinople and is dated to the second half of the thirteenth century and contains the works of authors writing in both the twelfth and the thirteenth century.¹⁰¹ Finally, Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, graecus 524 is the source for a number of texts in this volume and the greatest source for Komnenian occasional poetry (the *Anthologia Marciana*).¹⁰² The manuscript was copied in Constantinople at some point in the last decades of the thirteenth century and was destined for the copyist's own use. It is worth noting that scholars and scribes did not only copy the contents of twelfth-century codices, but also the style in which they were written. The similarity in the calligraphic style between codices from the eleventh and twelfth centuries and those dating from between 1280–1330 has been well studied – but can still confuse modern scholars.¹⁰³

Similar to material spolia, the presence of twelfth-century texts in thirteenth-century contexts can condition the work of their thirteenth-century recipients. Verses of the poetry from the *Anthologia Marciana* are found lightly paraphrased in the verses of Philes, while late eleventh- and twelfth-century poems are found mixed with original works attributed to Manuel Philes and Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, literary modes discovered or re-discovered in the twelfth century had their life extended in Constantinople of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century. Imperial models and ideologies of ecumenism were revived (or retained) concomitantly with imperial titles and ceremonial practices.¹⁰⁵ Nonetheless, the culturally dominant group in the early Palaiologan era did not follow these models strictly; on the contrary, models are placed in a creative process of imitation, adaptation and re-interpretation. This process of imitation (*mimesis* in Greek) was often employed in the reuse of classical and late antique rhetorical models.

The sociolect of playful Hellenism found in the work of the eminent eleventh-century scholar Michael Psellos and twelfth-century Komnenian intellectuals remained popular. For example, in the work of Constantine Akropolites (d.1324), often called the “New Metaphrast” for his re-workings of hagiographical vitae in the first half of the fourteenth cen-

100 Papaioannou, *Psellos*, 263; cf. Angelov 2007: 56. Wilson 1966, 1978 places part of the copying activity possibly in the Nicaean court.

101 Hunger 1961: 409–18.

102 See F. Spingou, I.3.3, I.3.4, I.4.3, I.7.4, II.7.1, II.7.3 in this volume; B. Hostetler, I.6.8b in this volume.

103 The Palaiologan archaizing script is more static and rigid in comparison to that of the eleventh or twelfth century and it occasionally demonstrates influence from the then very fashionable Fettaugen-Mode. Prato 1979: 151–93; Hunger and Kresten 1980; De Gregorio and Prato 2003. E.g. Vatican, BAV, gr. 1302, gr. 225, and gr. 226.

104 Both points are extensively discussed in my forthcoming, *Poetry for the Komnenoi*.

105 Macrides 1994: 273. Angelov 2007: 105–15; however, many more titles were new or related to the Nicaean court see Macrides, Munitiz, and Angelov 2013: 301–06.

tury, the author does not hesitate to use classical allusions. For instance, in the encomion celebrating the Vita of Saint Eudokimos, Achilles and his tutor Chiron are present, as also are Aphrodite, Odysseus, and the Sirens.¹⁰⁶ Other traditions from the twelfth century persist and were enriched. For example, Palaiologan love romances not only draw from their Komnenian predecessors, but are closely related to Western examples.¹⁰⁷ *Ekphraseis* have been prominent in the literary production of the Komnenoi either as self-standing rhetorical works/exercises or embedded in longer narratives.¹⁰⁸ In the time of the early Palaiologoi, *ekphraseis* of cities in particular were either works of their own or (most frequently) included in re-workings of hagiographical texts and miracle stories.¹⁰⁹

Change came slowly. Notable in this regard is the shifting reception of the rhetorical works of the eleventh-century intellectual Michael Psellos in the first decades of the fourteenth century.¹¹⁰ Psellos, the rhetorician, had been admired and imitated.¹¹¹ But this ceased towards the end of the period covered by this volume, when the interest in copying and reading his texts greatly diminished. Even so, the rigid but playfully archaizing literary language of Theodore Metochites and George Pachymeres paves the way to Nikephoros Gregoras' *Roman History* and John Kantakouzenos' *History*. The *ekphraseis* of cities in hagiographical texts continue in the texts of Nikephoros Gregoras and Philotheos Kokkinos.¹¹² These texts also included "romantic elements," such as long journeys and accounts of pirates and shipwrecks that had characterized the literary culture of later Byzantium – features that had first appeared in the tradition of hagiographical writing but were enriched by their use in novels and romances.¹¹³ Furthermore, early fourteenth-century hagiographical texts differ from earlier texts because of an increasing interest in mysticism in Orthodox theology. Hesychasm had prevailed.

The Year 1328

The year 1081 signals the beginning of the Komnenian dynasty's rule and so helps us to mark the cultural world that will emerge under their rule and that will continue into the fourteenth century. Similarly, the year 1328 is not an absolute terminus. Nonetheless, the accession of Andronikos III calls attention to the political turmoil that began in the

106 Constantine Akropolites, *Life of St Eudokimos*, ed. Taxidis, ll. 104–07, 370–73, 201–03, respectively; cf. Talbot 2011: 178 n. 18.

107 On the relations between the Komnenian novels, the Palaiologan romances and their European counterparts see Nilsson 2011: 214–25, with further bibliography.

108 See, e.g., the *ekphraseis* of Manasses and *ekphraseis* in imperial panegyrics in Nilsson 2014: 152–61.

109 On the "rhetorical hagiography" of the late thirteenth/early fourteenth centuries see Talbot 2011: 176–79. On hagiographic texts describing Thessaloniki see Kaltsogianni, Kotsabassi, and Paraskevopoulou 2002: 143–213; see also the *ekphrasis* of Constantinople included in the collection of Miracles of Pege, discussed by A. Alexakis, I.8.2.

110 Papaioannou, *Psellos*, 266.

111 That is discussed extensively in Papaioannou, *Psellos*, 253–67.

112 See Talbot 2011: 182.

113 As noted by Talbot 2011: 183–84; for a more general discussion of the relationship between fiction, novel and hagiography see Messis 2014.

1320s and that would deeply affect the culture which we call “Byzantine” and that would mark the end of the continuities that shape the culture of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Byzantium.¹¹⁴

According to the historian Nikephoros Gregoras, Andronikos III (r.1328–41), the grandson of Andronikos II (r.1282–1328) had been known for his licentious behavior and his power-loving character. In 1320, Andronikos the grandson, who was at the time third in the succession to the throne, had been spending a night in the bedroom of a noble lady. His archers were on guard with orders to kill her other lover should he try to approach. They accidentally killed Andronikos’ brother, who came to see his sibling. Upon hearing the dreadful news, his father, who was second in line to the throne, died of his grief.¹¹⁵ The ruling emperor, Andronikos II, was enraged and removed his grandson Andronikos from the line of succession. A prolonged period of instability, rivalry, and civil unrest began upon that night in the year 1320.¹¹⁶ Eventually, Andronikos II abdicated in 1328 and his younger grandson became emperor. As Niels Gaul has pointed out, Emperor Andronikos III (r.1328–41) decisively limited the influence of those close to the former emperor.¹¹⁷ This had an immediate effect upon those who had been the bearers of the dominant culture in later Byzantium.

The characteristic feature of Andronikos II’s intellectual circle had been a deep appreciation of *paideia*, such as it had flourished under the Komnenians. This entailed a demonstrated familiarity with a sociolect shaped by traditional education and contemporary cultural priorities. First and foremost, that sociolect included knowledge of rhetoric and the conventions of imperial propaganda, as well as theology, philosophy, and some acquaintance with astronomy/astrology and medicine.¹¹⁸ Given the prominent position of *paideia* during his reign, it is perhaps not surprising that Andronikos II is arguably the most-praised emperor in Byzantine history.¹¹⁹

Gaul has successfully proved that Andronikos II created a dominant social network, that would overcome the bitter disputes unleashed by his father, emperor Michael VIII (r.1259–82), when he had attempted to impose the Union of the Churches in 1274.¹²⁰ Unfortunately, the efforts of Andronikos II did not survive that emperor, as the supporters of his grandson had little connection with Andronikos II’s circle. Also, as Gaul observes, the most prominent actors in Andronikos’ network were all aged by the 1320s. Andronikos III did not fail to observe the power invested in that group, and realized that he could

114 The Byzantines did not call themselves “Byzantines,” but “Romans” or, in poetry, “Ausonians”; the term “Hellenes” is of later date and very restricted in use. Their empire is called Rhomania, and their language Rhomaic. The term “Byzantium” was introduced to describe the later survival of the Eastern Roman Empire by Hieronymus Wolf in 1555. The term “Byzantion” in medieval sources refers only to the city of Constantinople (which was originally named thus by the name of his mythical founder, Byzas).

115 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Roman History*, bk. VIII.1.Γ, vol. 1, 285–86.

116 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Roman History*, bk. VIII.3.Δ, vol. 1, 295–96.

117 See Gaul 2016.

118 For the development of the study of astronomy, astrology, and medicine in Byzantium see the articles by A. Tihon, P. Magdalino, and T. S. Miller in Kaldellis and Siniosoglou (eds.) 2017, respectively

119 Angelov 2007: 30.

120 See Gaul 2016.

easily dismantle it by withdrawing imperial patronage. According to Gaul, by 1340, the prominent role of rhetoric belonged to the past.

The collapse of Andronikos II's network had a greater impact on the cultural production of Byzantium than the events related to the Fourth Crusade. In particular, the demise of rhetoric was marked. For example, only thirteen imperial speeches were written between 1328 and 1453, and most of these date from the siege of Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks.¹²¹ Other forms of rhetoric were also heavily affected. There is a sharp decrease in the production of texts in verse, one of the highest forms of rhetoric. Late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts do not offer anything close to the c.30,000 verses attributed to the pen of the early fourteenth-century author, Manuel Philes.

A series of misfortunes added to the problems caused by the devastating Palaiologan civil wars. The thirty years between 1320 and 1350 were marked also by an aggressive Ottoman expansion (including the conquest of the city of Prousa, modern Bursa, in 1326 and the shock created by the conquest of Nicaea, modern Iznik, in March 1331), the Byzantine–Serbian conflict in the region of Macedonia, and a severe outbreak of the Black Death in Constantinople between 1347 and 1349.¹²² The financial difficulties of Byzantium (and especially Constantinople) were further worsened as the City, which had been a major center for the commerce in luxury goods for centuries, lost major revenues when the Mongol lands fell into disarray after the collapse of the Mongol state in 1335.¹²³

Under these changed circumstances, Byzantine intellectuals no longer sought the restoration of the Empire; instead, they sought repentance.¹²⁴ The focus of intellectual activity also changed. Four fifths of the intellectuals active between 1320 and 1350 are linked, positively and negatively, to the theological debates around Hesychasm. This development re-asserted the centrality of theology within intellectual life¹²⁵ and marked a distinct contrast with the generation that dominated the years around 1300.¹²⁶

The ebbing of traditional intellectual life in Constantinople exacerbated the flow of well-educated Byzantines to the Italian states. George Lekapenos had already taken the teachings of Planoudes to Italy,¹²⁷ while Manuel Moschopoulos – who had been sent to prison by Andronikos II in the winter of 1305/06 – became most influential among early humanists in Italy.¹²⁸ One might note that Petrarch learned (some) Greek from one of the early protagonists of the Hesychastic controversy, Barlaam of Calabria.¹²⁹ This early

121 For a complete list see: Angelov 2007: 48 n. 59.

122 There were no less than fifty short or long epidemic waves of Black Death in the extensive Byzantine world between 1300 and 1453; see Tsiamis *et al.* 2011; Bartsocas 1966. On the Black Death in Constantinople see Congourdeau 1999.

123 Laiou 2002: 1161.

124 See Ševčenko 1961; Hilsdale 2014: 203–04.

125 Matschke and Tinnfeld 2001: 371–385; from the 174 literati that they record, 94 are related to the period under consideration here.

126 See Planoudes, *Letters* no. 112 (cf. Taxis 2012: 112) and Metochites, discussed in Ševčenko 1973: 53.

127 Constantinides 1982: 100–01.

128 Constantinides 1982: 103–08; the examples here can be multiplied.

129 See Ciccolella 2005: 4, who also offers a most useful brief overview about the beginning of learning Greek in the West (3–12); cf. Ciccolella 2008: 97–102.

movement of intellectuals, teachers, and their manuscripts intensified in the following decades, reaching a peak in the last fifty years of imperial Byzantium and becoming a permanent trend after 1453.¹³⁰ The arrival of Manuel Chrysoloras in 1397 was celebrated in Florence as the beginning of a new era for the city, one in which it would become a new Athens.¹³¹ Simultaneously, the political fragmentation of later Byzantium encouraged the creation of new, vigorous, and regional elites, which in the absence of a strong central voice gradually became the ambassadors for the legacy of Byzantine culture.

Later Byzantium

The definition of Later Byzantium proposed in this Introduction is distinct from previous uses of the term in political or cultural history. For example, John Haldon places the “later period” of Byzantine history between the middle of the eleventh century and the fifteenth century,¹³² while Mark Bartusis alludes to the period between the twelfth and the fifteenth century.¹³³ The term appears most prominently on the cover page of Ivan Drpić’s book on epigrams on works of art. There it signifies “the last centuries of the Byzantine Empire, roughly from the rise of the Komnenian Dynasty in the late eleventh century to the fall of Constantinople.”¹³⁴ In our understanding, the term encompasses the period between c.1081 and c.1350 and refers to a culture centered on Constantinople (even if only notionally). In short, we argue that cultural developments under the Komnenoi continued to shape Byzantine intellectual life until the years of civil war and the rise of Hesychasm in the fourteenth century gave rise to a Byzantium after Byzantium, whose distinct culture would outlive the final fall of the Empire in 1453.

This is not to argue that the values of *paideia* completely vanished from Byzantium. The fifteenth century witnesses a number of remarkable instances of rhetorical production. A vivid example of that trend can be found in the writings of the Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos (r.1391–1425). In c.1400, Manuel II became the first emperor to travel to western Europe, to request help against Ottoman expansion. Upon his visit to Paris, Manuel II wrote an attic-style *ekphrasis* about a fictive tapestry, that was supposedly to be found in the Louvre Palace.¹³⁵ A second example of such rhetorical products is the comparison between Old and New Rome written in the fifteenth century by the aforementioned Manuel Chrysoloras.¹³⁶

Nonetheless, this volume is focused upon a period that marks the last great flourishing of the educated elite within Constantinople. Defined by the changing social needs of Komnenian polity, this culture continued to hold sway through the (first) loss and

130 See Wilson 1992; Mondrain 1991–92; Harris 1995; Laiou 2004.

131 Ciccolella 2005: 5–6.

132 Haldon 2010.

133 Bartusis 2013: 610.

134 Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 6.

135 See Davis 2003; Peers 2003; and Loukaki 2013 for the literary tradition of the topic.

136 PG 156: 23–54; Dagron 1987; Constantinides 2003: 52–53.

recapture of Constantinople. But as the city dwindled economically and fell into bouts of civil war, a new era was born, one that pointed to a Byzantium without Constantinople. This volume presents a selection of texts from Later Byzantium that can help us to understand better the art, aesthetics, and cultural life of that period. These texts are, in the main, the product of a rich Constantinopolitan culture, and they allow us to glimpse the perception of the art of this period of cultural continuity amidst the rise, fall, and rise again of the Constantinople of Later Byzantium.

This Volume

This volume is the result of a truly collaborative effort. The contributors study diverse aspects of the Medieval world, such as literature, art, general history, law, theology, and philosophy. The range of linguistic traditions presented in the following pages (Arabic, Armenian, Georgian, Hebrew, Byzantine Greek, Medieval Latin, Italian, Old Norse, Slavic, and Syriac) reveals the complexity found in the study of Byzantine culture. Inevitably, texts in Byzantine Greek are prevalent, as this was the language of the culturally dominant group.

The corpus of texts related to visual and sensual aesthetics from Byzantium is particularly rich. As such, a process of selection became inevitable. An initial list drawn up by the series editor was refined by myself, as the volume editor. The list was circulated among colleagues, who commented on it and suggested improvements. Later, invited contributors also modified the list by proposing texts from their own areas of expertise.

There has been an effort to avoid extensive overlap with other important corpora of translations of texts with aims comparable to that of this volume. However, this was not always possible, either because of the significance and/or the exceptional interest of some texts or because of the lack of an English translation.¹³⁷ Furthermore, despite the bulky size of this volume, it is impossible for the entirety of textual testimonies about art and aesthetics from this period to be represented. The expert will immediately notice the absence of famous passages from the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene or the *Diegesis Chronike* of Niketas Choniates or the works of Theodore Hyrtakenos. Nor have such lengthy texts as Mesarites' *ekphrasis* of the Holy Apostles been included. However, most of the omitted texts are available in modern translations (often accompanied by rich commentaries). References to translations of important texts about art and aesthetics omitted from this volume are provided in the introductory note of each section.

Each of the 148 contributions follows a formulaic layout so as to allow the reader to navigate more easily through the contents of the volume. Ten fields are included in each contribution. Under "Edition" the reader will find listed the bibliographic details of the edition employed and a list of previous publications of the text. Under "Manuscripts" the list of the manuscript witnesses is provided. Many contributors have consulted anew medieval manuscripts and suggested improvements to current editions of texts. In cases in which the text

¹³⁷ See Mango, *Art*; Agapitos (ed.) 2006 (with the Modern Greek translation of six important texts and excerpts of texts on Byzantine art and aesthetics); Geanakopoulos 1984; see also Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 491–556; Magdalino and Nelson 1982; Kazhdan and Epstein, *Change*, 235–66. Cf. also the list with early anthologies of original texts on Byzantine art and references to important source material in Mango, *Art*, 260.

presented in a contribution is extant as an inscription, the details about the “Monument/Artefact” are provided. Where possible, illustrations of surviving objects are included in the volume. The next field contains bibliographical details of previous translations in modern languages. The paragraph entitled “Significance” provides a brief overview over the content of the text and highlights aspects important for the understanding of Byzantine art and aesthetics. Next, general information about the author (if known) or the authorship of a text is given. Biographical notes are not exhaustive and cover only some aspects of the career of an individual and his literary production. Further bibliography about the author is provided, should a reader wish to pursue further study about the author. Under “Text and Context,” information about the historical circumstances to which a source refers is given. The link between a text and a work of art is also discussed in this paragraph. Also, if the passage is an excerpt rather than a complete text, then it is placed within its textual context. Texts are quoted in their original language. If improvements to the published text have been made, these are indicated in the Commentary. Inscriptions are quoted in either critical or diplomatic editions. When the original spelling of an inscription is considered significant then a diplomatic transcription is also provided. The translations remain as close as possible to the original text – although a degree of interpretation is inevitable in any translation. Finally, the “Commentary” aims to make the text comprehensive, with references to events, literary allusions, and obscure passages. At the end of each contribution the relevant bibliography is cited. Some contributions have the form of “dossiers,” as they include texts of multiple authors. The field “Significance” is placed at the beginning of each dossier, summarizing the discussion on a specific topic. The “Introduction” that follows provides the reader with an overview of the dossier’s subject matter. The subsequent presentation of each of the texts included (named as Text A, B, etc.) follows the above-mentioned model. The Bibliography is cited at the end of a dossier.

The contributions are organized in fifteen chapters divided between two parts. Part I comprises primary sources that relate to the aesthetic culture of Byzantium, while Part II is concerned with the modes of textual expression that traditionally speak about or are connected with visual art.¹³⁸ Each section includes between four to fifteen contributions. Each section is preceded by a short introduction that discusses the content of the following contributions and presents either a particular aspect of the visual and material culture (Part I) or the fundamental characteristics and the history of the study of a textual form discussed in the chapter (Part II).

Part I, entitled “Art, Aesthetics, and Literature” surveys salient aspects of Byzantine visual culture in later Byzantium. It begins with the theoretical discussion of art (I.1 Notions of the Image in Later Byzantium) and moves to different sides of artistic production

¹³⁸ The terms “modes of textual expression” or “textual forms” are preferred here to “genres.” Genres existed in Byzantium, they were recognized as such and they were extremely important for shaping the field(s) of expectation of the medieval reader. However, the Byzantine “genres” do not necessarily coincide with the ancient ones. Byzantine theoreticians, conservative as they were, did not update the list of inherited. Thus, the use of the term can be more confusing than helpful; the seminal study on literary genre in Byzantium is by Margaret Mullett (1992).

(I.2 Artists and Patrons, I.3 Eikon and Iconography in Art and Literature, and I.4 Materials). Responses to objects of minor and monumental art and architecture are then given (I.5 Seeing Spaces: Responses to the Built Environment and I.6 Art and Devotion in Later Byzantium). The last two chapters of Part I concern artistic and aesthetic interpretations of the abstract notions of memory and beauty (I.7 Memory and Art, and I.8 Beauty). The chapter on beauty is subdivided into four parts corresponding to four types of beauty found in the man-made and natural environments (a. Everyday Beauty, b. Natural Beauty, c. Human Beauty, and d. Artistic Beauty).

Part II is organized around responses to visual culture as these are conditioned by specific textual forms. The first half of the title of each chapter (II.1 Counting Down: Inventories, II.2 Describing, Experiencing, Narrating: The Use of Ekphrasis, II.3 Speaking: Ethopoiia, II.4 Instructing and Dedicating: Epigrams on Works of Art, II.5 Reading: Book Epigrams, II.6 Inscribing: Later Byzantine Epigraphic Culture, and II.7 Lamenting: Tomb Epigrams) reveals the actions invited by particular forms of expression. The textual forms listed represent a function-oriented approach to literary and documentary production, rather than a traditional division of texts into rhetorical genres.¹³⁹ The approach suggested creates a hybrid between a non-static view of genres and the beholder's response to textual modes that goes beyond "rhetorics." For example, inventories are a chancellery type of document that often acquired a literary aspect in (and after) this particular period. *Ekphraseis* and *ethopoiiai* are rhetorical forms taught at school and widely popular in Byzantium.¹⁴⁰ Their subject is not always related to art. The generic division between (dedicatory or not) epigrams on works of art, book epigrams, and tomb epigrams is a recent development that weds the functionality of a text to its literary form.¹⁴¹ All three forms of epigrams have a similar appearance, but they are connected to different objects and occasions. Texts included in the section entitled "Inscriptions" correspond to different forms of texts: they may have been written in prose or verse; they may demonstrate a highly literary style or they may be written in a more lowbrow form; they may have been written in Greek or in a different language. What connects them is that they are found (or were potentially found) physically attached to an object in the form of an inscription.

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139 On the discussion over genres in Byzantine literature with references to earlier bibliography see Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 7 and 20–21.

140 On ancient theoretical discussion about *ekphrasis* see Webb 2009: 39–51; on *ethopoiia* see *eadem*, 43–44; Amato and Schamp 2005.

141 See Lauxtermann, *Poetry*.

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Part I



Art, Aesthetics, and Literature

I.1 Notions of the Image in Later Byzantium

Introduction

CHARLES BARBER

The extensive discussion of the icon and its cult that emerged in the course of the iconoclastic crisis (c.730–843) greatly refined the concepts applied to these topics. Nonetheless, that period did not bring Byzantine discussion of the status of the icon and its cult to an end. While the *Horos* of the seventh oecumenical council (787) and the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy* (843) provided definitive statements on the religious image and its portrait, one can find numerous writings in the following centuries that return to the question of the icon and the parameters set out in these documents.¹

The period encompassed by this volume of translations opens with a major crisis over the status of the icon and its veneration. Charles Barber and David Jenkins (I.1.1 in this volume) present three extensive texts related to this which began when Leo of Chalcedon objected to the imperial appropriation of materials bearing sacred images, such as the doors of the Chalkoprateia church in Constantinople. As his arguments against this act unfolded in the period from 1082 to 1095, Leo developed a theory of the image that argued for a formal, as opposed to a material, presence of Christ in his icons. Given this presence of Christ's *character*, Leo argued that an icon should not be destroyed and that this portrayal deserved adoration. A full account of this argument is presented in Leo's letter to his nephew Nicholas of Adrianople. This letter, which perhaps dates to 1093 or 1094, shows how Leo builds his case upon a reading of the ninth-century iconophile writings of Theodore of Stoudios and other authorities, which Leo reads as offering support for a hypostatic presence in the image mediated by the visible *character* of the subject.

A key response to Leo of Chalcedon's arguments is offered by Eustratios of Nicaea. His *Syllogistic Demonstration* builds upon the logical model of ninth-century iconophile thought to show that the icon only has a formal relation to the subject depicted in that object. It is a response that is notable for its precise accounts of the limits of depiction, which becomes the description of the outline, form, and dimension of the outward and sensible traits of the appearance of a person. This allows him to argue that the material and sensible icon cannot receive adoration:

Christ as God is adored; Christ as God cannot be depicted; therefore, the depicted, as depicted, is not adored. So that in no way can we speak of the adoration of a manufactured icon, or of adoration in an icon.

¹ For the *Horos* of the seventh oecumenical council see ed. Lamberz, 3.3, 820–28; for the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy* see ed. Gouillard.

As such, Eustratios has argued that when Christ is depicted, He cannot be depicted in terms of his divinity, but only in relation to his visible humanity.

The most influential product of this debate was the chapter on iconomachy included in Euthymios Zigabenos' lengthy compendium of heresies compiled in the early twelfth century. The *Dogmatike Panoplia* had been commissioned by the Emperor Alexios I (r.1081–1118) to serve as an authoritative account of past and present heresies. It remained an influential reference work for Byzantine theologians. Carefully stitched together from iconophile sources, predominantly letters written by Theodore of Stoudios, the text appears to have been compiled with the recent controversy stirred by Leo of Chalcedon in mind. Above all, the discussion of the icon and its cult re-articulates a relational model for both painting and the veneration of the icon. The basis for this remains Christ's human nature:

I worship Christ in it [the icon], who is visible there in a carnal depiction according to his carnal form, whence the veneration is relative and hypostatic.

Although relatively brief, Euthymios' chapter underscores the importance of the ninth-century theologians for the formulation of the notion of the icon in Byzantium.

The legacy of earlier thought on the conception of the icon in the period addressed by this volume is also found in the legal commentaries presented by Nathan Leidholm (I.1.2 in this volume). He offers the reader the twelfth-century commentaries by John Zonaras, Theodore Balsamon, and Alexios Aristenos on Canons 73 and 82 of the Quinisext Council (691–92). These Canons discuss the respect owed depictions of the cross and the need to portray Christ in the flesh. While Zonaras and Aristenos largely reiterate the key points in the Canons, Balsamon offers additional witnesses and comments that expand upon their possible interpretation and application. For example, he argues that the terms of Canon 82 argue against the use of live doves to represent the Holy Spirit or the use of a bed and a doll to represent the Nativity.

In a letter written in the mid thirteenth century by Theodore II Laskaris to patriarch Manuel II, the emperor deploys notions of the icon and its veneration as aspects of his praise of the patriarch. As Dimiter Angelov points out (I.1.3 in this volume), the language of the letter stresses the hope for a union with God. The expectation is of a spiritual ascent achieved by both the veneration of the icon and the likeness seen there. The text offers an almost empathetic identification between the worshipper and the prototype, as the image is granted feelings by the one looking: "For unless someone permits the image to feel fully sorrow, what kind of esteem and devotion would he demonstrate to the prototype?" It is notable that the text uses *latreia* rather than the more common *proskynesis* for the worship being discussed.

Martin Hinterberger (I.1.4 in this volume) draws our attention to the discussion of a miracle performed by an icon that is found in the twelfth-century *Vita of John of Damascus and Kosmas of Maiouma*. In the healing miracle translated below, Kosmas witnesses the depiction of the Mother of God leaving her icon to restore an amputated hand to John of Damascus, the great eighth-century theologian and early defender of the icon. John had prayed for her intervention and had then fallen asleep in front of the icon. The

miraculous nature of the Mother of God's transformation from a depiction to a "living" presence and agent of healing is underscored in the text.

A more pastoral account of the Christian icon is offered by a fourteenth-century Arabic text written by Ṣalībā ibn Yuḥannā al-Mawṣili and translated by Thomas A. Carlson (I.1.5 in this volume). His discussion of icons and their veneration builds upon authoritative texts from the iconoclastic era, but then goes on to discuss contemporary practices. He denies that the material of the icon is worshipped and, instead, emphasizes the commemorative and instructional roles played by icons. Ultimately, the familiar stories of Abgar and of the Paneas sculpture are introduced to justify Christian images.

The texts translated for this section of the volume come from a range of sources: letters, philosophical/theological treatises, legal commentaries, and a saint's life. They reveal a continuing engagement with a long tradition of thinking about the icon. While rooted in authoritative texts from the iconoclastic era, the texts gathered here indicate the variety of responses to that legacy that were possible in the following centuries. They help us to understand the continuing importance of the icon within Byzantine thought.

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I.1.1

Art and Worship in Komnenian Thought

CHARLES BARBER AND DAVID JENKINS

Significance

The three selections found in this dossier are related to the heated debates over the status of holy images in the last decades of the eleventh century. They offer an extended discussion of the icon and its cult, analyzing terminology and the appropriate interpretation of the patristic legacy. These texts indicate that the notion of the icon bequeathed by the theologians of the eighth and ninth centuries remained open to debate, even as the writings of Theodore Stoudites and Nikephoros of Constantinople remained influential.

Introduction

As the three lengthy texts introduced below are closely related, this part of the volume will differ slightly in its format by providing a single extended introduction and analysis of the three selections.¹

The last decades of the eleventh century and the first years of the twelfth century witnessed an upsurge in the discussion of the nature of the icon and its veneration. These debates show how the legacy of the iconoclastic era (conciliar acts, the theological works of Theodore Stoudites and Nikephoros of Constantinople, the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy*) was debated and analyzed afresh at this period. The following pages offer an introduction to the events that provoked this renewed debate and to the texts by Leo of Chalcedon, Eustratios of Nicaea, and Euthymios Zigabenos selected for translation in this dossier.²

An image controversy that erupted in 1082 and continued until 1095 provides the background for the texts included here.³ Leo, Metropolitan of Chalcedon, who was a well-regarded and influential holy man of the era, was central to the affair. The dispute had its origins in late 1081 when Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118) required funds to continue his war against the Norman ruler Robert Guiscard. Alexios' mother, Anna Dalassene, and his brother, Isaac sebastokrator, who were governing

1 These introductory remarks draw upon the relevant sections of Barber 2007, esp. 99–157.

2 Related texts that do not directly discuss the theology of the icon include the *Semeioma* pronounced against Leo of Chalcedon in 1086 and the texts of John of Antioch on the alienation of church property. A complete edition and translation of all the texts related to this debate is being prepared by Charles Barber and David Jenkins.

3 A reasonably extensive bibliography exists for this topic. Useful introductory narratives can be found in Stephanou 1946: 177–99; Glavinas 1972; Thomas 1987: 192–207; Anderson 1983: 35–67; Weyl Carr 1995: 579–84; Barber 2007: 99–157.

Constantinople in Alexios' absence, arranged to melt down sacred vessels and other works of art with holy images on them in order to meet this need.⁴ In order to legitimate a potentially controversial act, Isaac sebastokrator had sought patriarchal blessing and a Synod of the church had met and approved this action.⁵ Nonetheless, when silver and gold images were removed from the doors of the church of the Theotokos Chalkoprateia in Constantinople, Leo of Chalcedon protested against both the synodal decision and the subsequent expropriations. In early 1082 Leo wrote a strongly worded letter of protest to Alexios.⁶ Leo asked that Alexios investigate the expropriations and that the Patriarch Eustratios Garidas (1081–84) resign for having supported the removal and destruction of images. Alexios had to address the topic again in the course of the winter of 1083–84.⁷ At this time the discussion was perhaps more institutional than theological, focusing on the question of the reparations for the damage caused and whether the Patriarch should be removed from office for having supported these expropriations.⁸ In early 1084 the Patriarch was exonerated of any wrongdoing. Even so, he was to abdicate in July of the same year.⁹ In spite of this, Leo continued to pursue the matter through 1084 and 1085, as he was unhappy that the Patriarch had not been punished for allowing the expropriations. As a result, proceedings were brought against Leo in November 1085.¹⁰ The trial provided Leo with an opportunity to reassert his rejection of any alienation of consecrated property.¹¹ He was condemned for these views, then removed from his bishop's throne, and finally sent into exile that summer. This action brought the first phase of this dispute to a conclusion. While much of the discussion had focused upon the question of the respective rights of church and state over church property, by 1086 Leo had begun to formulate a novel theological account of the sacred image. The core of his argument can be found in a letter addressed to the Patriarch Nicholas III Grammatikos (1084–11). Here we read:

Εἰ γὰρ τῷ χαρακτῆρι Χριστοῦ κεχωρισμένῳ μὲν τῆς εἰκονικῆς ὕλης ὄντι, ἀχωρίστῳ δὲ τοῦ πρωτοτύπου Χριστοῦ, ταύτην τὴν προσκύνησιν ἔνεμον, οὐκ ἂν τὸν χαρακτῆρα Χριστοῦ μετὰ τῆς ὕλης κατέλυον: ἀλλ' ἐφείδοντο

4 Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, 143–46.

5 For an account of Isaac sebastokrator see Skoulatos 1980: 124–30. Isaac presided over the trials of John Italos and Leo of Chalcedon and appears to have played an active role in the policing of intellectual debate at this period. His active role in the preparations for the trials of Leo of Chalcedon can be suggested by the florilegium compiled in his name and included in the manuscript that contains the dossier of texts that are our chief witness to the Leo of Chalcedon affair (Mount Athos, Great Lavra 196, f. 42–47). It is tempting to identify this florilegium with a now lost compilation that had been appended to Eustratios of Nicaea's *Demonstration*, p. 160.

6 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Emperor Alexios Komnenos*, 403a–04a. The manuscript from which Lauriotès made his edition has long been considered lost. In 2003, Lamberz (2003: 180) reported that the manuscript may still be in the Lavra library; for the chronology see Grumel 1946: 126.

7 *The Alexiad*, vol. 1, p. 171–73.

8 *Semeioma*, ed. Sakkelion, p. 116.

9 *Semeioma*, ed. Sakkelion, p. 116.

10 The account of this phase of the debate is to be found in *Semeioma*, ed. Sakkelion, 102–28; note the discussions of this text in Grumel 1944: 333–41; Glavinas 1972: 99–132.

11 Thomas 1987: 197.

ἄν καὶ τῶν ὑλῶν διὰ τὸν χαρακτῆρα Χριστοῦ, ἵνα μὴ καὶ οὗτος ταῖς ὑλαῖς συγκαταλύοιτο.¹²

For if they [hellenizing thinkers] had distinguished this *character* of Christ, which is inseparable from the prototype of Christ, from the iconic material, they could have apportioned worship to this [portrait]; they would not have destroyed the outward appearance of Christ with the material, but they would have spared the materials on account of the *character* of Christ, so that this was not also destroyed with the materials.

Leo has argued that even though the appearance of Christ in the materials of the icon must be distinguished from those materials, these materials should not be destroyed, as they conveyed this appearance and are to be valued for this reason. A key term is *character* (χαρακτήρ), which in this context can be understood as the distinguishing and visible characteristics or features of a person. While it is important to keep this broader meaning of the term in mind, it is sometimes apt simply to understand the word to mean portrait.

In the early 1090s Leo of Chalcedon was re-called from exile once he had agreed to renounce his views on the adoration of icons.¹³ Leo's restoration became official and the affair came to an end at the synod held at the Blachernai palace in 1094/5.¹⁴

In the course of his writing Leo of Chalcedon developed an argument that there was a particular kind of presence mediated by the image, one in which little distinction could be drawn between what appeared to the viewer in the icon and the subject itself.¹⁵ His focus was Christ's icon and he argued that this deserved adoration rather than veneration because Christ was formally present in the icon. This participation was not essential, but it nonetheless transformed the value of the object in which the image was inscribed. Leo's position is outlined most fully in the letter to his nephew, Nicholas of Adrianople that is translated below.¹⁶ This was perhaps written in 1093 or 1094 and was intended to refute a position that had been proposed by Basil, Metropolitan of Euchaita.¹⁷

Leo argues that it was a sacrilege to use matter once impressed with a holy image for any other purpose. He begins his letter by defining an image. For Leo, as for most Christian theologians, the term was rooted in an essential relation between the image and its archetype, a point that builds from the Trinitarian notion of the relationship between God the Father and God the Son.¹⁸ Next, Leo pointed out that Adam and his descend-

12 Lauriotes 1900: 406b.

13 Grumel, *Regestes* no. 967.

14 PG 127: 972–84. The precise date of this synod remains uncertain; cf. Leo of Chalcedon 1971: 213–84; Glavinias 1972: 179–82.

15 Carr 1995: 581–82 emphasizes the question of presence.

16 See pp. 24–35 in this volume. The importance of this letter is noted at the very start of the published record of the Blachernai synod: PG 127: 972B and Gautier 1971: 216.

17 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, ed. Lauriotes, 414a–16a, 445a–447a, 455b–456b. Stephano 1946: 178–79, followed by Glavinias 1972: 161 and Carr 1995: 580–81 identify this letter as the key source for our understanding of Leo's interpretation of the icons.

18 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 414b. The reference to Basil is to his *Fourth Homily on the Sabellians, Arios, and the Anomians*, PG 31: 608A.

ants were also an image of God, having been made in the image and likeness of God.¹⁹ From this, according to Leo, it follows that an icon was “a portrait/*character* inscribed in matter.”²⁰ To help him make this point he cites texts by Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzos.²¹ The text from Basil reads: “One calls the image of the emperor ‘emperor’ without thereby implying that there are two emperors, for one neither splits the power nor divides the glory.” The passage from Gregory reads: “Let us take two seal rings, one is gold, the other iron, which bear the same engraved imperial image . . . Let us then impress these in the wax. What difference is there between the two seals? None. Look at the wax and, even if you are very wise, can you tell me which form has been impressed with iron and which with gold. How then have these two become the same? It is because the difference derives from the material and not the *character*.” These passages lead Leo to make two points. First, that *character* itself is non-material. Second, that *character* is in itself simple, but becomes various in its materialization.²² What he is attempting to do here is to distinguish the portrait (the *character* manifest in the icon) of the given subject from the materials of the icon itself. For Leo, this *character* in itself not only shares both the formal and the essential qualities of its subject, but is also identical with that subject. Leo then points to Canon 82 of the Quinisext Council of 691/692 as well as the *Horos of the Seventh Oecumenical Council* of 787 to support his understanding of the work of the *character* in the icon.²³ For example, he cites the *Horos* as a support for his argument that: “the *character* depicted in the images is a hypostasis of what is depicted, [the *Horos*] describing it in this way: ‘he who venerates the image venerates in it the hypostasis of what is depicted.’”²⁴ If we follow Leo’s argument, it then becomes necessary to distinguish mentally between the *character* of the subject and the material of the icon when worship is addressed to the image. Once this has been done, it then becomes possible to argue that while the icon-as-object can receive a relative worship, because the iconic materials have been re-valued thanks to their role in conveying the portrait, the sensible portrayal of Christ Himself that is seen in the icon can receive adoration, as this cannot be separated from Christ as God.²⁵

This distinction helped Leo to distance himself from an old ally, Basil of Euchaita, who had proposed that the material of an icon is divinized by the presence of Christ’s portrait.²⁶ Basil’s proposal rested upon his interpretation of the 68th Canon of the Quinisext

19 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 414b.

20 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 414b: “εἰκὼν λέγεται παρὰ ταῦτα καὶ μόνως ὁ ταῖς ὕλαις ἐγγραφόμενος χαρακτήρ.” The term *χαρακτήρ/character* encompasses both the outward appearance of a person, one which may or may not have ethical implications, and the re-presentation or impression of this appearance into some other medium (here translated as “portrait”).

21 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 414b; Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit* 18.45 (PG 32: 149C); Gregory of Nazianzos, *Homily 40: On the Holy Baptism* (PG 36: 396C).

22 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 414b.

23 The Council in Trullo Revisited, p. 162–64; Mansi 13.377E.

24 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 415a; Mansi 13.377E.

25 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 415b.

26 Basil of Euchaita, *Isaakio*, p. 411b–413a; on his earlier opposition to Leo see Grumel 1946: 117. Grumel (1946: 122–23) notes that Leo misrepresents Basil’s ideas. In *Letter Five* and *Letter Six* Nicholas and Leo present him as a misguided ally.

Council.²⁷ He argued that the fathers of the Quinisext Council had sought to protect the sacred thing, namely the vellum and ink that formed the manuscript, because they believed that the material of these books had been transformed by the sacred words that had been written on to these materials.²⁸ Given this, Basil argued that all matter has the potential to be iconic.²⁹ This presents a remarkable re-evaluation for the material aspect of an image, granting it more than a passive and mediatory role. Leo of Chalcedon, however, did not want to be identified with such a re-evaluation of matter. Hence, he declared that he did not adore the iconic material, but only the person represented there.³⁰

Leo deployed a number of authorities in support of his understanding of the relation between the subject's *character* and its manifestation in the icon. For example, he quoted from Theodore Stoudites' *Third Refutation of the Iconoclasts* to establish his basic understanding of the icon:

... ἡ σχέσις, κατὰ τὸ εἶναι ἐν τῷ πρωτοτύπῳ τὸ παράγωγον εἶρηται, ἀλλ' οὐ διὰ τὸ μεμερίσθαι θατέρου θάτερον, ἢ μόνον, παρὰ τὸ τῆς οὐσίας διάφορον
...

... relation is used in regard to the copy in the prototype. And the one is not distinguished from the other because of this, excepting the difference of essence ...³¹

This point is then reiterated in an oft-quoted borrowing from Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite:

... τὸ ἀληθές ἐν τῷ ὁμοιώματι τὸ ἀρχέτυπον ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι, τὸ ἐκάτερον ἐν ἐκατέρῳ παρὰ τὸ τῆς οὐσίας διάφορον.

... the truth in the likeness, the archetype in the image, the one in the other, except for the difference of essence.³²

These texts allow Leo to establish a perfectly orthodox double conception of the relation between the subject and its icon. One in which the essence of the icon, its material being, cannot be a part of the subject it conveys, while the portrait seen in the icon maintains a truthful relation between this icon and its subject.³³

27 The whole canon is quoted at Basil, *Isaakio*, p. 411b–412a. The transl. is from *The Council in Trullo Revisited*, ed. G. Nedungatt and M. Featherstone, *Kanonika* 6 (1995), p. 150–51.

28 Basil of Euchaita, *Isaakio*, p. 412a.

29 Basil of Euchaita, *Isaakio*, p. 412a.

30 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 446b.

31 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 445b; Theodore Stoudites, *Third Antirrhetic* (PG 99: 424D). The notion of the “copy in the prototype” can be traced to John of Damaskos’ chapter on images in his *Exposition of Faith*, p. 206, ll.8–10.

32 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 446a; (Pseudo-)Dionysios the Areopagite, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* 4.3 (PG 3:473C). Used in iconophile literature, e.g., Theodore Stoudites, *Letter to Plato Concerning the Worship of Holy Icons*, in Theodore Stoudites, *Letters*, p. 164, ll.19–21; Theodore Stoudites, *Second Antirrhetic* 10 (PG 99: 357C).

33 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 446a.

Leo argues that homonymy and likeness make this possible. Christ's form (εἶδος) is visible in the icon and permits adoration of the *character* seen there thanks to the likeness and the name conveyed by the iconic materials. Similarly, the depiction of a human being does not participate (οὐ μετέχει) in that being's "living potency (ἡ ζωτικὴ δύναμις)" but is likened to this "living potency" by means of outlines and shapes.³⁴ Leo then needed to define clearly the limits for the work done by the iconic materials and to reiterate that these were wholly distinct from the *character* seen in the icon. This allows him to argue that one sees the hypostasis, the person of Christ in the icon, and not simply a sensible outline. It is by these means that the Trinity can come into presence.³⁵ The iconic materials themselves cannot then be considered as a medium that can bring Christ into presence. Rather they describe His *character*, making the likeness of the adorable subject visible in the icon. For this reason, the iconic materials can and should be revered:

Τούτου τοίνυν τὸν θεοῦπόστατον σωματικὸν χαρακτήρα, Θεὸν εἰδότες, καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἀγίαις εἰκόσιν, ὡς εἴρηται, ὡς Θεὸν καὶ Δεσπότην σεβόμεθα καὶ προσκυνοῦμεν λατρευτικῶς: τὴν μέντοι εἰκονικὴν ὕλην, τιμῶμεν ὡς θεῖον ἀνάθημα τοῦ Θεοῦ τυγχάνουσαν, καὶ προσκυνοῦμεν αὐτήν καὶ ἀσπαζόμεθα, οὐ λατρευτικῶς: ἀλλὰ τιμητικῶς τε καὶ σχετικῶς διὰ τὸν τοῦ Χριστοῦ χαρακτήρα.

Therefore, as was stated, knowing that His divinely-hypostatic bodily *character* [is] God, we also revere and adore [Him] as God and Lord in the holy icons. However, we honor the iconic material as a divine offering to God, and we venerate and embrace this, not in terms of adoration, but honorably and relatively on account of the *character* of Christ.³⁶

The distinctions that Leo has drawn in his account of representation lead him to define a necessarily doubled worship for the icon. For Leo, the icon presents the divine *character* of Christ while not actually bearing this image in its iconic material. As such, a need arises for two descriptions of the worship addressed to the icon. On the one hand a relative worship is addressed to the icon itself, while adoration is addressed to the one portrayed there.³⁷ This could be understood as an attempt to verbalize the multivalent performance of worship. It invites us to accept that those bringing worship to bear on an icon could both see and worship the Christ in the icon and see and adore Christ Himself. But Leo's articulation of this distinction was not clear. The biggest problem was the lack of definition regarding the meaning of his key description of the depiction in the icon as a "divinized portrait/*character* (θεώμενον χαρακτήρα and ὁ θεῖος αὐτοῦ χαρακτήρ)."³⁸ For Leo, the term was a necessary description, as it maintained language that underlined that

34 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 445b–446a.

35 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 446b.

36 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 446b.

37 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 415a.

38 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 415b, p. 446a.

Christ was one of the Trinity. Furthermore, he suggested that this understanding not only permitted adoration, but that the adoration addressed to the image would also necessarily embrace God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.³⁹ It is this possibility that had ensured the holy status of the icon as a bearer of, if not a participant in, the portrait.⁴⁰

An extended response to Leo's definition of the icon was written by Eustratios, Metropolitan of Nicaea (c.1050/60–c.1120),⁴¹ although it remains unclear as to when precisely Eustratios wrote his two treatises on this topic.⁴² The first of Eustratios' two essays was an extensive *Dialogue* between two participants, who are thin disguises for a supporter of Leo of Chalcedon (*Philosynethes*) and for Eustratios himself (*Philaletes*).⁴³ At the core of this text is a discussion as to whether it was appropriate to adore or venerate an icon of Christ.⁴⁴ *Philaletes* posits that in order to answer this question one needs to understand what exactly it is that an icon represents and whether it is legitimate for the icon to convey the given subject. The discussion focuses upon Christ, whose person unites human and divine natures. Having these two natures in one person complicates the problem of representation, as it forces one to ask whether the divine nature can be represented.⁴⁵ This then leads to an understanding that since the divine nature is simple and undifferentiated and therefore without dimension, it cannot be depicted. On the other hand, the human is differentiated and has dimension and therefore can be painted.⁴⁶ The important point here is that the essential difference between the human and the divine cannot be set aside in the case of Christ. For Eustratios, it is clear that only Christ's human nature can be depicted and that the divine nature cannot be beheld in or through the icon. It follows from this that the portrait in an icon is necessarily partial. In concluding this part of the argument *Philaletes* introduces a further qualification to this fundamental distinction by

39 Leo of Chalcedon, *Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople*, p. 415a.

40 Carr 1995: 581 draws attention to this question.

41 Draeseke 1896; Joannou 1952; Joannou 1954a; Joannou 1954b; Joannou 1958; Giocarinis 1964; Giocarinis 1967; Mercken 1973 6*–14*; Trizio 2006: 35–63. Leo's status as an official court theologian is marked by his debate on a variety of theological questions with Peter Grossolanus, the Catholic Archbishop of Milan. A text written by Eustratios to mark this occasion can be found at Demetrakopoulos 1866: 84–99. Then, in 1114 Eustratios worked with Alexios I in a series of conferences directed against Monophysitism. Unfortunately, some of the positions espoused by Eustratios on this occasion brought charges of heresy against him. In 1117 he was effectively abandoned by his emperor and then condemned for these opinions and his earlier defense of the icons: Joannou 1958: 28.

42 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 127–51, 151–60. The *Dialogue* (p. 129) indicates some debate at the court; but this could belong to the period preceding 1086 (Dräseke 1896: 326–27), or to the period prior to 1094/95; cf. Stephanou 1943: 46; Grumel, "Eustrate," p. 723. Glavinias 1972: 195–98 has proposed that the composition was after the death of Nicholas III Gramatikos in 1111. In the Utrecht manuscript (Utrecht, University Library, ms. 3, ff. 71r–76r) of the syllogistic demonstration, Eustratios is identified (f. 71r) as a deacon of the Great Church in Constantinople and Leo is identified as the Metropolitan of Chalcedon. Together, these might suggest a date of composition prior to Leo's deposition in February or March 1086. The content of the essays brings us closer to the points raised in the letter to Nicholas and may suggest that the date of composition lies shortly before the Blachernai synod.

43 *Philosynethes* is perhaps a reference to Plutarch's *Moralia*, where in the section "How to tell a flatterer" (56C) the term is used to define an amorous man.

44 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 130.

45 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 131–32.

46 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 132.

stating that art can only imitate that which is sensible: “It therefore remains that man and each of the animals is not depicted according to their entire substance, but only according to the sensible within them.”⁴⁷ Eustratios has by these means brought his audience to the understanding that a man-made icon can only depict the visible traces of its given subject.

The implications of this visible turn are developed in a series of responses to objections raised by *Philosynethes* regarding the visible/invisible distinction. *Philosynethes* begins by noting that there are images of angels, even though they are intelligible rather than sensible beings and so exist beyond the narrow limits of what might be depicted.⁴⁸ In reply, *Philaletes* argued that the depiction of angels is symbolic rather than iconic and so differs from the issues pertaining to Christ’s icon. *Philaletes* cites Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite as an authority for this view and then goes on to argue that a distinction should be drawn between things perceived by the sensible eye and things perceived through the intelligible eye. As such, images made after intelligible perceptions should be considered a condescension that allows humans to make sense of such manifestations. Since mankind discerns by means of the senses, it follows that there is a need for painting and writing to convey subjects that exist in the intelligible realm.⁴⁹ *Philosynethes* then asks whether this adherence to the level of the sensible means that an image should show the flesh, bones, sinews, and everything else that pertains to the body. *Philaletes* responds by saying: “Not all of these, but only that which appears.”⁵⁰

The discussion then turns to the topic of whether it is the essential or the accidental that is depicted in an image. *Philosynethes* argues that a system of representation based only upon visible variables can truly allow for a precise differentiation between different beings. It is an objection that is based on the assumption that the form and nature of the person are necessarily identical.⁵¹ *Philaletes* responds to this objection by identifying what is essential and what is accidental in a body: he calls the hands, eyes, and feet essential, while their curve and color are deemed accidental.⁵² To which *Philosynethes* objects that this distinction is not only simplistic but also a mere mental or rhetorical gesture.⁵³ In particular, he argues that these forms are more complex, being both essential and accidental.⁵⁴ By way of a response, *Philaletes* simply asserts that artists do not place anything essential into the materials with which they work.⁵⁵ He thereby considers it impossible to speak of anything essential in regard to the process that brought the painting into being.

The two opponents then move from this discussion of the artist’s share to debate the nature of creativity. *Philaletes* begins by defining the manner in which God created all

47 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 132.

48 For a full account of the theoretical framing of the depiction of angels in Byzantium see Peers 2001.

49 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 132–34.

50 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 134.

51 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 134.

52 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 134–35.

53 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 135.

54 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 135.

55 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 135.

of nature and everything that lives.⁵⁶ These were acts that had brought about an essential change in matter. In contrast, while mankind is able to work the land or to sow seed in the earth, these actions, although echoing God's creative actions, cannot be deemed an original creation in their own right.⁵⁷ This distinction then allows him to define what it is possible for the artist to do, by reiterating his earlier point that no one believes that a painting creates anything essential.⁵⁸ As such, the artist's work cannot properly be compared to the work of creation. Rather than see art as a form of poetics akin to divine creation, *Philalethes* offers a more limited definition. This is introduced by a question: "So, is art representational?" (Τί οὖν, τέχνη ἢ εἰκονιστική;) This is answered in the affirmative, as *Philalethes* will go on to use the idea of depiction to distinguish the work of art from the work of creation by noting that: "The representational is therefore not substance producing" (ἡ εἰκονιστικὴ ἄρα οὐκ ἔστι οὐσιοποιόν).⁵⁹

The debaters then turn to the question of form, seeking to define what is meant by this term. For *Philalethes*:

Ἔστι γὰρ εἶδος τὸ εἰδόμενον ἡγουν βλεπόμενον καὶ φαινόμενον, ὅπερ ἔστιν ἢ μορφὴ ἐκάστου κατ'ἐπιφάνειαν. οὐ γὰρ εἰς βάθος ἢ ὄψις ἐπιβάλλει, οὐδὲ τῆς οὐσίας ἐφάπτεται, μόνων δὲ χρωμάτων καθ' ἑαυτὴν καὶ τῶν κοινῶν αἰσθητῶν σχημάτων, λέγω ἀριθμοῦ, κινήσεως, καὶ εἴ τι τοιοῦτον ἕτερον, ἅπαντα συμβεβηκότα ἐστί. μετενήνεκτα δὲ τοῦνομα καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ κατ'οὐσίαν εἶδη καθ' ὁμοιότητα τῆς μορφῆς ὀνομασθέντα. ἐπιμορφάζει γὰρ καὶ ταῦτα καὶ κοσμεῖ καὶ καλλύνει τὸ ὑποκείμενον.

Form is what is seen or looked at or brought to light, which is the appearance of the surface of each. For sight does not penetrate deeply nor does it make contact with substance, but only with the colors it can see and the common, sensible characteristics like number and motion, all of which, if anything, are accidents. But the term has also been applied to the essential forms, named on account of the similarities of shape. For these also shape and adorn and beautify the underlying thing.⁶⁰

This definition then leads to a discussion of materialism and the nature of the relationship between the medium and the subject. *Philalethes* offers three kinds of material: the natural, the artistic, and the logical. These are not exclusive qualities. Rather they are possibilities inherent in all matter. The natural refers to those elements of which all those that live are comprised. The artistic refers to those materials from which things can be made. The logical is that which is directed towards form itself. Given these definitions, *Philalethes* argues that painting should be considered to be like writing. Both translate the

56 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 136.

57 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 136–37.

58 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 139.

59 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 139.

60 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 142.

essential form of a given subject into the manifest form of a visual or verbal text.⁶¹ Given this, *Philalethes* is able to arrive at this definition: “Art imitates nature by placing forms in matter” (τὴν φύσιν γὰρ ἢ τέχνη μιμεῖται ἐν ὕλῃ τιθεῖσα τὰ εἶδη).⁶² This imitation does not embrace the substance of what is shown, but merely the external accidents of appearance. Hence, the image is not animate, rather it consists only of outlines and shapes, such as a triangle or a sphere or a cylinder.⁶³

Philosynethes responds to this formalist argument by introducing the question of the divine *character*/portrait. He states that he neither adores the accidents nor the essence of the subject seen in the icon: “But since the accidents which have been drawn according to the appearance of Christ artistically reveal that divine *character* itself, we say that we worship in terms of adoration that which was revealed by them” (Ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ τὰ συμβεβηκότα κατὰ τὴν μορφήν τῷ Χριστῷ χαραττόμενα τεχνικῶς αὐτὸν ἐκείνον μηνύει τὸν θεοῦπόστατον χαρακτῆρα, ἐκείνῳ φαμέν προσκυεῖν λατρευτικῶς τῷ μηνυομένῳ ὑπ’ αὐτῶν).⁶⁴ In reply *Philalethes* asks what it is that is then disclosed in these icons: that which is painted or that which is not painted?⁶⁵ For *Philalethes* the answer is clear, although we contemplate Christ in terms of his having two natures in a single hypostasis, when it comes to looking at an icon it is the human alone that is seen there, hence we cannot adore what is in the icon.⁶⁶ *Philosynethes* asks: “Is this not God?”⁶⁷ In response *Philalethes* argues that reason has distinguished two natures in Christ’s hypostasis, the human and the divine. This distinction permits the representation of Christ’s humanity and also directs adoration towards his divine nature.⁶⁸ Once the distinction is made, however, the humanity is deemed to be other than the divinity and therefore cannot be adored. But *Philosynethes* argues against this because it introduces two kinds of worship, adoration and veneration addressed to a single subject with a common form.⁶⁹ *Philalethes* replies by arguing that the presence of the icon necessitates this double aspect for our worship: “In the first instance we worship Him directly, in the second, through the mediation of an imitation.”⁷⁰ This entails that any worship brought to bear on the icon must also be mediated.⁷¹

At the end of this very concise account of painting, Eustratios has argued that the fundamental distinction between the human and the divine, the visible and the invisible, the material and the spiritual, has significant consequences for the icon. The logic of these fundamental distinctions limits the icon to being a medium for the depiction of the accidental traits of a given subject that are available to the human senses. Such an

61 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 142.

62 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 143.

63 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 144.

64 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 144.

65 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 144.

66 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 145.

67 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 145.

68 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 147.

69 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 147.

70 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 148.

71 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 149.

understanding also necessitates that an icon can only receive worship that is appropriate to these conditions.

Eustratios' second essay on the icon, the *Syllogistic Demonstration* (translation below) builds the same case that is made in the *Dialogue*, but does so through an extensive and persistent deployment of syllogisms.⁷² The *Demonstration* does add and examine the proposition that Christ's human nature should be defined as an acquisition (*proslemma*) by the Logos and should therefore be considered as being distinct from the Logos. Eustratios leads his reader from the definition of Godhead to that of depiction by means of an examination of dimension:

πᾶν ἄρα τὸ λατρευτὸν ἀδιάστατόν τε καὶ ἀσχημάτιστον. εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, πᾶν τὸ εἰκονιστὸν διαστατόν καὶ σχηματιστόν· ἔστιν ἐν δευτέρῳ σχήματι συλλογίσασθαι οὕτως. πᾶν καθ' αὐτὸ λατρευτὸν ἀδιάστατον· οὐδὲν εἰκονιστὸν ἀδιάστατον· οὐδὲν ἄρα εἰκονιστὸν καθ' αὐτὸ λατρευτόν. καὶ αὖθις. πᾶν τὸ καθ' αὐτὸ λατρευτὸν ἀσχημάτιστον· οὐδὲν εἰκονιστὸν ἀσχημάτιστον· οὐδὲν ἄρα εἰκονιστὸν καθ' αὐτὸ λατρευτόν. ὅτι δὲ πᾶν εἰκονιστὸν διαστατόν καὶ σχηματιστόν δηλον. πᾶν γὰρ εἰκονιστὸν γραπτὸν· πᾶν δὲ γραπτὸν γραμμαῖς τυπωτόν· πᾶν δὲ γραμμαῖς τυπωτόν διαστατόν· πᾶν ἄρα εἰκονιστὸν διαστατόν, ἀλλὰ καὶ σχηματιστόν. πᾶσα γὰρ γραμμὴ εὐθεῖα ἢ περιφερῆς, ἢ ἐκ τούτων σύνθετος, ἥτις ἐστὶν ἡ ἐλικοειδής· ταῦτα δὲ σχήματα μεγεθῶν· κἂν στερεὰ δὲ σχήματα περιθελῆ τις, οὐδὲν ἦττον, εἰ μὴ καὶ μᾶλλον ἔσται διαστατὰ εἰκονιστά· εἴ γε καὶ ἐπὶ πλείω διαστατόν τοῦ ἐπιπέδου τὸ στερεόν.

Therefore, everything that is adored is without dimension and form. Then, if this [is the case]: everything that is depicted has dimension and form; this is to be syllogized in the second figure in this way: Everything that is adored per se is without dimension; nothing depicted is without dimension; therefore nothing depicted is adored per se. And again: everything that is adored per se is without form; nothing depicted is without form; therefore nothing depicted is adored per se. It is clear that everything depicted has dimension and form. For everything depicted is "written"; and everything that is "written" is impressed with lines; and everything impressed with lines has dimension; therefore everything depicted has dimension, but is also representable. For every line is either straight or curved or a composite of these, which is the elliptic. And these are the forms of magnitude. Even if someone should posit solid forms, it is no less the case, with the exception that their depictions will possess more dimension, in so far as the solid has more dimension than the plane.⁷³

The icon takes only the outline and the shape and not the essence of the subject depicted.⁷⁴ These are the traces of the accidents that manifest this subject:

⁷² Demetrakopoulos 1866: 151–60.

⁷³ Demetrakopoulos 1866: 153–54.

⁷⁴ Demetrakopoulos 1866: 154–55.

Ἔτι ἡ εἰκὼν τὸ σχῆμα καὶ τὴν μορφήν τοῦ εἰκονιζομένου λαμβάνει οὐ τὴν οὐσίαν· τὸ δὲ σχῆμα καὶ ἡ μορφή ποιότης ἀπλῶς καὶ τέταρτον γένος ποιότητος· πᾶσα δὲ ἀπλῶς ποιότης συμβεβηκός· οὐδὲν δὲ συμβεβηκός λατρευτόν· οὐδὲν ἄρα σχῆμα ἢ μορφή λατρευτόν· πάντως δὲ οὐκ ἄδηλον περὶ ποίου σημαινομένου τῆς εἰκόνος ἐν πᾶσι τούτοις ὁ λόγος ἡμῖν· περὶ γὰρ τῆς τεχνικῆς τε καὶ κατὰ μίμησιν·

But since an icon takes the form and the shape of what is depicted and not its essence, the form and shape are simply a quality and the fourth kind of quality,⁷⁵ and all quality is simply accident, and accident is not adored, therefore, neither form nor shape is adored. It is completely clear what our detailed discussion of the icon is about: art and imitation.⁷⁶

These qualities pertain to Christ's humanity alone and so ought not to receive adoration. Nonetheless, they have great value, as it is these features that convey Christ's particularity and, as such, affirm that Christ was an individual and not some diffuse embodiment of human nature.⁷⁷

When Eustratios calls attention to this accidental ground for painting, he reiterates a sharp distinction between an icon, a man-made object, and its natural subject. This difference is substantial and because of this Eustratios absolutely rejects any suggestion of divine presence within the work of art. He addresses Leo of Chalcedon's understanding of the icon directly:

Φασὶ δὲ τινες, ὡς οὐκ ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι λαμβάνοντες τὸ εἶδος τὴν λατρείαν προσφέρομεν, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἀποδιοστῶντες τὸν χαρακτήρα τῆς ὕλης, ὡς θεοὑπόστατον ὄντα, τῆς λατρείας ἀξιοῦμεν. πρὸς ὃ φαμεν, ὅτι ὁ τῇ εἰκόνι τὴν ὄψιν ἐπιβάλλων, εἴτ' ἐπέκεινα γινόμενος τῆς αἰσθήσεως, καὶ δίχα αὐτῆς ἐν ἑαυτῷ περιφέρων τὴν διάπλασιν τοῦ εἴδους καὶ διατύπωσιν, οὐδὲν ἕτερον πεποίηκεν ἢ μόνον ὅτι τὰ ἐν τῇ ὕλῃ διαστήματα καὶ τὴν τῆς σχηματίσεως σύνθεσιν ἐν τῇ φαντασίᾳ ἀνετυπώσατο, ὅπερ ἐπὶ πάντων πέφυκεν ἀεὶ τῶν αἰσθητῶν γίνεσθαι.

But some say that the adoration is not to be understood as being offered to the form in the icon, but having separated the *character* per se from the material, this, being divine, would be worthy of adoration. To this we say that he who looks at what is in an icon, surpasses the sensual, and separated from this he bears within himself the fashioning and shape of the form, having done nothing more than representing in his imagination the dimensions in the material and the composition of the form, which is what always naturally occurs with sensibles.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ The fourth quality refers to the categorization of things in terms of their form and their figure (Aristotle, *Categories* VIII 10a 11–24).

⁷⁶ Demetrakopoulos 1866: 154.

⁷⁷ Demetrakopoulos 1866: 155.

⁷⁸ Demetrakopoulos 1866: 155–56.

He then argues that our understanding of the icon should be built upon perception and should encompass both the imagination and memory.⁷⁹ Returning to the question of worship, Eustratios reminds his audience that any abstraction, such as human nature, cannot be worshipped, as worship is only owed to concrete particulars – those traits that have defined the individual.⁸⁰ Finally, he reiterates that the Logos cannot be worshipped in the icon as this image can have nothing to do with the divine even when the divinity has become incarnate:

Ὁ Χριστὸς καθὸ Θεὸς λατρευτὸς ἔστιν· ὁ Χριστὸς καθὸ Θεὸς εἰκονιστὸς οὐκ ἔστιν· ὁ εἰκονιστὸς ἄρα, καθὸ εἰκονιστὸς, λατρευτὸς οὐκ ἔστιν· ὥστε κατ' οὐδένα τρόπον ἐνδέχεται ἢ εἰκόνας λέγειν λατρείαν χειροκμήτου, ἢ ἐν εἰκόνι τοιαύτην.

Christ as God is adored; Christ as God cannot be depicted; therefore, the depicted, as depicted, is not adored. So that in no way can we speak of the adoration of a manufactured icon, or of adoration in an icon.⁸¹

The text then appeals to the authority of the fathers and indicates that the *Demonstration* served as a preface to a florilegium of patristic sources on the question of the veneration of images.⁸²

The Leo of Chalcedon affair was brought to an end by a synod that met in the Blachernai Palace in Constantinople in late 1094 or early 1095. It was the circulation of Leo of Chalcedon's letter to Nicholas of Adrianople that had provoked the meeting.⁸³ Emperor Alexios I himself presided over the conclusion of the synod and he is presented as questioning the clerics on the matter at hand. In the first of these questions he asks: "Do you say that the icon of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ is to be worshipped relatively or in terms of adoration?"⁸⁴ The answer was: "We worship it relatively, as an icon of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ. Those that do not worship in this manner, anathema."⁸⁵ The Emperor then asked: "What do you call images? The iconic materials or the likenesses appearing in these?"⁸⁶ To which the response was: "The likenesses appearing in the materials."⁸⁷ Alexios then asked: "Is it possible to worship in terms of adoration the likeness of Christ that is visible in the material?"⁸⁸ The participants in the synod replied: "No."⁸⁹ John of Klaudiopolis then asked a question: "Some say that holy

79 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 156–57.

80 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 157.

81 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 159.

82 Demetrakopoulos 1866: 160.

83 See Text A, p. 23–38.

84 PG 127: 980D.

85 PG 127: 980D.

86 PG 127: 981A.

87 PG 127: 981A.

88 PG 127: 981A.

89 PG 127: 981A.

icons do not participate in divine grace.”⁹⁰ To which the emperor and everyone answered: “Anathema to those who say this. For while the holy icons participate in divine grace, they are not of the same nature as the prototypes.”⁹¹ Then the emperor asks: “The likeness of Christ inscribed in matter, is this the divine nature?”⁹² He was answered: “No. The divine nature is uncircumscribable.”⁹³ A concluding passage from the *Synodikon of Orthodoxy* was then read.⁹⁴ After which, Alexios I drew the following conclusion: Christ himself and the other members of the Trinity were owed adoration, while icons could only be offered a relative worship. The two could not be confused.⁹⁵ The authority cited for this was the letter of Theodore Stoudites to Athanasios.⁹⁶

Chapter 22 of Euthymios Zigabenos’ *Dogmatike Panoplia* (the third text translated below) also made use of Theodore’s letter to Athanasios. This definition of dogmatic theology was built upon a lengthy account of the major heresies that had afflicted Orthodoxy and was prepared at the request of Alexios I and completed by c.1111.⁹⁷ The chapter on iconoclasm is in need of a new edition.⁹⁸ Granted this, it is apparent that Euthymios adhered closely to an earlier work of uncertain pedigree for the core of his essay on the image question. Hergenröther and Thümmel have attributed this earlier work to the Patriarch Photios.⁹⁹ As such the chapter on iconoclasm is often treated as an historical rather than a contemporary text. Nonetheless, its relationship to the contemporary discussion and understanding of icons is more complicated and perhaps indicates a more recent authorship. Indeed, the chapter is arguably the definitive *Komnenian* essay on the question of images.¹⁰⁰

Direct quotations recur throughout this chapter (unusually for Zigabenos, he does not provide attributions for these sources). In addition, he also paraphrases a number of texts. Once these are disentangled, it becomes clear that this discussion offers a carefully constructed meditation on the icon and its worship that is wholly fabricated from iconophile sources.¹⁰¹ Theodore Stoudites is the primary source used, with quotes from his

90 PG 127: 981A; Gautier 1971: 7–8.

91 PG 127: 981A.

92 PG 127: 981B.

93 PG 127: 981B.

94 PG 127: 981C–D

95 PG 127: 984A.

96 PG 127: 981D–984A.

97 The lengthy panegyric for Alexios I at the start of the text (PG 130: 20–26) as well as references to the work by Anna Komnene (*The Alexiad*, 489) indicate that Alexios I had much to do with the commissioning of the work.

98 For example, the *Patrologia Graeca* edition contains a lengthy quotation from John of Damaskos’ chapter on icons in the *On the Orthodox Faith* that is by no means a persistent presence in the manuscript tradition. It is also notable that the fifteenth-century manuscript that was the basis for Hergenröther’s edition (Vatican, BAV, Palatinus gr. 361) is largely devoted to issues that were significant in the later eleventh century, particularly matters of dispute between the Latin and Greek churches. A more thorough edition of this text and its afterlife in the work of Euthymios Zigabenos will clarify this situation.

99 Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, p. 53–62; Thümmel 1981: 275–89; Thümmel 1982: 53–58; Thümmel 1983: 153–57.

100 PG 130: 1164–73. An introduction to Euthymios and the *Panoplia* can be found in Wickert 1908: 278–388.

101 Attempts to identify these sources can be found in Wickert 1908: 278–388; Papavasileiou 1979: 102–19. Additional references can be found in Hergenröther and Thümmel.

First Refutation of the Iconoclasts, as well as his letters to Plato, Athanasios, and Niketas Spatharios.¹⁰² There are also quotes from the Seventh Oecumenical Council and Patriarchs Germanos and Nikephoros.¹⁰³ Of these it is clearly the letter written by Theodore Stoudites to his uncle Plato that has most influenced Zigabenos' account of iconoclasm.

The account of iconoclasm given in the *Dogmatic Panoply* opens with a direct quote from Patriarch Nikephoros' *First Antirrhetic*.¹⁰⁴ It is a very strong opening, one that immediately and repeatedly proposes an essential difference between the icon and its subject. The point is continued when Zigabenos draws on Theodore Stoudites' *Second Antirrhetic* and his *Letter to Plato* to elaborate upon the distinction between a natural and a thetic image.¹⁰⁵ The passage uses the difference between the material of the icon and the material of Christ's human nature to lead us toward the formal relation, mediated by likeness and manifest in shape that allows us to see Christ in the icon. Having arrived at this definition, Zigabenos is able to argue that veneration is itself mediated by the common appearance of the image and the prototype, and that an icon depicts the person and not the nature of the one represented. This is the form impressed into the image, but not the material itself, which then becomes worthy of worship.¹⁰⁶

Next Zigabenos introduces, by way of Theodore Stoudites, a relational model to define more precisely how an icon and its subject are linked.¹⁰⁷ Continuing this thread, Zigabenos describes the icon as a mirror, an analogy that was also found in Theodore Stoudites' letter to Plato. This is then reinforced by reference to the discussions of the implications of the imperial image and the seal found in the same source. Together these make the point that the form seen in the image is not to be confused with the material that bears it.¹⁰⁸ Zigabenos then defines the visual quality of the icon: "What the sacred icons make visible are those visible aspects of their archetypes that become the memory

102 The passage from the *First Refutation of the Iconoclasts* is PG 99: 341B–C, this is found at PG 130: 1165D; the letter to Plato is quoted and paraphrased at various points in Zigabenos' text: Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57:33–35 at PG 130: 1165A; Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57:93f at PG 130:1168A, Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57:98–100 at PG 130: 1168B, Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57:102–110 at PG 130:1168B–C, and Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57:118 at PG 130: 1169C; cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 428.4–11 at PG 130: 1165D–68D; cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 476.31–43 at PG 130:1168A.

103 *Seventh Oecumenical Council*: PG 130: 1169B–B6 is based on Mansi 13: 225A2; PG 130: 1169B6–C is based on Mansi 13: 44D; PG 130: 1169D8–13 is based on Mansi 13: 45A. Germanos: PG 130: 1169C5 is based on the letter to John of Synada: PG 98: 160C4. Nikephoros: PG 130: 1164D–1165A quotes Nikephoros' *First Antirrhetic*, PG 100: 277A; PG 130: 1165D–1168A is also from the *First Antirrhetic*, PG 100: 277C–D;

104 PG 100: 277A quoted at PG 130: 1164D–1165A. This is probably the text identified in the descriptions of the manuscript containing the florilegium as being from the *First Discourse of St. Nikephoros against the Iconoclasts*.

105 PG 130: 1165A–C. The opening definition perhaps draws on Theodore Stoudites, *Second Antirrhetic*: PG 99:368C. This is then followed by a direct quote from Theodore Stoudites, *Letter to Plato* at Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57: 33–35. The remaining section of the quote paraphrases the *Letter to Plato*: Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57: 17–70 until the last few lines, when the writer echoes Nikephoros, *First Antirrhetic*, PG 100: 225–28.

106 PG 130: 1165C.

107 PG 130: 1165D–68A; this quote paraphrases Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 528: 51–54.

108 PG 130: 1168A–C.

and desire for the prototypes for us.”¹⁰⁹ Zigabenos then returns to one of the primary themes in the debates introduced by Leo of Chalcedon, namely the nature of the worship brought to bear on icons. He states that while the Holy Trinity is to be adored, icons can only be venerated, for doing otherwise would be to adore creation or matter.¹¹⁰ Thus: “I worship Christ in it [the icon], who is visible there in a carnal depiction according to his carnal form, whence the veneration is relative and hypostatic.”¹¹¹ Hence, it is Christ’s somatic visibility that brings value to an icon. Underscoring the importance of visibility, Zigabenos then contrasts the icon with shadows, and praises the clarity that icons offer.¹¹² This clarity comes from the forms portrayed and not from the materials of the icon itself. Indeed, should an image be damaged or a cross broken, it should be thrown away.¹¹³ Zigabenos thus reiterates, through the words of his theological forebears, the conception of the icon proposed at the Blachernai synod of 1095. Indeed, the precise terms of the Zigabenos material betray interests that respond to some of the particular problems raised by Leo of Chalcedon’s letter to Nicholas. There, Leo had argued for a distinction between the portrait and the iconic material that permitted the presence of the divine within the space of the icon and therefore made the adoration of the icon possible. The Zigabenos text addresses the same issues by drawing a distinction between the *character* portrayed and the material of the icon. This, however, did not lead to adoration, rather the material presence of the icon itself differentiated the portrait from its subject rather than identified this with it.

The possibility of a connection between Zigabenos’ account of the icons and this recent discussion of the topic can be extended when we take note of the choice of texts used in the Zigabenos’ presentation on iconomachy and compare these with the records that we have of the florilegium associated with Isaac sebastokrator that was produced to respond to Leo’s letter to Nicholas. The record of the florilegium that has come down to us describes excerpts from the following texts:¹¹⁴ a letter of Theodore Stoudites to the monk Severianos;¹¹⁵ a letter of Theodore Stoudites to the spatharios Niketas;¹¹⁶ a letter of Theodore Stoudites to the aseketis Diogenes;¹¹⁷ the first *Antirrhetic* by Theodore Stoudites;¹¹⁸ a letter of Theodore Stoudites to Athanasios;¹¹⁹ a passage written by Nikephoros of Constantinople;¹²⁰ quotes from the Seventh Oecumenical Council held at Nicaea in 787;¹²¹

109 PG 130: 1168C.

110 PG 130: 1168C–D.

111 PG 130: 1168D.

112 PG 130: 1169A.

113 PG 130: 1169B.

114 Lauriot 1886–87: 168–72; the florilegium was on folios 42–55 of the now lost manuscript; the list is also in Grumel 1946: 123–24; Stephanou 1946: 188–89; Glavinias 1972: 175–76.

115 Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 445.

116 Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 476.

117 Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 491.

118 PG 99: 328–52.

119 Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 428 or 528.

120 Unidentifiable.

121 Unidentifiable.

the letter of Patriarch Germanos of Constantinople to Bishop John of Synada;¹²² a letter of Theodore Stoudites to John the Grammarian;¹²³ the first *Logos against the Iconoclasts* by Patriarch Nikephoros of Constantinople;¹²⁴ a letter of Theodore Stoudites to his uncle Plato.¹²⁵ The *Panoply* offers direct quotes and paraphrases from: the first *Antirrhetikos* of Nikephoros;¹²⁶ the *Antirrhetikoi* of Theodore Stoudites;¹²⁷ the letters from Theodore Stoudites to Plato, Diogenes, Niketas, Severianos, John the Grammarian and Athanasios;¹²⁸ the letter of Germanos to John of Synada;¹²⁹ and excerpts from the Seventh Oecumenical Council.¹³⁰ This proximity is suggestive and probably excludes the possibility that these are entirely independent works. Granted this, some options arise. First, the Sebastokrator's florilegium and the Zigabenos text might rely on an older common source. Second, that the florilegium provided the raw material for Zigabenos' composition. Third, that a composition that accompanied the florilegium was copied into Zigabenos' compilation. Only a fresh examination of the manuscript containing the record of Isaac Sebastokrator's florilegium will clarify this relationship.

The debate over the status of images in the last decade of the eleventh century reinforced the significance of authorities such as Theodore Stoudites and Nikephoros of Constantinople, whose writings expanded upon the definitions of the image found in the Seventh Oecumenical Council and the Synodikon of Orthodoxy. The key participants in these eleventh-century debates, Leo of Chalcedon and Eustratios of Nicaea introduce the reader to various definitions of the icon that show them grappling with the implications of the language used to describe depiction and worship as they pertain to sacred icons. Leo of Chalcedon sought to preserve a sense of divine presence in the icon. Leo was not alone in this concern at this period.¹³¹ He argued that the icon deserved both adoration and veneration. Adoration, because Christ's person included his divine nature and this person was depicted in the icon. Veneration, because the iconic materials that bore this depiction were worthy of honor thanks to their role in making this subject available to the icon's viewer. In contrast, Eustratios of Nicaea developed a syllogistic model that focused upon the icon itself as a constraint on the visible.¹³² For him, the icon provided an accurate record of human perception, but could never encompass Christ's divine nature. As such,

122 PG 98: 156–61.

123 Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 586.

124 Unidentifiable.

125 Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57.

126 PG 130: 1164D–1165A = PG 100: 277A; PG 130: 1165B–C = cf. PG 100: 225–28; PG 130: 1165D–1168A = PG 100: 277C–D; PG 130: 1168C–D = PG 100: 584.

127 PG 130: 1165A = PG 99: 368C; PG 130: 1165C = PG 99: 405A; PG 130: 1165D = PG 99: 421A; PG, 130: 1165D = PG 99: 341B–C; PG, 130: 1168D–1169A = PG 99: 433B; PG 130: 1169D = PG 99: 404D.

128 PG 130: 1165AB, 1168A–C, 1169C = Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57: 33–53, 91–110, 118–21; PG, 130: 1165C = Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 491: 12–17; PG 130: 1168A = Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 476: 31–33; PG, 130: 1168C–D = Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 445: 22–42; PG 130: 1168D = Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 428: 4–10.

129 PG 130: 1168C = PG 98: 160C.

130 PG 130: 1168C = Mansi 13: 377D; PG 130: 1169B = Mansi 13: 225A; PG 130: 1169B–C = Mansi 13: 44D; PG 130: 1169D = Mansi 13: 45A.

131 Barber 2010: 27–40.

132 Barber 2009: 131–43.

the icon could only receive veneration. Both theologians build upon a relatively limited number of texts from the eighth and ninth century discussions of iconoclasm. This focus was echoed in Euthymios Zigabenos' discussion of iconomachy, which carefully weaves together these authoritative voices and became a fundamental statement on the icon and the veneration that was to be addressed to it.¹³³ All told, the three texts translated here are witnesses to a far from settled understanding of the icon at this period, vigorous debate over the nature of the icon, and the development of a concise definition of the icon.

Text A | Leo of Chalcedon (fl. 1081–95)

A Letter to Nicholas of Adrianople

Ed.: Alexander E. Lavriotes, “Ἱστορικὸν ζήτημα ἐκκλησιαστικὸν ἐπὶ τῆς βασιλείας Ἀλεξίου Κομνηνοῦ,” *ΕκκλA* vol. 24, year 20 (1900), 414a–16a, 445b–47a, 455b–56b

MS.:¹³⁴ Mount Athos, Great Lavra, ms. 196 (s. XI ex.), ff. 36r–42r

Other Translations: None

Significance

Leo of Chalcedon developed a novel theory of the icon while protesting the imperial appropriation of church treasures in 1081. In a series of letters, of which the letter to his nephew Nicholas of Adrianople is the most developed, Leo argues that an icon of Christ deserved adoration as well as veneration, because it presented the *character* of Christ.

The Author

Leo was the Metropolitan of Chalcedon and had been one of the judges for the trial of the philosopher John Italos in 1082. He was also considered a holy man. He was not a particularly active theologian, but his resistance to the expropriation of church property in late 1081 produced a series of letters over the course of a decade that laid out a notion of the icon that sought to preserve an hypostatic presence for the divine nature within the icon. This conception of the icon provoked an intense debate that culminated in the rejection of Leo's views at the synod that met at the Blachernai Palace in 1094/95.

Text and Context

See Introduction, pp. 8–12.

¹³³ Here it is important to note the value placed on this text in the fourteenth century, where the Euthymios text appears to have served as the point of departure for various discussions of the icon: Matthew Blastares, *Syntagma alphabeticum* (Potles and Rhalles, *Σύνταγμα*, 6, 246–48); Neophytos Prodromenos, “A question concerning the epigraph on the holy and venerable icons of Christ and the Holy Theotokos. For what reason we inscribe the ΙΣ ΧΣ for Christ and the ΜΗΡ ΘΥ for the Mother of God,” Kalođeropoulou-Metalenou 1996; Barber 2015; Theophanes III of Nicaea, *Fourth Homily on the Light of Thabor*.

¹³⁴ Not consulted.

Text

[414a] Λέοντος τοῦ ἀπὸ Χαλκηδόνος Νικολάω Ἀδριανουπόλεως.¹

Ἐνέτυχόν σου τοῖς γράμμασιν, ἀδελφὲ φίλτατε καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας ὑπέρμαχε, δι' ὧν ἐδήλωσας ἡμῖν τὸν Θεὸν ἐξεγεῖραι τοὺς καθ' ἡμῶν καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας λαλοῦντας πρότερον, νῦν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας λαλήσαι καὶ ἄκοντας· καὶ ὅτι, τὸ κινήσαν πνεῦμα πρῶην τὸν Εὐχαΐτων εἶπεῖν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ αὐθις γράψαι ταύτην αὐτὸν ἐκίνησε· ἐγὼ δὲ οὕτως ἀρχαίως ἔχω καὶ ἀμαθῶς, ὥστε μήτε πρότερον μήτε νῦν, εὐρίσκειν αὐτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἢ τῆς ἀληθείας λαλήσαντα. τὸ γὰρ εἶπεῖν αὐτὸν ἔτι ἀνυπόγραφον εἶναι ἀτελὲς τὸ σημείωμα οὐχ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ἐρεθίζοντός ἐστι τοὺς τοῦ Κυρίου ἐχθρούς, ὥστε καὶ ὑπογράψαι, καὶ διὰ τῆς ὑπογραφῆς βεβαιῶσαι τὸ ἀσεβὲς αὐτῶν καὶ πάσης παρανομίας πεπληρωμένον σημείωμα. ἀνέγνων καὶ τοῦ Εὐχαΐτων τὸ γράμμα, καὶ εὔρον αὐτὸν ἑαυτῷ καὶ τοῖς πρῶην παρ' αὐτοῦ λεγομένοις ἐναντιούμενον· καὶ διὰ τῶν πρότερον αὐτῷ λαλουμένων, ἔτι καὶ διὰ τῶν νῦν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ γεγραμμένων, κατὰ τῆς εὐσεβοῦς ἡμῶν πίστεως ἀποβαίνοντα· καὶ γὰρ πρότερον ὑλολάτρως ἡμᾶς ἀποκαλῶν τοὺς ἐν ταῖς ἀγίαις εἰκόσι προσκυνοῦντας, οὐ τὰς εἰκονικὰς ὕλας, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἐν αὐταῖς ἱστορούμενον θεοῦπόστατον σωματικὸν χαρακτήρα Χριστοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν συμπροσκυνοῦντες αὐτῷ, μιᾶ προσκυνήσει καὶ τὸν Πατέρα καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, αὐτὸς ὕλην ἐκάλει, καὶ τὸν ὑπεράγιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ χαρακτήρα, ἐν εἶναι λέγων ἀμφοτέρα· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἡμᾶς, ὑλολάτρως. νυνὶ δὲ ὥσπερ μεταβαλλόμενος ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰρετικοῦ ἐκείνου φρονήματος αὐτοῦ, εἰς ἕτερον ἀσεβείας βόθρον κατεκρημνίσθη ὁ ἄθλιος· ἠρνήσατο γὰρ ἐγγράφως ὕλην λέγειν εἶναι καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκονικὴν ὕλην, γράψας οὕτω προφανῶς· ὕλην εἰκονικὴν, οὐκ ἂν εἴποι τις τὴν εἰκόνα φέρον τοῦ πρωτοτύπου, ἀλλ' εἰκόνα Χριστοῦ καὶ Χριστόν, ὥστε συνάγεσθαι αὐτῷ πρότερον μὲν λέγοντι, ὕλην καὶ τὸν θεῖον χαρακτήρα Χριστοῦ, νῦν δὲ καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν ὕλην Χριστόν. τὰ ἐκ διαμέτρου κακὰ, κατὰ τὸν θεῖον φάναι Θεολόγον, καὶ ὁμότημα τὴν ἀσεβειαν· ἀμφοτέρα γὰρ ταῦτα αἰρετικῶν εἰσι δόγματα. αἰεὶ γὰρ ἡ εἰκονικὴ ὕλη ὕλη ἐστὶν ἀναθεθειμένη τῷ Θεῷ, ὡς θεῖον ἀνάθημα καὶ ὁ χαρακτήρ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, αἰεὶ Χριστός ἐστι καὶ Θεὸς κεχωρισμένως τῆς ὕλης νοούμενος. τοῦτο δὲ πάσχει ὁ ἄθλιος, καὶ οἱ τῆς αὐτῆς αὐτῷ κοινωνοῦντες κακίας, καὶ τὸ τῆς εἰκόνης ὄνομα διαταράσσει αὐτούς, ἐκ τοῦ μὴ γινώσκειν, ὡς οἶμαι, τὰ τῆς εἰκόνης [414b] σημαινόμενα· ἔτι δὲ καὶ τὰ τῆς σχέσεως καὶ τὰ τοῦ ἀρχετύπου, καὶ τὰ τῆς προσκυνήσεως, καὶ τὰ τῆς ὑποστάσεως, καὶ τὰ περὶ τῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀναθημάτων λεγόμενα· καὶ γὰρ ἕκαστον τούτων, διάφορα ἔχει τὰ σημαινόμενα. σοὶ μὲν καὶ πάνυ γινωσκόμενα, τοῖς δὲ πολλοῖς ἀγνοούμενα· καὶ συμβουλεύω σοὶ ταῦτα, εἰδότι τὸν περὶ τίνος τούτων πρὸς σὲ διαμφιβάλλοντα, ἐρωτᾶν εἶπεῖν σοὶ πρότερον ὑπὲρ ὁποίου σημαινομένου ποιεῖται πρὸς σὲ τὴν ἐρώτησιν, ἵν' οὕτω δυνηθῆς ἀσφαλῶς ἀνταποκριθῆναι αὐτῷ· καὶ γὰρ εἰκὼν ἢ ἐστὶ καὶ λέγεται καὶ ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ Πατρός, καθὼς ὁ μέγας διδάσκει ἀπόστολος λέγων, "ὅς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου." "εἰκὼν οὐ ἄψυχος," ὡς φησιν ὁ μέγας Βασίλειος, "οὐδὲ χειρότμητος, οὐδὲ τέχνης ἔργον καὶ ἐπινοίας, ἀλλ' εἰκὼν ζῶσα, μᾶλλον δέ, καὶ αὐτοοῦσα ζωή· οὐκ ἐν σχήματι ὁμοιότητος, ἀλλ' αὐτῇ τῇ οὐσίᾳ, τὸ ἀπαράλλακτον διασώζουσα." εἰκὼν λέγεται καὶ ὁ Ἀδάμ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὡς ἔχει τὸ "ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον κατ' εἰκόνα Θεοῦ ἐποίησεν αὐτόν," κατὰ τὸ ἀρχικὸν δηλαδὴ καὶ βασιλικὸν

Translation

[414a] Leo of Chalcedon to Nicholas of Adrianople

I read your letters, my beloved brother and defender of the truth, in which you made clear to us that God has awakened those who previously spoke against us and against the truth to speak now in support of us and in support of the truth, even if unwilling; and that the spirit which first moved the metropolitan of Euchaita to speak the truth in support of us has again moved him to write in this fashion. But I am so old and unlearned that neither then nor now do I find him speaking in support of us and in support of the truth. For his saying that the still unsigned *semeioma* is incomplete is not something in support of us or in support of the truth, but rather something that provokes the enemies of the Lord to sign it and through their signature to confirm this impious *semeioma* which is full of utter illegality.

I have read the metropolitan of Euchaita's letter and I find him in contradiction with himself and with what he has said previously. Based on what he said before and what he is now writing I find him at odds with our pious faith. Previously he called us worshippers of matter, even though we do not venerate the iconic materials in the holy images, but the divinely hypostasized bodily *character* of Christ our God, which is in them, venerating with [this *character*] in a single veneration both the Father and the Holy Spirit. Since he himself claimed that the all holy *character* of Christ is matter, saying that both are one, [he concluded] that we are worshippers of matter. But now, as if moving on from this heretical thought, the wretched one has thrown himself headlong into another pit of impiety. He denied in writing that he claimed that iconic material is itself matter, having written clearly that no one would say that what bears the image of the prototype is iconic material, but [is rather] the image of Christ and Christ. Thus while he previously identified matter with the divine *character* of Christ, he now claims that Christ is the matter itself. These evils are diametrically opposed, as the divine Theologian says, and equally impious since both are heretical teachings.¹⁶ For iconic matter is always matter that has been offered to God as a divine offering, and the *character* of Christ is always Christ and God conceived separately from matter. The word "image" confounds the wretched one, as well as those who share in this same evil, because, in my opinion, they do not know what the significant terms related to the [414b] image mean, much less those related to "relation" and "archetype," to "veneration" and "hypostasis," and to what has been said concerning offerings to God. Each of these terms has a different meaning. You know this, but many do not. Therefore I advise you, so that you might be able to respond to him with assurance, to ask him to first tell you which of these terms he is questioning you about, since you know that his dispute with you concerns one of these. Therefore I advise you the following: since you know that he who doubts you questions one of these terms, ask him to first tell you which one it is so that you might be able to respond to him with assurance.

Indeed, the Son of God the Father is and is also called an image, as the great apostle teaches, saying, "He is an image of the invisible God,"¹⁷ and as Basil the Great says "an image [is] not without a soul, neither made by hand nor a work of art or invention, but

βασιλέα τῶν ἐπὶ γῆς βασιλευόμενον ἄνωθεν. εἰκὼν ἐστὶ τοῦ Ἀδάμ καὶ ὁ Σῆθ, καὶ τοῦ γεννῶντος παντὸς τὸ γεννώμενον· ἐγέννησε γὰρ φησὶν ὁ Ἀδάμ κατὰ τὴν εἰκόνα αὐτοῦ καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἰδέαν αὐτοῦ. εἰκὼν λέγεται παρὰ ταῦτα καὶ μόνως ὁ ταῖς ὕλαις ἐγγραφόμενος χαρακτήρ, ὡς φησὶν ὁ τε μέγας Βασιλεῖος καὶ ὁ μέγας θεολόγος Γρηγόριος, ὁ μὲν εἰπῶν καὶ βασιλεὺς λέγεται "καὶ ἡ τοῦ βασιλέως εἰκὼν καὶ οἱ δύο βασιλεῖς· οὔτε γὰρ τὸ κράτος σχίζεται, οὔτε ἡ δόξα μερίζεται." ὁ δὲ Θεολόγος· "ἔστω λέγων χρυσός, ἔστω σίδηρος, δακτύλιος δὲ ἀμφοτέροι καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ἐγκεχαράχθωσαν εἰκόνα βασιλικήν." καὶ ορᾷς ὅπως κεχωρισμένως τῆς ὕλης, εἰκόνα τὸν χαρακτήρα καλεῖ· καὶ τούτοις ἐπιφέρει λέγων· εἶτα κηρὸν ἐκτυπούτωσαν· τί διοίσει ἡ σφραγὶς αὕτη τῆς σφραγίδος ἐκείνης; οὐδὲν· ἐπίγνωθι τὴν ὕλην ἐν τῷ κηρῷ, κἄν ἦς σοφώτατος, εἰπέ· τί μὲν τοῦ σιδήρου, τί δὲ τοῦ χρυσοῦ τὸ ἐκτύπωμα; καὶ πῶς ἐν ἐστὶ· τῆς γὰρ ὕλης τὸ διάφορον, οὐ τοῦ χαρακτήρος· καὶ τίνα ἐκ τούτων μανθάνομεν· ἐν μὲν ὅτι εἰπῶν καλεῖται καὶ μόνος ὁ χαρακτήρ δίχα τῆς ὕλης. δεύτερον δὲ ὅτι ἐν οἷς μὲν ἐστὶ μικρά τις διαφορὰ ὡσπερ καὶ ἐν ταῖς ὕλαις εὐρίσκεται, ἐν τούτοις ἐστὶ καὶ ἀριθμός. ἔνθα δὲ οὐδεμία διαφορὰ εὐρίσκεται, ἀπλοῦν τί ἐστὶ τοῦτο καὶ ἐν καὶ ἀνάριθμον· ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ ἐνός καὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ χαρακτήρος. ἀπλοῦν γὰρ ἐστὶ τῆ φύσει τὸ ἐν· τοιαύτη δὲ ἐστὶ ὡς ὁ Θεολόγος φησὶν "ἡ τῶν ἀπλῶν φύσις, μὴ τῷ μὲν εἰκέναι, τῷ δὲ [415a] ἀπεικέναι· ἀλλ' ὅλον ὅλου τύπου εἶναι· καὶ ταῦτὸν μᾶλλον ἢ ἀφομοίωμα." καὶ ἐπεὶ οὕτω ταῦτά φησὶν ὁ μέγας Θεόδωρος· "ἐντεῦθεν τῆ τῆς εἰκόνας Χριστοῦ προσκυνήσει, μία ἡ προσκύνησις καὶ δοξολογία τῆς πολυμνητοῦ καὶ μακαρίας Τριάδος"· προσκυνεῖται γὰρ φησὶν οὐχὶ ἡ εἰκονικὴ ὕλη, ἀλλ' ὁ ἐν αὐτῇ ἐξεικονισθεὶς Χριστός, ἐφ' ᾧ συμπροσκυνεῖται ὁ Πατὴρ καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. εἰκὼν λέγεται καὶ μόνη ἢ εἰκονικὴ ὕλη, δίχα τοῦ ἐν αὐτῇ χαρακτήρος, ὡς ἐν τῷ ΠΒ' Κανόνι ἐκφέρεται τῆς Οἰκουμενικῆς ΣΤ' Συνόδου, λεγουσῆς ἐν αὐτῷ "ὡς ἂν οὖν τὸ τέλειον κἄν ταῖς χρωματουργίαις, ἐν ταῖς ἀπάντων ὄψεσιν ὑπογράφηται, τὸν τοῦ αἵροντος τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου ἄμνοῦ, Χριστοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν κατὰ τὸν ἀνθρώπινον χαρακτήρα καὶ ἐν ταῖς εἰκόσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν, ἀντὶ τοῦ παλαιοῦ ἄμνοῦ ἀναστηλοῦσθαί ὀρίζομεν." ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ Ζ' Σύνοδος ἐν τῷ συνοδικῷ αὐτῆς ἀναγνώσματι, συνωδᾷ τούτοις ἔγραψε· τὸν ἐγγραφόμενον ταῖς εἰκόσι χαρακτήρα ὑπόστασιν εἶναι τοῦ ἐγγραφομένου διδάσκουσα, οὕτως εἰποῦσα· "ὁ προσκυνῶν τὴν εἰκόνα προσκυνεῖ ἐν αὐτῇ τοῦ ἐγγραφομένου τὴν ὑπόστασιν." πάντως ἕτερον ἐν ἑτέρῳ· "δῆλον δὲ τοῦτο καὶ τοῖς πρὸ ἡμῶν φησὶν ὡς ἐξ εἰκόνων τε καὶ ἐν εἰκόσι, τιμᾶται καὶ προσκυνεῖται ἡ ἀλήθεια." ἀκουέτωσαν οἱ τὸ μὲν² ἐξ εἰκόνων δεχόμενοι, τὸ δὲ ἐν εἰκόσι μὴ προσδεχόμενοι. τούτων οὖν οὕτω κεχωρισμένως ἐξ ἀλλήλων νοουμένων τε καὶ προσκυνουμένων, ἡ μὲν εἰκονικὴ ὕλη τιμητικῶς καὶ σχετικῶς προσκυνεῖται (τούτέστι διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸν θεοῦπόστατον Χριστοῦ χαρακτήρα σχέσιν), ὁ δὲ ἐν αὐτῇ ὀρώμενος αὐτοῦ χαρακτήρ, οὐ δι' ἄλλον τινά, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς δι' ἑαυτὸν λατρευτικῶς προσκυνεῖται. εἰκὼν λέγεται ἐπὶ τε Χριστοῦ καὶ τῆς Θεοτόκου καὶ τῶν τιμίων ἀγγέλων καὶ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων καὶ ὁσίων ἀνδρῶν καὶ τὸ συναμφοτέρον, ἥτοι ἡ ὕλη τε καὶ ὁ ταύτη ἐγγραφεὶς χαρακτήρ· καὶ τῶν μὲν ἄλλων πάντων αἱ ὑποστάσεις ταῖς εἰκόσιν ἐγγραφόμεναι, τιμητικῶς καὶ σχετικῶς προσκυνοῦνται καὶ ἀσπάζονται, ὁ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ χαρακτήρ θεοῦπόστατος ὑπάρχων τουτέστιν ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὑποστάσει τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑποστάς, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο Θεὸς ὑπάρχων καὶ αὐτὸς κατ' οὐσίαν συναφθέντος αὐτῷ καὶ συνημμένου ὄντος τούτῳ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, ἀδιαστάτως καὶ ἀδιασπᾶστως καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἁγίαις

a living image, and more than that, a self-existing life, which does not preserve the unchanged in the form of likeness, but in substance itself.”¹⁸ Adam is also called an image of God, as in the following verse, “God created man, he created him in the image of God,”¹⁹ namely, in the ruling and kingly sense, as the first king of the things ruled on earth. And Seth is the image of Adam, and the one who begets everything begotten. For it says that Adam begat according to his image and according to his appearance.²⁰ In addition to these, an image is said to be uniquely a character written in matter, as Basil the Great and the great theologian Gregory claim. The former says that a king is “also called the image of a king, and both are kings since the kingdom is not split nor is the glory divided,”²¹ and the Theologian says, “Let one be gold, the other iron, both rings have inscribed the same imperial image.”²² Do you see how he describes the *character* as an image that is separate from matter? He continues, saying, “Then let them impress the wax; how will this stamp differ from that stamp? In no way at all. Consider the matter in the wax, even if you are the wisest of men, tell me: which impression is of iron, which is of gold? How are they the same? For the difference is according to matter, not *character*.”²³ What have we learned from this? First, that when we say “*character*” we mean that it alone is without matter; second, that number exists in things which are slightly different in terms of their matter, and that something simple and one is without number, as in the case of something of one and the same *character*. For “one” is simple by nature. As the Theologian says, “it is the nature of simple things not to be similar, [415a] but to be unique, to be complete in every respect, and identical rather than a semblance.”²⁴ Moreover this is what the great Theodore says about these things: thence “in the veneration of the image of Christ there is a single veneration and glorification of the much honored and blessed Trinity.”²⁵ For he says that it is not the iconic matter that is venerated, but Christ, who is depicted in it, and that the Father and the Holy Spirit are also venerated with Him. An image is said to be only the iconic matter, distinct from the *character* [depicted] in it, as the 82nd Canon of the Sixth Oecumenical Council states, “Therefore, in order that what is perfect, even in paintings, may be portrayed before the eyes of all, we decree that henceforth the figure of the Lamb [of God] who takes away the sin of the world, Christ our God, should be set forth in images in human form, instead of the ancient lamb.”²⁶ Even the Seventh Council in its synodical document wrote in agreement with this, teaching that the *character* depicted in the images is a hypostasis of what is depicted, describing it in this way: “he who venerates the image venerates in it the hypostasis of what is depicted.”²⁷ And [in a] completely different way in another passage, saying: “it was also clear to those before us that the truth is venerated and honored from and in images.”²⁸ Those who accept “from images” but do not also accept “in images” should listen closely. [Matter and *character*] are worshipped and conceived separately from one another: the iconic material is honorably and relatively worshipped, that is, on account of its relation to the divinely hypostasized *character* of Christ; however, His *character*, which is seen in it, existing on account of nothing else, is itself and on account of itself worshipped in terms of adoration. An image of Christ, of the Theotokos, of the honorable angels and all the saints and holy men is said to be both matter and the *character* depicted in it. The hypostases of all the others that are depicted

εἰκόσιν αὐτοῦ, λατρευτικῶς προσκυνεῖται καὶ σέβεται ὡς Θεός· καὶ τοῦτό ἐστιν ὃ φησιν ἡ ἐβδόμη Σύνοδος ἐν τῷ συνοδικῷ αὐτῆς, ὅτι καὶ "ταύταις ἀσπασμὸν καὶ τιμητικὴν προσκύνησιν ἀπονέμομεν. οὐ μὴν τὴν κατὰ πίστιν ἡμῶν [415b] λατρείαν, ἢ πρέπει μόνῃ τῇ θεῖα φύσει." ταῖς μὲν γὰρ ἄλλαις εἰκόσι τιμητικὴ τε καὶ σχετικὴ προσκύνησις ἀπονέμεται, καὶ ἀσπασμὸς ὡσπερ καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς ἀναθήμασι διὰ τὸν κοινὸν Δεσπότην. τῷ δὲ ὑπεραγίῳ χαρακτῆρι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, λατρευτικῇ, ἥτις πρέπει μόνῃ τῇ θεῖα φύσει αὐτοῦ· ἡ γὰρ θεότης τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὡς ἤδη εἴρηται, καὶ χωρισθέντων ἀπ' ἀλλήλων ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ, τῆς τε ἀγίας ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς ἀγίας σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ πάντων τῶν τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ τοῦ ἀγίου χαρακτῆρος αὐτοῦ, ἀδιαίρετος ἐκ πάντων καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν ἀσύγχυτος ἔμεινε· ὅθεν Θεός ἐστιν καὶ ὁ ἅγιος αὐτοῦ χαρακτήρ, καὶ λατρευτικῶς προσκυνεῖται κἂν ταῖς ἀγίαις εἰκόσιν αὐτοῦ. διὰ τοῦτου κἂν ταῖς ἀγίαις ἐκκλησίαις, ᾄδεται πανταχοῦ εἰς τιμὴν τῆς θεοχαράκτου μορφῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς ἐν τῷ ἀγίῳ Μανδηλίῳ ἐντυπωθείσης οὕτως· "ισότημος ὢν Πατρὶ κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν τὴν θεϊκὴν, ἀθάνατε καὶ συνοχεῦ τῆς κτίσεως, ἀπείροις ἐπικαμφεῖς οἰκτιρμοῖς ὡς εὐσπλαγχνος, ἴσος ἐφάνης ἡμῖν οἷς τὸν τε θεώμενον χαρακτῆρα παρέσχες σοῦ τῆς σαρκὸς, σέβουσιν ὀρθοδόξως σὲ Θεὸν καὶ ἄνθρωπον"· οὕτω γὰρ δογματίζει καὶ τὸ περὶ τῶν ἀγίων εἰκόνων ἐκφωνηθέν δεύτερον συνοδικὸν λέγον· "οὕτω φρονοῦμεν, οὕτω λαλοῦμεν, οὕτω κηρύσσομεν Χριστὸν τὸν ἀληθινὸν Θεὸν ἡμῶν καὶ τοὺς αὐτοῦ ἀγίους ἐν λόγοις τιμῶντες, ἐν συγγραφαῖς, ἐν νοήμασι, ἐν θυσίαις, ἐν ναοῖς, ἐν εἰκονίσμασι, τὸν μὲν ὡς Θεὸν καὶ δεσπότην προσκυνοῦντες καὶ σέβοντες, τοὺς δὲ διὰ τὸν κοινὸν Δεσπότην καὶ ὡς αὐτοῦ γνησίους θεράποντας τιμῶντες, καὶ τὴν κατὰ σχέσιν προσκύνησιν ἀπονέμοντες."

Ἀπέσωσέ σοι τὰ παρ' ἡμῶν δογματιζόμενα ἀνελλιπῶς ἅπαντα περὶ τῶν ἀγίων εἰκόνων τὸ παρὸν Συνοδικὸν καὶ ἀνεπνεύσαμεν, φίλτατε. χρὴ δὲ μηδὲ τοῦτο σὲ παραδραμεῖν ὡσπερ ἐν συνεκδρομῇ τῶν ἤδη ῥηθέντων, σὲ ἀνεπιστήμαντον. τὸ "ἐν λόγοις τιμῶντες, ἐν συγγραφαῖς, ἐν νοήμασι, ἐν θυσίαις, ἐν ναοῖς, ἐν εἰκονίσμασι," εἰς ἔλεγχον τῶν δογματιζόντων σχήματι μὲν μόνῳ δεῖν προσάγειν ταῖς εἰκόσι τὴν προσκύνησιν, οὐ μὴν ἀληθές, πράγματι δὲ διαβιβάζειν μόνῳ τῷ νοῖ πρὸς τὸ πρωτότυπον καὶ τὴν τιμὴν καὶ τὴν προσκύνησιν, ταύτας δὲ χρεῖας καταλαβούσης, καὶ συντρίβειν καὶ κατὰ τὸ βουλευτὸν αὐτοῖς δαπανᾶν· ὃ δὴ καὶ ὁ θεομισήσας Ἰουλιανὸς πρὸς τὸν μεγαλομάρτυρα καὶ θεῖον Ἀρτέμιον ἔλεγεν ὡς "οἱ τῆς σοφίας ἐπιμελόμενοι οἶδασι ποῦ τὴν τιμὴν διαβιβάζουσι, τὸ δ' ἀγοραῖον [416a] πλῆθος ψυχαγωγίας χάριν τὰς εἰκόνας τιμῶσιν." ἄρκουσί σοι ταῦτα περὶ εἰκόνων.

[445b] Ἡ δὲ σχέσις ἐπὶ τῶν εἰκόνων καὶ τῶν πρωτοτύπων σημαίνει δύο· ἐν μὲν, ὅταν διὰ τὸν κοινὸν Δεσπότην καὶ ὡς αὐτοῦ γνήσιοι θεράποντες τιμῶνται πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι, ὃ σημαίνομεν³ ἐπὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ· οὐδ' ὄλως ἀρμόζει νοεῖσθαι διὰ τίνα γὰρ ἕτερον οὗτος ἢ δι' ἑαυτὸν τιμηθήσεται ὡς Θεός. ἕτερον δέ, ὃ φησι, ὁ μέγας Θεόδωρος, ὅτι "ἡ σχέσις κατὰ τὸ εἶναι ἐν τῷ πρωτοτύπῳ τὸ παράγωγον εἴρηται." ἀλλ' οὐ διὰ τὸ μεμερίσθαι θατέρου θάτερον ἢ μόνον παρὰ τὸ τῆς οὐσίας διάφορον, ὃ δὴ σημαίνομεν καὶ ἐπὶ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἐπὶ πάντων τῶν ἀγίων, κοινῶς καὶ ἐστὶ καὶ νοεῖται καὶ λέγεται· ὁ γὰρ εἷς καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς χαρακτήρ οὐδέποτε πρὸς ἑαυτὸν μερισθήσεται καὶ δύο γενήσεται, κἂν διαφόροις ὕλαις ἐντυπωθῇ, μὴ δὲ μιᾶς ἐν αὐτῷ οὔσης διαφορᾶς· τῶν γὰρ ὕλων τὸ διάφορον οὐ τοῦ

in images are venerated and embraced honorably and relatively, but the divinely hypostasized *character* of Christ, which exists in the very hypostasis of the Son of God, and is therefore itself also God, existing according to the substance of the Son, who is joined to it and unified together with it, [this *character*] is inseparably and indivisibly revered and worshipped in terms of adoration in His holy images as God. This is what the Seventh Council says in its *Synodikon*: “that we afford them affection and honorable veneration but not the adoration which according to our faith is appropriate [415b] for the divine nature alone.”²⁹ Honorable and relative veneration is afforded to other images, just as affection is owed to the other offerings on account of [their] common Lord. But to the all holy *character* of Christ adoration [is afforded], which is appropriate for His divine nature alone. For the divinity of Christ, as has been said, remained indivisible from the whole and wholly unmingled, even though at the time of His death His holy soul was separated from His holy flesh, and everything of His flesh was separated from His holy *character*. It follows then that His holy *character* is also God and is worshipped in terms of adoration even in His holy images. For this reason, throughout all the holy churches the following is also sung in honor of the shape of Christ which is divinely inscribed on the holy Mandylion, “Being of equal honor with the Father according to [Your] divine substance, O Immortal and Sustainer of the creation, as if swayed by infinite pities of compassion you appeared equal to us, to whom You offered the divinized *character* of Your flesh, and we revere You in the orthodox manner as God and man.”³⁰ The second *Synodikon* which was convened concerning the holy images also teaches this dogma, saying, “So we think, so we speak, so we proclaim Christ the true God and his saints; in words we honor [them], in writings, in thoughts, in offerings, in churches, in images, venerating and revering Him as God and Lord, but honoring them on account of their common Lord and as his noble servants and affording [them] relative veneration.”³¹

The present *Synodikon* has preserved everything that we have taught you concerning the holy images, and we have breathed new life into them, my beloved <friend>. You should not overstep these, because by staying in step with what has already been said you [remain] inconspicuous. The passage “we honor [them] in words, in writings, in thoughts, in offerings, in churches, in images”³² is a rebuke to those who teach that veneration should be offered to images in form alone and not truly [claiming] that in reality veneration and honor pass to the prototype by means of the mind alone and that when necessity demands they can smash them up and sell them according to their will. Even God-hating Julian said to the great martyr and divine Artemios that those who cultivate wisdom know where to place honor, but the market crowd [416a] honors images for refreshment.³³ Let this be sufficient for you concerning images.

[445b] The relation between icons and their prototypes can be understood in two ways. First, it is on account of their common Lord, which means on account of Christ, that all the saints are honored as His legitimate servants; nor is it at all fitting to think that He will be honored as God on account of someone other than Himself. And second, as the great Theodore says, “the relation has been called the derivative [*paragogen*] of the prototype’s being,”³⁴ and these are not to be distinguished from one another, except for the difference

χαρακτήρος. ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀρχέτυπον δύο σημαίνει· ἐν μὲν, ὅταν τὸ εἶδος μόνον θεωρῆται παρὰ τὸ τῆς οὐσίας διάφορον ὡς ὁ μέγας Διονύσιος λέγει ὅτι "ἐπὶ τῶν [446a] αἰσθητῶν εἰκόνων εἰ πρὸς τὸ ἀρχέτυπον εἶδος ὁ γραφεὺς ἀκλινῶς εἰσορᾷ, πρὸς μηδὲν ἄλλο τῶν ὄρατῶν ἀνθελκόμενος ἢ κατὰ τι μεριζόμενος, αὐτὸν ἐκείνον τὸν γραφόμενον ὅστις ἐστὶ, διπλασιάσει καὶ δεῖξει τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐν τῷ ὁμοιώματι τὸ ἀρχέτυπον ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι, τὸ ἐκάτερον ἐν ἐκατέρῳ παρὰ τὸ τῆς οὐσίας διάφορον."

"Ἐτερον δέ, ὅταν μετὰ τοῦ σώματος καὶ ὄραται καὶ νοῆται ὁ ἐν αὐτῷ χαρακτήρ, ὅτε καὶ ὁμώνυμα ταῦτα καλεῖσθαι ὁ Θεολόγος φησί. διατί; ὅτι τὸ μὲν κυρίως ἐστὶν ὅπερ λέγεται, τὸ δὲ οὐ κυρίως· οἷον τί λέγω; ὁ ζῶν ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ζῶν ἐστὶ κυρίως καὶ ἄνθρωπος ὅτι ἀπὸ τοῦ ζῆν παρονομασθεὶς καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄνω θρεῖν τὸν ὧπα αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἐστὶν ὅπερ λέγεται κυρίως. ἢ δὲ εἰκὼν καὶ ζῶν καλεῖται καὶ ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλ' οὐ κυρίως διότι τῆς μὲν ζωτικῆς καὶ τοῦ "ἄνω θρεῖν τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν" οὐ μετέχει δυνάμεως. ὁμοίωται δὲ ἐκείνῳ, ὃ ἢ ζωτικὴ δύναμις καὶ τὸ ἄνω βλέπειν ἐμπέφυκε κατὰ τὴν τῶν σχημάτων καὶ μορφῶν ὁμοιότητα· ὥστε τὸ μὲν εἶδος Χριστοῦ προσκυνοῦμεν λατρευτικῶς ὡς Θεοῦ καὶ Θεόν, τὴν δὲ εἰκονικὴν αὐτοῦ ὕλην, ἐν ἧ ὁ θεῖος αὐτοῦ χαρακτήρ προσκυνεῖται λατρευτικῶς, προσκυνοῦμεν τιμητικῶς ὡς θεῖον οὐσαν ἀνάθημα, ἀλλ' οὐ λατρευτικῶς. ἢ δὲ τῶν προσκυνήσεων διαφορὰ πολυσχιδῆς ἐστὶ· ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἄναρχος Πατὴρ καὶ ὁ συνάναρχος αὐτοῦ Υἱός, καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἐνανθρώπησιν, καὶ τὸ συνάναρχον αὐτῷ καὶ πανάγιον Πνεῦμα μιᾶ προσκυνήσει, συμπροσκυνοῦνται λατρευτικῶς· ὁ δὲ σαρκῶθεις μονογενῆς Υἱός τοῦ Πατρός, καθ' ἑαυτὸν θεωρούμενος, καὶ ὁ ὑπεράγιος αὐτοῦ χαρακτήρ προσκυνεῖται μιᾶ προσκυνήσει λατρευτικῶς. οὐ γὰρ συμπροσκυνεῖται ἢ σὰρξ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ ταύτης χαρακτήρ τῆς θεότητος αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ κατ' οὐσίαν συναφθεὶς αὐτῇ, ὡς φησὶν ὁ Θεολόγος, καὶ ἀεὶ ταύτη συνημμένος ὢν, μία ὑπόστασις ἐστὶ σὺν αὐτῇ· καὶ εἷς οὐ τῇ φύσει, τῇ δὲ συνόδῳ, διὰ τοῦτο καὶ προσκυνεῖται λατρευτικῶς, ἀλλ' οὐ συμπροσκυνεῖται αὐτῷ ἢ σὰρξ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ ταύτης χαρακτήρ. ἢ μέντοι Θεοτόκος καὶ πάντες οἱ ἅγιοι καὶ αἱ ταῖς ἀγίαις εἰκόσιν ἐγγραφόμενοι αὐτῶν ὑποστάσεις τιμητικῶς προσκυνοῦνται καὶ σχετικῶς διὰ τὸν κοινὸν Δεσπότην. κατ' ἀναλογίαν," ὡς φησὶν ὁ μέγας Θεόδωρος, τῆς Θεοτόκου ὡς Θεοτόκου, τῶν ἀγγέλων ὡς ἀγγέλων, καὶ τῶν ἁγίων ὡς ἁγίων· προσκυνοῦνται καὶ βασιλεῖς παρ' [446b] ἡμῶν καὶ ἄρχοντες καὶ πατέρες καὶ δεσπότες, ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν διὰ νόμον, οἱ δὲ διὰ πόθον, οἱ δὲ διὰ φόβον.

"Ἡ δὲ τῶν ὑποστάσεων διαίρεσις αὕτη ἐστὶν· ἢ μία Θεότης τρισυπόστατός ἐστιν· ὁ γὰρ Πατὴρ καὶ ὁ Υἱός καὶ τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα οὐσία μὲν ἐστὶ μία, τρεῖς δὲ ὑποστάσεις. ὑπόστασις δὲ ἐστὶν ἐκάστῳ τούτων τῶν τριῶν ὁ ἄναρχος τρόπος τῆς αἰδίου αὐτῶν ὑπάρξεως, οἱ καὶ ιδιότητες αὐτῶν καὶ εἰσὶ καὶ ὀνομάζονται· οἷον ὁ Πατὴρ ἀγέννητος, ὁ Υἱός γεννητός, τὸ Πνεῦμα ἐκπορευτόν. αἱ γοῦν ιδιότητες αὐτῶν αὗται εἰσὶν ἀκίνητοι ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἂν εἴη ιδιότης ἢ κινουμένη καὶ μεταπίπτουσα. καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὔτε ὁ Πατὴρ ἐσαρκώθη (ἵνα μὴ γεννητός καὶ Υἱός γένηται), οὔτε τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον ἐκπορευτόν ὄν (ἵνα μὴ καὶ υἱός γένηται καὶ γεννητός). ἔχουσι δὲ τοῦτο οἱ τρεῖς ἐν ἐξαιρέτον τὸ ἐμπεριχωρεῖν ἀλλήλοις ἀσυγχύτως καὶ ἀδιαίρετως· τούτων δὲ μόνος ὁ Υἱός, καίπερ ἀεὶ ἀνεκφοιτήτως ἐν τῷ Πατρὶ ἰδρυμένος ὢν, εὐδοκία τοῦ Πατρός καὶ συνεργία τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος τὴν ἡμετέραν φύσιν ἐκ τῆς ἀγίας Θεοτόκου ὑπεστήσατο ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ τῆς υἰότητος αὐτοῦ ὑποστάσει· καὶ ταύτην ἐξ αὐτῆς μὲν ἐνώσεως καὶ κοινωνίας ἐθεούργησε,

of substance, a meaning which is and is thought and is said in regard to both Christ and all the saints. For one and the same *character* will never be split in relation to itself and become two, even if it is impressed in different materials, given that there is no difference in it. The difference is of the materials, not of the *character*. However, the archetype can also be understood in two ways. First, as great Dionysius says, “when the [446a] form alone is contemplated apart from the difference of substance, that in the case of sensible images, if the painter is focused on the archetypal form, and drawn to no other visible thing or distracted in any way, he will depict what is painted as it is, and he will display the truth in the likeness, the archetype in the icon, each in each apart from their difference of substance.”³⁵

But it is something else when the *character* in it is both seen and conceived with the body, such as when the Theologian says that they are called homonyms.³⁶ Why? Because that which is said to be, either *is* properly or not. What am I saying? A living human being is properly both a *living* being and a *human being*, because in addition to being named on account of being alive he is also named on account of being the *one-who-looks-upwards*,³⁷ which is the very thing he is properly said to be. The image is also called both a living being and a human being, but not properly. Because it does not participate in “living potency” or in “looking upwards,” but it is likened to that which “living potency” and “looking upwards” are by nature, according to a likeness of outlines and shapes. As such, we adore the form of Christ, as [being] of God and God, but we worship honorably, not in terms of adoration, His iconic material as a divine offering, in which His divine *character* is adored. This difference between the kinds of worship has many sides to it. The Father is without beginning, as are both His Son (even after the incarnation) and the all-holy Spirit; they are all worshiped together in one adoration. The only-begotten Son of the Father became flesh, seen in and of Himself, worshiped together with His beyond holy *character* in one adoration. For His flesh is not worshiped together with the *character* of His very divinity, but according to the substance joined to it, as the Theologian says, and being always united in it, it is one hypostasis with it, and one not by nature, but by union.³⁸ For this reason [the hypostasis] is also worshiped in terms of adoration, but His flesh and its *character* are not worshiped with it. However, the Theotokos and all of the saints and their hypostases depicted in the holy icons are worshiped honorably and relatively, on account of their common Lord in due proportion as great Theodore says, [the hypostasis] of the Theotokos as Theotokos, of the angels as angels, and of the saints as saints.³⁹ And emperors and rulers [446b] and fathers and lords are worshiped by us, some in accordance with the law, some out of desire, others out of fear.

The hypostases are distinguished in the following way. The one divinity is in three hypostases, for the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are of one substance, but three hypostases. The hypostasis of each of these three is the mode-without-beginning of their eternal existence, which their specific qualities both are and are [so] named; for instance, the Father is unbegotten, the Son begotten, the Spirit proceeding. Their specific qualities are immovable since a specific quality could not be moved or changed. And therefore the Father did not become incarnate, so as not to become begotten and the Son. Nor did the

φθαρτὴν δὲ ἐφύλαξεν αὐτὴν μέχρι τοῦ πάθους διὰ⁴ τὸ πάθος πλὴν ἀληθῶς τεθεωμένην. μετὰ μέντοι τὸ πάθος καὶ τὴν ἔγερσιν ἄφθαρτόν τε ἀπρόσιτον τῇ φθορᾷ κατεσκεύασε· καὶ ἔστιν ἡμῖν ὁ Χριστὸς εἰς τῆς ἁγίας Τριάδος καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἐνανθρώπησιν ὡσπερ καὶ πρὸ ταύτης ὑπῆρχεν υἱὸς μονογενῆς καὶ Σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου, μὴ δὲ μιᾶς προσθήκης τῷ Τρισαγίῳ ὕμνῳ τῶν ἄνω πασῶν δυνάμεων προσγενομένης⁵ ἐκ τοῦ σάρκα γενέσθαι τὸν Λόγον καὶ σκηνώσαι ἐν ἡμῖν. τούτου τοίνυν τὸν θεοῦπόστατον σωματικὸν χαρακτήρα Θεὸν εἰδότες, καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἁγίαις εἰκόσιν, ὡς εἴρηται, ὡς Θεὸν καὶ Δεσπότην σεβόμεθα καὶ προσκυνοῦμεν λατρευτικῶς. τὴν μέντοι εἰκονικὴν ὕλην, τιμῶμεν ὡς θεῖον ἀνάθημα τοῦ Θεοῦ τυγχάνουσας, καὶ προσκυνοῦμεν ταύτην καὶ ἀσπαζόμεθα, οὐ λατρευτικῶς ἀλλὰ τιμητικῶς τε καὶ σχετικῶς διὰ τὸν τοῦ Χριστοῦ χαρακτήρα· καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης δὲ φύσεως ὡς Δαμασκηνὸς φησὶν ἅγιος Ἰωάννης· "ὑπόστασις ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ τῆς ἐκάστου ἡμῶν ὑπάρξεως καθ' ἑαυτὴν· σύμψηξις ψυχῆς τε καὶ σώματος· μένει γὰρ τὸ τε σῶμα καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ αἰεὶ μίαν ἀρχὴν ἔχοντα τῆς ἑαυτῶν ὑπάρξεως τε καὶ ὑποστάσεως κἂν χωρισθῶσιν ἀλλήλων· εἰ γὰρ καὶ χωρίζεται ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦ σώματος ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ, ἀλλ' ἡ ὑπόστασις ἀμφοτέρων μία καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ ἐστὶ." τὰ γὰρ ἅπας καθ' αὐτὰ ὑποστάντα, ἀδύνατον ἐτέραν [447a] ἀρχὴν ὑποστάσεως ἔχειν· ὑπόστασις γὰρ ἐστὶν, ὡς εἴρηται, ἡ καθ' αὐτὸ ὑπαρξίς. οὐκοῦν⁶ καὶ ὁ σωματικὸς χαρακτήρ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἡ ὑπόστασις αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν ὡς ἐν αὐτῷ ὑποστάς καὶ Θεὸς ἐστὶν, ὡσπερ γὰρ ἡ θεότης ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς τοῦ Ἐμμανουὴλ οὐ διηρέθη ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ, οὕτως οὐδὲ ἐκ τοῦ ἁγίου αὐτοῦ χαρακτήρος ποτὲ χωρισθήσεται. [455b] ἀναθήματα δὲ εἰσι τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ αἱ εἰκονικαὶ ὕλαι, καὶ τὰ ἱερά καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ σκεύη πάντα καὶ ἀπλῶς πᾶσα ὕλη ἀνατιθεμένη τῷ Θεῷ, καθὼς ὁ νομοθέτης εἶπε Μωσῆς· "ὅτι πᾶν ἀνάθημα, ὃ ἀναθῆ τις τῷ Θεῷ ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπου ἕως κτήνους καὶ ἕως ἀγροῦ κατασχέσεως αὐτοῦ, οὐκ ἀποδοθήσεται, οὐκ ἀνταλλαχθήσεται, οὐκ ἐκποιθήσεται, ἅγιον ἁγίων ἐστὶ τῷ Κυρίῳ." δείκνυσι δὲ τὸ τοῦ νοσησίου καὶ τῆς ἐκ τούτων μικρᾶς ἀφαιρέσεως, ἀσεβὲς ὁμοῦ καὶ ἐπισφαλὲς ἐν ἱερικῷ, ἀπληστος στρατιώτης ὁ Ἄχαρ, λιθόλευστος γεγωνῶς. εἰ δὲ καὶ τὸ τούτου ἀσεβήματος μέγεθος, τῆς ἀφαιρέσεως λέγω τῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀναθημάτων παρ' ὁποιοῦδήτινος ἂν τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τολμητῆ, βούλει μαθεῖν, καὶ ἐκ τῶν πραγμάτων τούτῳ μοι νόησον, πάντως δὲ οὐκ ἀμφιβάλλεις, οὔτε σύ, οὔτε τις ἄλλος τῶν εὐσεβῶν ὅτι ὡσπερ ὁ ἄνθρωπος . . . ἀσυγκρίτως ἐλάττωνά εἰσι κατὰ τὸ σέβας καὶ τὴν τιμὴν τῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ πραγμάτων. ἴδωμεν οὖν τί Παῦλος ὀνομάζει [456a] τοὺς πλεονέκτας καὶ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ἄρπαγας πραγμάτων. ὁ πλεονέκτης, φησί, εἰδωλολάτρης ἐστὶ. καὶ ἡ πλεονεξία εἰδωλολατρεία ἐστὶν, εἰ δὲ τις παραναγινώσκει τὰ τοῦ Θεολόγου δευτέραν εἰδωλολατρείαν τὴν πλεονεξίαν ἀποκαλοῦντος, ἐπιστόμισον αὐτόν, εἰπὼν ὅτι δευτέραν ταύτην οὐ τῇ ἀξίᾳ καὶ τῷ μεγέθει ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ εἴρηκεν, ὡς πρὸ τοῦ μεγάλου ἀποστόλου μιᾶς γινωσκομένης εἰδωλολατρείας, εἰ δὲ ὁ τὰ τῶν ὁμοδούλων ἀφαιρούμενος εἰδωλολάτρης ἐστὶ, τί ἂν εἴποι τις εἶναι τὸν ἀφαιρούμενον τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀναθήματα; εἰ δ' ἐπὶ τούτοις ἄπορος ἡ εὕρεσις τῆς προσφόρου κλήσεως, ἀπορωτέρα πολλῷ πλέον φανεῖται ἐπὶ τῶν συντριβόντων μετὰ τῶν ὑλῶν καὶ τὰς ἐγγραφομένας ταύτας ὑποστάσεις. καὶ πάλιν· εἰ ὡς Θεὸς καὶ Δεσπότης προσκυνεῖται καὶ σέβεται ὁ Χριστὸς ἐν τῇ ἁγίᾳ εἰκόνι αὐτοῦ, ὁ τοῦτον συντρίβων ποῦ καὶ μετὰ τίνων ταχθήσεται τέως⁷ ἐγὼ μὲν, παντάπασιν εἰπεῖν ἀπορῶ. ἡ μέντοι ἁγία ἐβδόμη Σύνοδος ἐν μὲν τῷ Συνοδικῷ αὐτῆς τοὺς ἀποβαλλομένους τὰς εἰκονικὰς ἀναζωγραφήσεις καὶ τοὺς χρωμένους ὡς

Spirit as proceeding [become incarnate], so as not to become the Son and begotten. And the three possess this one exceptional feature: their interpenetration by one another is without confusion or distinction. However, of these only the Son, although established eternally inseparably from the Father, with the approval of the Father and the cooperation of the Holy Spirit assumed our nature from the holy Theotokos in the hypostasis particular to His Son-ship. He divinized this [nature] from His union and communion with it and preserved it as perishable up to the time of His passion even though it was truly divinized on account of that passion. However, after the passion and resurrection He maintained [it] as imperishable and immune to destruction. And He is the Anointed for us, one [member] of the Holy Trinity, even after the incarnation since He existed as the only-begotten Son and Savior of the world before it, [which is why] no qualification is made to any of the powers on high in the *Trisagion* hymn after the Logos assumed flesh and dwelt among us. Therefore, knowing that His divinely hypostatic bodily *character* [is] God, we also revere and adore [Him] as God and Lord in the holy icons. However, we honor the iconic material as a divine offering to God, and we venerate and embrace this, not in terms of adoration, but honorably and relatively on account of the *character* of Christ. [And in the case of human nature], as Saint John of Damascus says: “[its] hypostasis [in and of itself] is in the beginning of each of our existences a unity of both body and soul. For the body and soul always remain in possession of one beginning of their existence and hypostasis, even if they have become separated from one another.”⁴⁰ “For even if the soul is separated from the body in death, the hypostasis of both is one and the same.”⁴¹ What once existed in itself cannot possess a different [447a] beginning of existence; for a hypostasis is, as has been said, an existence in itself.⁴² Therefore, the bodily character of Christ is also His hypostasis, existing in it, and is God. For just as the divinity of Emmanuel was not separated from His flesh at His death, so too will He never be separated from His holy *character*. [455b] Iconic material, holy objects and other [liturgical] instruments are all offerings [to] God, and all matter is simply offered to God, as the law-giver Moses said: “But nothing that a person owns and offers to the Lord – whether a human being or an animal or family land – may be sold or exchanged or withdrawn; everything so offered is most holy to the Lord.”⁴³ And when Achan, the greedy soldier, was stoned to death, he demonstrated how impious and dangerous his stealing even a few of these things from Jericho was.⁴⁴ And if you want to learn the magnitude of this impiety, that is, of the theft of what is offered to God by whomever might dare to do so, consider this [with me] [based on] the things [themselves] and you [will] have no doubts, neither you nor any of the pious, because just like man . . .⁴⁵ [the things of man] are incomparably less [worthy] of respect and honor than the things of God. Therefore let us note what Paul calls [456a] those who are avaricious and steal the things of men: he claims that the avaricious one is an idolater, and that avarice is idolatry.⁴⁶ But if someone misreads the words of the Theologian, who calls avarice a second idolatry,⁴⁷ you should cut him off, saying that he called [avarice] a second [idolatry] not because of its [lesser] value or magnitude, but on account of its [subsequent recognition], since prior to the great apostle, only one idolatry was known. But if the one who steals from his fellow servants is an idolater, what would

κοινοῖς τοῖς ἱεροῖς κειμηλίοις καὶ τοῖς εὐαγέσι μοναστηρίοις (ἐπισκόπους μὲν ὄντας ἢ κληρικούς καθαιρεῖσθαι προστάσσει, μονάζοντας δὲ ἢ λαϊκοὺς τῆς κοινωνίας ἀφορίζει). εἶτα καὶ ἀναθεματίζει λέγουσα· "οἱ μὲν οὕτως ἔχοντες ἀνάθημα ἔστωσαν· οἱ μὲν οὕτω φρονοῦντες πόρρω τῆς ἐκκλησίας μενέτωσαν· ἡμεῖς τοὺς προστιθέντας τι ἢ ἀφαιροῦντας τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἀναθεματίζομεν." ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ ιγ' αὐτῆς κανόνι ἐρμηνεύουσα τί ἐστὶν ἡ καθαιρέσις τῶν τοῦ ἱερατικοῦ κατάλογου καὶ τί ὁ ἀφορισμὸς τῶν μοναζόντων καὶ τῶν λαϊκῶν, τῶν διακρατούντων δηλαδὴ μοναστήρια καὶ ἱεροῦς οἴκους καὶ μὴ ἀποδιδόντων ἵνα κατὰ τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἀποκατασταθῶσιν, ἐπάγει τῇ τοιαύτῃ αὐτῶν καθαιρέσι καὶ τῷ ἀφορισμῷ λέγουσα· καὶ "ἔστωσαν κατάκριτοι ἀπὸ Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ καὶ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος, καὶ τετάχθωσαν ὅπου ὁ σκώλης οὐ τελευτᾷ, καὶ τὸ πῦρ οὐ σβέννυται." ἔτι τῇ τοῦ Κυρίου φωνῇ ἐναντιοῦνται τῇ λεγούσῃ "μὴ ποιεῖτε τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρὸς μου, οἶκον ἐμπορίου." ταῦτα τοῖνυν ἀναντιβρόχως ἐπὶ πλέον ἔσονται τοῖς τὸν θεοῦπόστατον χαρακτῆρα τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν ταῖς εἰκονικαῖς ὕλαις τε συγκαταλύουσι καὶ ταῖς ὕλαις χρωμέναις ὡς κοινοῖς καὶ τοῖς τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης χρήσεως πράγμασι, κἂν βασιλεῖς ὧσιν οἱ τοιοῦτοι, κἂν ἄρχοντες, κἂν ἀρχιερεῖς· ἐν γὰρ τῇ σοφίᾳ Σολομῶν οὕτω βοᾷ καὶ κηρῦσσει· "ἀκούσατέ μοι βασιλεῖς καὶ σύνετε, μάθετε δικασταὶ περάτων γῆς, ἐνωπίσασθε οἱ κρατοῦντες [456b] πλήθους καὶ⁸ γεγαυρωμένοι ἐπὶ ὄχλοις ἐθνῶν· ὅτι ἐδόθη παρὰ Κυρίου ἢ κράτησις ὑμῖν⁹ καὶ ἡ δυναστεία παρὰ Ὑψίστου, ὃς ἐξετάσει ὑμῶν τὰ¹⁰ ἔργα καὶ τὰς βουλὰς διερευνήσει· ὅτι ὑπηρεταὶ ὄντες, τῆς ἐκείνου βασιλείας οὐκ ἐκρίνατε ὀρθῶς οὐδὲ ἐφυλάξατε¹¹ τὸν νόμον οὐδὲ κατὰ τὴν βουλήν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐπορεύθητε. φρικτῶς καὶ ταχέως ἐπελεύσεται ὑμῖν, ὅτι κρίσις ἀπότομος ἐν τοῖς ὑπερέχουσι γίνεται. ὁ γὰρ ἐλάχιστος σύγγνωστός ἐστιν ἔλέους, δυνατοὶ δὲ δυνατῶς ἔτασθήσονται· οὐ γὰρ ὑποστελεῖται¹² πρόσωπον ὁ πάντων Δεσπότης, οὐδὲ ἐντραπήσεται μέγεθος, ὅτι μικρὸν καὶ μέγαν αὐτὸς ἐποίησεν ὁμοίως τε προνοήσει περὶ πάντων, τοῖς δὲ κραταιοῖς ἰσχυρὰ ἐφίσταται ἔρευνα."

Τοιαῦταί σοι,¹³ περιπόθητε καὶ εὐσεβέστατε ἡμῶν ἀδελφέ, αἱ περὶ τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως τῶν χριστιανῶν πληροφορία ἡμῶν· καὶ τὸ τῆς γραφῆς ποιῶν οὐκ ἐπαυσάμην "διὰ Σιών," λεγούσης, "οὐ σιωπήσομαι· καὶ διὰ Ἱερουσαλήμ, οὐκ ἀνήσω" διατί ἵνα μὴ τῇ ὑποστολῇ καθὼς ἐν τῷ Ἀββακούμ γέγραπται τὸ μὴ εὐδοκεῖσθαι κατακριθῶ. φοβεῖ γὰρ με καὶ τὰ τοῦ Ἰεζεκιήλ λέγοντος· "ὕψις ἀνθρώπου, ἐν τῷ λέγειν τῷ ἀνόμῳ θανατωθήσῃ, καὶ σὺ οὐ διεστείλω¹⁴ αὐτῷ· οὐδὲ ἐλάλησας τοῦ διαστείλασθαι τῷ ἀνόμῳ τοῦ ἀποστρέψαι ἀπὸ τῶν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ, τοῦ ζῆσαι αὐτόν· ὁ ἄνομος¹⁵ ἐκεῖνος τῇ ἀδικίᾳ αὐτοῦ ἀποθανεῖται, καὶ τὸ αἷμα ἐκ τῆς χειρὸς σου ἐκζητήσω." φοβεῖ δέ με πλέον, καὶ ἡ κατὰ τοῦ πονηροῦ δούλου φοβερὰ ἀπόφασις, τοῦ τὸ δεσποτικὸν κατορύξαντος τάλαντον, καὶ μὴ καταβαλόντος τοῦτο τοῖς τραπεζίταις.

someone call a person who steals what has been offered to God? And if in these instances it is difficult to determine a proper definition, it will appear much more difficult in the case of those who destroy along with their material the hypostases depicted [in them]. And again: if Christ is venerated and revered in His holy icon as God and Lord, where and with whom will the one who destroys this be [fated to stand] at the time [of Judgment]? I have no idea what to say. The holy Seventh Synod in its *Synodikon* commands that bishops or clerics who remove the iconic images and use the holy implements and monasteries as common items be deposed, and that monks and laymen be excommunicated. Then it anathematizes [them]⁴⁸, saying “Let those who behave in this way be anathematized; let them remain far from the Church. We anathematize those who add something to or take away something from the Church.”⁴⁹ Moreover, in its 13th Canon the [Synod] expands on the removal of the priestly order as well as the excommunication of the monks and laymen, that is, of those who hold sway over monasteries and holy houses, and do not allow them to be restored according to their ancient [rule] – adding to such removal and excommunication the statement, “Let them stand condemned by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and let them stand where the worm never dies and the fire is never extinguished.”⁵⁰ They are opposed to the word of the Lord saying, “Do not make of my Father’s house a place of business.”⁵¹ And these things will be even more indisputable [in the case of] those who destroy along with its iconic materials the divinely hypostatic *character* of Christ and our God and then use these materials as common items for man’s employment, even if they be emperors or rulers or chief priests. For in [his book of] Wisdom, Solomon cries out and proclaims, “Hear my words, therefore, kings, and understand; learn, you magistrates of the earth’s expanse! Give ear, you who have power over [456b] multitudes and lord it over throngs of peoples! Because authority was given you by the Lord and sovereignty by the Most High, who shall probe your works and scrutinize your counsels! Because, though you were ministers of his kingdom, you did not judge rightly, and did not keep the law, nor walk according to the will of God, terribly and swiftly he shall come against you, because severe judgment awaits the exalted – for the lowly may be pardoned out of mercy but the mighty shall be mightily put to the test. For the Ruler of all shows no partiality, nor does He fear greatness, because He Himself made the great as well as the small, and provides for all alike; but for those in power a rigorous scrutiny impends.”⁵² Such are the certainties of our orthodox Christian faith, my most desired and pious brother. And I have not ceased from enacting the passage from Scripture that says, “For Zion’s sake I will not be silent, and on account of Jerusalem I will not yield.”⁵³ Why? So that I am not condemned, as it is written in Habakkuk, for being unworthy due to [my lack of courage].⁵⁴ For the words of Ezekiel frighten me, “Son of man . . . when I say to a wicked person, ‘You will surely die,’ and you do not warn them or speak out to dissuade them from their evil ways in order to save their life, that wicked person will die for their sin, and I will hold you accountable for their blood.”⁵⁵ The fearsome decision against the wicked servant, the one who buried his master’s money and did not entrust it to bankers, frightens me even more.⁵⁶

Commentary

1. The punctuation of Lauriotes' edition has been altered in order to better serve the modern reader. Lauriotes' punctuation is often inconsistent and seems to represent at times the manuscript tradition and at others the editor's preferences.
2. μὲν added.
3. Emended from: σημαίνόμενοι.
4. Emended from: διὸ.
5. Emended from: προσγενομένη.
6. Emended from: Οὐκ οὖν.
7. Emended from: τέω.
8. Emended from: ἡμῖν.
9. καὶ added.
10. Emended from: σου.
11. Emended from: τὸ.
12. Emended from: ἐφυλάσασθε.
13. Emended from: ὑποστέλλεται.
14. Emended from: διαστείλω.
15. Emended from: ἄμεμος.
16. Gregory Nazianzos, *On the Holy Lights* (Oration 39), PG 36: 348, ll. 4–5.
17. Col. 1:15.
18. Basil of Caesarea, *Against Eunomius* 5, PG 29: 552.
19. Gen. 1:27.
20. Gen. 5:3.
21. Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit*, 18.45.
22. Basil of Caesarea, *On the Holy Spirit*, 18.45.
23. *On the Holy Baptism* (Oration 39), PG 36: 396.38.
24. Gregory Nazianzos, *Fourth Theological Oration* (Oration 30), 20.
25. Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57.79–80 – the letter is addressed to his uncle Plato. This letter appears in the florilegium of Isaac sebastokrator.
26. *The Council in Trullo Revisited*, p. 163.
27. Mansi 13.377E.
28. This passage also appears at the end of the section from the Seventh Oecumenical Council that was read at the Blachernai synod and that was regularly read during the Feast of Orthodoxy (PG 127: 980B–D). The passage is based upon Mansi 13.377DE, but the Mansi edition of the Council does not include this final clause: Δῆλον δὲ τοῦτο καὶ τοῖς πρὸ ἡμῶν πεφανερωμένον καὶ κεκηρυγμένον καὶ ἐγνωσμένον, ὡς ἐξ εἰκόνων καὶ ἐν εἰκόσι τιμᾶται ἢ ἀλήθεια καὶ προσκυνεῖται. The additional clause, which may be a scholion (email correspondence with Erich Lamberz), is found in some manuscripts of the Acts of the Council and in manuscripts of the Canons from the Council. On this, see the edition of the *Horos* of the council, “Concilium Nicaenum II 787,” eds. E. Lamberz and J. B. Uphus 2006, p. 315 n. 198.
29. Mansi 13.377DE.
30. Grumel 1950: 135–52.

31. Cf. Gouillard, *Synodikon of Orthodoxy*, p. 51, ll. 101–06. The paragraph from which this passage was taken was read in its entirety: see Grumel and Darrouzès 1989 965, p. 427–28.
 32. Gouillard, *Synodikon of Orthodoxy*, p. 51, ll. 102–03.
 33. The reference is to Julian's response to Artemios found in *Acta Sanctorum* 20 October, col. 872A: τούτων τοίνυν εικόνας στήσαντες, σέβουσιν ἄνθρωποι καὶ τιμῶσιν· ἅμα δὲ καὶ μύθους τινὰς πρὸς ἡδονὴν ἀναπλάσαντες, οὐχ ὡς θεοὺς δὲ τιμῶσι τὰς εἰκόνας αὐτῶν, ἅπαγε· τοῦτο γὰρ τὸ ἀπλούστερον καὶ ἀγροικικὸν τῶν ἀνθρώπων διαλαμβάνεται γένος· ἐπεὶ οἱ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἀσπαζόμενοι, καὶ τὰ των θεῶν ἀκριβῶς ἐξετάζοντες, οἶδασι τίνι τὴν τιμὴν ἀπονέμουσι, καὶ πρὸς τινὰ διαβαίνει ἢ τῶν θείων ἀγαλμάτων προσκύνησις.
 34. Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 445, 16–19. The letter is addressed to Severianos and is listed in the florilegium of Isaac sebastokrator.
 35. (Pseudo-)Dionysius, *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 96.5–9.
 36. Gregory Nazianzos, *Third Theological Oration* (Oration 29), 14.3–4.
 37. ἄνω θρεῖν τὸν ὄππα = ἄν-θρῶ-πος. Etymology first attested in the *Etymological Lexicon* by Orion of Thebes (fifth century.), p. 174, ll. 1–2.
 38. cf. Gregory Nazianzos, *On the Holy Spirit* (Oration 31), 18.7–8.
 39. This passage has not yet been identified in the work of Theodore Stoudites. A related text can be found in Patriarch Photios' *Letter to Boris/Michael of Bulgaria*: Διὸ καὶ τῶν μακαρίων ἐκείνων καὶ ἱερῶν ἀνδρῶν ἡ θεοφόρος καὶ ἁγία πανήγυρις οὐ μόνον τὴν εἰκόνα Χριστοῦ, καθάπερ ἔφημεν, ἀλλὰ γε δὴ καὶ τῆς παναχράντου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου δεσποίνης ἡμῶν θεοτόκου καὶ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων τὰς ἱεράς εἰκόνας κατὰ ἀναλογίαν τῆς τῶν πρωτοτύπων ὑπεροχῆς καὶ σεβασμιότητος τιμᾶσθαι καὶ προσκυνεῖσθαι κοινῶν θεσπισμάτων ὁροις ἐπεσφράγισέ τε καὶ ἐπεκύρωσεν in Photius, *Epistulae et Amphilochia*, ep. 1, ll. 454–59, ed. B. Laourdas and L.G. Westerink, vol. 1, 16.
 40. John of Damascus, *Dialectic or Philosophical Chapters*, 67.21–24.
 41. John of Damascus, *Dialectic or Philosophical Chapters*, 67.19–21.
 42. Cf. John of Damascus, *Dialectic or Philosophical Chapters*, 67.34–36.
 43. Lev. 27:28.
 44. Jos. 7:1–26.
 45. A gap is marked in the Lauriotes edition.
 46. 1Cor. 5:10–11.
 47. Gregory Nazianzos, *On the Holy Lights* (Oration 39) PG 36: 357, l. 24–26.
 48. Mansi 13.380B.
 49. Mansi 13.397CD.
 50. Mansi 13.431D.
 51. Jn. 2:16.
 52. Sap. Sal. 6:1–8.
 53. Is. 62:1. See also Gregory Nazianzos, *Third Homily on Peace* (Oration 22), PG 35: 1149 l. 36–39.
 54. Hab. 2:4.
 55. Ezech. 3:17–18.
 56. Mt. 25:14–30.
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Text B | Eustratios of Nicaea (c.1050/60–c.1120)**A Syllogistic Demonstration**

Ed.: A. Demetrakopoulos, *Ἑλλησιαστικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη* (Leipzig, 1866), 151–60

MSS.:¹³⁵ Utrecht, University Library ms. 3 (s. ?XII), ff. 71r–76r

Moscow, State Historical Museum, Sinod. Gr. 239 (366) (s. XIV), ff. 110r–118v

Other Translations: None

Significance

Eustratios of Nicaea's *Syllogistic Demonstration* presents a sustained argument against the definition of the icon defined by Leo of Chalcedon. Eustratios argues that the icon should not be adored because divinity cannot be present in the material icon. Above all, he emphasizes that painting is an imitation of the accidental and human attributes of its subject.

The Author

Eustratios, Metropolitan of Nicaea, was a student of the philosopher John Italos (c.1025–post 1082), who survived the downfall of his teacher and became a favored theologian in the court of Alexios I Komnenos. He debated with Catholics and Monophysites and also wrote commentaries on Aristotle's works. In 1117 he was condemned for his excessive use of syllogisms to resolve theological problems.¹³⁶

Text and Context

See Introduction.

¹³⁵ Consulted.

¹³⁶ For introductions to Eustratios and to his writings on the icons see Moutaphes 2006; Barber 2007: 99–130.

Text

Τοῦ αὐτοῦ περὶ τοῦ τρόπου, τιμῆς τε καὶ προσκυνήσεως τῶν σεβασμίων εἰκόνων συλλογιστική ἀπόδειξις.

[151] Ἡ λατρεία μόνη ἀρμόττει καθ' αὐτὸ τῆ θεότητι. μόνη θεότης ἡ ἅγια Τριάς· ἡ λατρεία ἄρα μόνη ἀρμόττει τῆ ἅγια Τριάδι. ὅτι δὲ μόνη καθ' αὐτὸ τῆ θεότητι ἡ λατρεία προσφέρεσθαι ἐποφείλεται, καὶ ὁ γραπτὸς νόμος καὶ ἔτι μᾶλλον ὁ πνευματικὸς παραδίδωσι, μηδενὶ τῶν δευτέρων καὶ κτιστῶν ταύτην προσφέρειν διδάσκοντες, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἐνὶ καὶ μόνῳ Θεῷ τῷ ἐν Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ καὶ ἀγίῳ Πνεύματι προσκυνουμένῳ. ταύτης τῆς ὁμολογίας ὡς ἀσφαλοῦς [152] ἐχόμενοι πείσματος, ἐροῦμεν καὶ περὶ τῶν ἐξῆς, πιστεύοντες ὡς οὐδεὶς χριστιανῶν πρὸς αὐτὴν ἀντιστήσεται, εἰ μὴ πού τὸν χριστιανὸν ψεύδεται ἐλληνίζων τῆ γνώμη καὶ πολυθεῖαν τιθέμενος, ἢ θεοποιῶν τὴν κτίσιν παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα· ἐξῆς δὴ φάμεν. τὸ πρόσλημμα ἦνται μὲν καθ' ὑπόστασιν τῷ θείῳ Λόγῳ, διάφορον δὲ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ τῆ οὐσίας. τοῦτο ὠμολόγηται μὲν τοῖς ὀρθοδόξοις ἅπασιν, πειρατέον δὲ ὅμως καὶ διὰ συλλογισμοῦ παραστήσαι. ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος ὁ αὐτὸς τῆ οὐσίας τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ τῷ Πνεύματι· τὸ πρόσλημμα οὐκ ἔστι ταυτὸν τῆ οὐσίας τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ τῷ Πνεύματι· τὸ πρόσλημμα ἄρα οὐκ ἔστι ταυτὸν τῆ οὐσίας τῷ Θεῷ Λόγῳ. ἴνα δὲ μὴ ἐκ δύο μερικῶν δοκοίη ἀποβῆναι τὸ συναγόμενον, προσθετέον, ὅτι ὧν δύο τὸ μὲν τινι ταυτὸν, τὸ δὲ οὐ ταυτὸν τῷ αὐτῷ τούτῳ, ταῦτα καὶ ἀλλήλοισι οὐ ταυτὰ καθ' ἑκείνο, καθ' ὃ τὸ μὲν ταυτὸν ἦν, τὸ δὲ διέφερον· εἰ δὲ οὐ ταυτὰ, ἕτερα· ἕτερα ἄρα τῆ οὐσίας ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος καὶ τὸ πρόσλημμα· εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, οὐ συναριθμοῖν Τριάδι τὸ πρόσλημμα κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ φύσιν· μόνη δὲ τῆ ἅγια Τριάδι ἀποκεκλήρωτο ἡ λατρεία καθ' αὐτό· τὸ ἄρα πρόσλημμα οὐκ ἔστι λατρευτὸν καθ' αὐτό, ἀλλ' ἢ διὰ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου ὑπόστασιν, ἣ τινι ἦνται ἀσυγχύτως καὶ καθ' ὑπόστασιν ἀδιαιρέτως. ἔτι τὸ πρόσλημμα κτιστὸν· οὐδὲν κτιστὸν λατρευτὸν καθ' αὐτό· τὸ πρόσλημμα ἄρα οὐκ ἔστι λατρευτὸν καθ' αὐτό. ὁ Πατὴρ λατρευτὸς ὡς Θεός· ὁ Υἱὸς λατρευτὸς ὡς Θεός· τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον λατρευτὸν ὡς Θεός· καὶ ταῦτα μόνα, μιᾶς ὄντα φύσεως, τοῖς χριστιανοῖς ὡς εἰς Θεὸς λατρεύεται, ὑποστατικοῖς μὲν ιδιώμασι διαφέροντα, ἠνωμένα δὲ οὐσίας ταυτότητι. τὰ τρία δὲ πάντα, καὶ τὸ τρεῖς πάντη, ὡς τοῦ πάντα προσρήματος καὶ τοῦ πάντη ἐπὶ τοῦ πρώτου τρία, καὶ τρεῖς προσαρμοζομένων· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο μόνας ἀπ' ἀρχῆς [153] εἰς δυάδα κινηθεῖσα μέχρι τριάδος ἔστη, ὁ μέγας ἐν θεολογίᾳ φησὶ Γρηγόριος· καὶ τοῦ ἡμετέρου νοῦ κατὰ τὴν περὶ Θεοῦ ὀρθὴν κινηθέντος ἔννοιαν καὶ τὸ πᾶν καὶ τέλειον πρῶτον καθ' ἀριθμὸν τῷ παντελείῳ προσαρμόσαντος Θεῷ· καὶ πάντη διαστατὸν τὸ τριχῆ διαστατὸν, ὡς μίμησιν φέρον τοῦ ὑπερτελείου Θεοῦ, καὶ τὰ πάντα ὄντος ἀρχηγικῶς, ἵν' ὡσπερ ἐκεῖνος ἐν τριάδι νοούμενος εἶδος τῶν νοητῶν ἔστι πρῶτον πάντα περιέχων καὶ περατῶν. αὐτὸς δὲ ὑπ' οὐδενὸς περατούμενος. οὕτως ἦ καὶ πρῶτον εἶδος καὶ τέλειον τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἐν τρισὶν ἀπαρτιζόμενον, τὴν τε ὕλην πρῶτως ὀρίζον καὶ περατοῦν καὶ πᾶσιν ἐπόμενον τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς τε καὶ φυσικοῖς· ὥστε τὰ τρία πάντα εἰπεῖν ἢ πᾶν οὐκ ἄτοπον. κἂν τῆ φύσει ἐν ἔστιν ὁ Πατὴρ ὁ Υἱὸς καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα· τῷ γὰρ ἀριθμῷ τριοδοῦμενα τοῖς προσώποις πληθύνονται, ταῖς ὑποστατικαῖς ιδιότησι διαφέροντα. ῥητέον οὖν οὕτως. πᾶν τὸ λατρευτὸν Θεὸς ἔστι τῆ ἑαυτοῦ φύσει· πᾶν δὲ τῆ ἑαυτοῦ φύσει Θεός, ἀδιάστατόν τε καὶ ἀσχημάτιστον· πᾶν ἄρα τὸ λατρευτὸν ἀδιάστατόν τε καὶ ἀσχημάτιστον. εἰ δὲ τοῦτο,

Translation

[151] By the same author, A Syllogistic Demonstration concerning the Manner, Honor, and Veneration of Venerable Icons.¹

Only adoration is appropriate for the divinity per se. The Holy Trinity alone is divinity. Therefore adoration alone is appropriate for the Holy Trinity. Both the written and even more so the spiritual law pass down to us that adoration should be offered to the divinity per se alone, teaching that this may not be offered to any secondary or created things, but to the one and only God who is worshipped in the Father and Son and Holy Spirit.

Having this confession as a fixed anchor, [152] we shall also speak about the following, believing that no Christian will stand against it, unless perhaps the Christian is deceived by pagan thought into positing polytheism or deifying the creation alongside the Creator. In fact we say this: while the *proslomma*² has been united hypostatically with God the divine Logos, it is substantially different from this. While all the Orthodox have professed this, it should also be set forth by means of logic.

God the Logos is of the same substance as the Father and the Spirit. The *proslomma* is not of the same substance as the Father and the Spirit. Therefore, the *proslomma* is not of the same substance as God the Logos. So that the conclusion would not appear to derive from two partial premises, it should be added, that while one of the two is the same as something else, the other is not the same as this something, and these are not the same according to that which the one was the same and the other different; if [they are] not the same, then [they are] different: therefore God the Logos and the *proslomma* are of a different substance. If this is so, the *proslomma* by its nature is not to be included in the Trinity.

Adoration per se has been allotted to the Holy Trinity alone. Therefore, the *proslomma* is not adored per se, but on account of the hypostasis of God the Logos, to which it has been united without confusion and indivisibly.

Furthermore, the *proslomma* is a created thing; nothing created is adored per se; therefore, the *proslomma* is not adored per se. The Father is adored as God; the Son is adored as God; the Holy Spirit is adored as God; and these alone, being of one nature, are adored as one God by Christians, for while differing in their hypostatic properties, they are united by an identity of substance.

They are all together three as well as entirely *the* three, where “all together” reflects the first three as a plurality and “entirely” [the second as a unity]; and *for this reason the Monad from the beginning having been moved* [153] *into the Dyad stopped at the Triad*,³ as Gregory the Great in theology says; and so our mind has been moved according to the correct conception of God and has attached the whole and complete first number to the all perfect God. And what has extension in any way has dimension in three ways, as it bears an imitation of the God who is beyond perfection and is primarily everything. So that just as He [God] conceived in the Trinity is the form of what is intelligible, containing and limiting everything first, though God Himself is limited by nothing, He is also the first and perfect form of what is sensible, complete in three, initially defining and limiting

πᾶν τὸ εἰκονιστὸν διαστατὸν καὶ σχηματιστὸν· ἔστιν ἐν δευτέρῳ σχήματι συλλογίσασθαι οὕτως. πᾶν καθ' αὐτὸ λατρευτὸν ἀδιάστατον· οὐδὲν εἰκονιστὸν ἀδιάστατον· οὐδὲν ἄρα εἰκονιστὸν καθ' αὐτὸ λατρευτὸν. καὶ αὐθις. πᾶν τὸ καθ' αὐτὸ λατρευτὸν ἀσχημάτιστον· οὐδὲν εἰκονιστὸν ἀσχημάτιστον· οὐδὲν ἄρα εἰκονιστὸν καθ' αὐτὸ λατρευτὸν. ὅτι δὲ πᾶν εἰκονιστὸν διαστατὸν καὶ σχηματιστὸν δῆλον. πᾶν γὰρ εἰκονιστὸν γραπτὸν· πᾶν δὲ γραπτὸν γραμμαῖς τυπωτὸν· πᾶν δὲ γραμμαῖς τυπωτὸν διαστατὸν· πᾶν ἄρα εἰκονιστὸν διαστατὸν, ἀλλὰ καὶ σχηματιστὸν. πᾶσα γὰρ γραμμὴ εὐθεῖα ἢ περιφερής, ἢ ἐκ τούτων σύνθετος, [154] ἥτις ἐστὶν ἢ ἐλικοειδής· ταῦτα δὲ σχήματα μεγεθῶν. κἂν στερεὰ δὲ σχήματα περιθεῖη τις, οὐδὲν ἦττον, εἰ μὴ καὶ μᾶλλον ἔσται διαστατὰ εἰκονιστά· εἴ γε καὶ ἐπὶ πλείω διαστατὸν τοῦ ἐπιπέδου τὸ στερεόν. εἶτα οὕτως. τὸ πρόσλημμα εἰ εἰκονιστὸν, καθ' αὐτὸ οὐ λατρευτὸν· τὸ πρόσλημμα ἄρα οὐκ ἔστι καθ' αὐτὸ λατρευτὸν, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν καθ' ὑπόστασιν ἠνωμένην θεότητα· ὡς τῇ μὲν θεότητι καθ' αὐτὸ τῆς λατρείας προσφερομένης, ἀπολαύοντος δὲ ταύτης δι' ἐκείνην καὶ τοῦ προσλήματος, ὡς καὶ τῆς θέσεως αὐτῆς καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσων ἐνδέχεται τῷ τρόπῳ τῆς ἀντιδόσεως. εἰ δὲ λατρευτὸν μὲν οὐ καθ' αὐτὸ τὸ πρόσλημμα, εἰκονιστὸν δὲ καθ' αὐτό· οὐκ ἄρα ἔχει τὸ λατρευτὸν ὡς εἰκονιστὸν. ὅτι δὲ καθ' αὐτὸ εἰκονιστὸν δῆλον· καθ' αὐτὸ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐψυχωμένη καὶ νοερά· πᾶσα δὲ σὰρξ σῶμα φυσικόν· πᾶν δὲ σῶμα φυσικόν διαστατὸν καθ' αὐτὸ καὶ ἐσχηματισμένον· πᾶν δὲ διαστατὸν καὶ ἐσχηματισμένον εἰκονιστὸν ἐστὶ καθ' αὐτό· τὸ πρόσλημμα ἄρα εἰκονιστὸν ἐστὶ καθ' αὐτό. ἔτι τὸ εἰκονιστὸν ἔχει ὡς διαστατὸν, ἢ διαστατὸν, λατρευτὸν· ἔδει γὰρ οὕτω τὰ διαστατὰ πάντως εἶναι λατρευτά· οὐκ ἄρα τὸ πρόσλημμα ἢ εἰκονιστὸν ἢ λατρευτὸν. ἔτι ἢ εἰκῶν τὸ σχῆμα καὶ τὴν μορφήν τοῦ εἰκονιζομένου λαμβάνει οὐ τὴν οὐσίαν· τὸ δὲ σχῆμα καὶ ἡ μορφή ποιότητος ἀπλῶς καὶ τέταρτον γένος ποιότητος· πᾶσα δὲ ἀπλῶς ποιότητος συμβεβηκός· οὐδὲν δὲ συμβεβηκός λατρευτὸν· οὐδὲν ἄρα σχῆμα ἢ μορφή λατρευτὸν. πάντως δὲ οὐκ ἄδηλον περὶ ποίου σημαυνομένου τῆς εἰκόνος ἐν πᾶσι τούτοις ὁ λόγος ἡμῖν· περὶ γὰρ τῆς τεχνικῆς τε καὶ κατὰ μίμησιν· ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος προαιώνιος ὢν ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν ἑαυτῷ τὸ πρόσλημμα ἐκ τῆς ἀγίας Παρθένου καὶ Θεοτόκου ὑπεστήσατο, τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ ἡμετέρου φυράματος· καὶ ὑπόστασις αὐτὸς ὁ Θεὸς [155] Λόγος τῇ προσληφθείσῃ φύσει ἡμῖν ἐχρημάτισεν, ὡς ἐν μιᾷ ὑποστάσει τὰς δύο θεωρεῖσθαι φύσεις. ὡς μὲν οὖν υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐτήρησεν ἀδιάπτωτα τὰ ὑποστατικά αὐτοῦ ιδιώματα, καθ' ἃ διεκρίνετο τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Πνεύματος καθ' ὑπόστασιν· ὡς δὲ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἔσχεν αὐθις ιδιώματα ἕτερα, καθ' ἃ διαφέρει τῆς μητρὸς καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀνθρώπων. ταῦτα δὴ τὰ δεύτερα τί ἐστὶν οὐσία ἢ συμβεβηκός; οἷόν τι λέγω, τὸ χρῶμα, τὸ μέγεθος, ἢ γρυπότης τυχόν, ἢ τοιαῦτε τρίχωσις, ἢ τῶν παρεῖων τοιαῦτε σχημάτισις, τῶν χειλέων, τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν, καὶ ἐκάστου μορίου κατὰ τὴν ἕξωθεν ἐπιφάνειαν, ἅπερ ἐν ταῖς εἰκόσι γράφοντες, τίνος ἐστὶ γνωρίζομεν τὴν ἐκάστου τῶν εἰκονιζομένων εἰκόνα. εἰ μὲν οὖν οὐσίαν τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐρεῖς, ἢ παρὰ πᾶσιν ἔσονταί τὰ αὐτά, ἢ παρ' ἐκάστῳ ἕτερα· εἰ μὲν οὖν τὰ αὐτά παρὰ πᾶσι, πῶς τὴν ἐκάστου εἰκόνα γνωρίζομεν, μὴδὲν διάφορον εὐρίσκοντες ἐν αὐταῖς; εἰ δὲ ἕτερα, συμβαίνει τὴν τῶν εἰκονιζομένων ἀνθρώπων οὐσίαν μὴ εἶναι τὴν αὐτὴν παρὰ πᾶσιν, ὅπερ ἄτοπον· μία γὰρ ἢ φύσις ἀπάντων ἀνθρώπων, κἂν ἀριθμῶ καὶ ὑποστάσει διεστηκασί· καὶ εἴ τι τῶν οὐσιωδῶς προσόντων ἀφαιρήσῃ τῆς φύσεως, τὸ κατ' οὐσίαν εἶδος ἐξήλλαξας. οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ ἔσται κατὰ τοῦτο καὶ ὁ Σωτὴρ οὐχ ὁ αὐτὸς τῇ φύσει

matter and subsequent to all sensible and physical things; so that to say that [the] three is both everything and all is not inappropriate.

And the Father, the Son and the Spirit are one in nature; for what is a triad by number becomes many by means of its persons, differentiated by their hypostatic particularities.⁴ Therefore this must be said: everything that is adored is God in His nature; everything that is God in His nature is without dimension and form; therefore, everything that is adored is without dimension and form. Then, if this [is the case]: everything that is depicted has dimension and form; this is to be syllogized in the second figure in this way: Everything that is adored per se is without dimension; nothing depicted is without dimension; therefore nothing depicted is adored per se. And again: everything that is adored per se is without form; nothing depicted is without form; therefore nothing depicted is adored per se. It is clear that everything depicted has dimension and form. For everything depicted is “written”; and everything that is “written” is impressed with lines; and everything impressed with lines has dimension; therefore everything depicted has dimension, but is also representable. For every line is either straight or curved or a composite of these, [154] which is the elliptic. And these are the forms of magnitude. Even if someone should posit solid forms, it is no less the case, with the exception that their depictions will possess more dimension, in so far as the solid has more dimension than the plane.

Next, if the *proslomma* is depicted, it is not adored per se. Therefore, the *proslomma* is not adored per se, but on account of the Godhead that has been united [to it] hypostatically, as adoration is offered to the Godhead per se, the adopted enjoys this on account of that [Godhead], [just as it enjoys] its own adoption and all the other things that are permitted to it by way of reciprocity.

But if the *proslomma* is not adored per se, but is depicted per se, and therefore does not [merit] adoration as a depiction. It is clear that it is a depiction per se; for it is per se flesh [possessing both a soul and a mind]. All flesh is a physical body. And every body has physical dimension per se and has been granted form. And everything that has dimension and form can be depicted per se. The *proslomma* is therefore the depicted per se. Yet, the depicted has dimension and nothing that has dimension qua dimension is adored.⁵ If that were the case, everything that has dimension should be adored. Therefore the *proslomma* is neither a depiction nor the adored. But since an icon takes the form and the shape of what is depicted and not its essence, the form and shape are simply a quality and the fourth kind of quality, and all quality is simply accident, and accident is not adored, therefore, neither form nor shape is adored. It is completely clear what our detailed discussion of the icon is about: art and imitation.

God the Logos, who is before the ages, in the last days took upon himself from the Holy Virgin and Theotokos the *proslomma*, the first offering of our admixture. And this hypostasis bore the name God the Logos [155] on account of the nature it assumed for us, as the two natures were contemplated in one hypostasis. As therefore the Son of God has maintained his most perfect hypostatic particularities, by which he was hypostatically distinguished from the Father and the Spirit, so the Son of Man in turn has other particularities, by which he is distinguished from his mother and the rest of humanity.

κατὰ τὸ πρόσλημμα. εἰ δὲ ταῦτα φεύγων, ὡς ἄτοπα καὶ ἀδύνατα, συμβεβηκότα ἔρεις τὰ ἐν ταῖς εἰκόσι γραφόμενα, καὶ λατρεύειν ἀπαιτεῖς, ταῦτα διιστῶν ἐκ τῆς ὕλης καὶ καθ' ἑαυτὸν φανταζόμενος, συμβήσεται συμβεβηκόσι λατρεύειν, ὅπερ καὶ τῆς ἑλληνικῆς μυθοπλαστίας ἀνευλογώτερον. φασὶ δὲ τινες, ὡς οὐκ ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι λαμβάνοντες τὸ εἶδος τὴν λατρείαν προσφέρομεν, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἀποδιιστῶντες τὸν χαρακτήρα τῆς ὕλης, ὡς θεοὑπόστατον ὄντα, τῆς λατρείας ἀξιοῦμεν. Πρὸς ὃ φαμεν, ὅτι [156] ὁ τῇ εἰκόνι τὴν ὄψιν ἐπιβάλλων, εἴτ' ἐπέκεινα γινόμενος τῆς αἰσθήσεως, καὶ δίχρα ταύτης ἐν ἑαυτῷ περιφέρων τὴν διάπλασιν τοῦ εἶδους καὶ διατύπωσιν, οὐδὲν ἕτερον πεποίηκεν ἢ μόνον ὅτι τὰ ἐν τῇ ὕλῃ διαστήματα καὶ τὴν τῆς σχηματίσεως σύνθεσιν ἐν τῇ φαντασίᾳ ἀνετυπώσατο, ὅπερ ἐπὶ πάντων πέφυκεν αἰ τῶν αἰσθητῶν γίνεσθαι. τὸ γὰρ αἰσθητικὸν πνεῦμα, οὗ τόπος ἡ ἐμπρόσθιος κοιλία τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου, τοὺς τύπους λαμβάνον τῶν αἰσθητῶν διὰ τῶν αἰσθητηρίων, ἔχει τούτους ἐν ἑαυτῷ, ὧς λέγεται φαντάσματα τὰ αἰσθήματα, ὧν παραμενόντων ἐφ' ἱκανὸν τὴν μνήμην καὶ τὸ μνημονεύειν φαμέν· ἐπεὶ καὶ φαντασία εἴρηται διὰ τὸ τῶν φανέντων εἶναι στάσις, καὶ μνήμη ὡς μονὴ καὶ μονιμότης τῶν γνωσθέντων. τὰ γὰρ φανέντα ἤτοι αἰσθηθέντα τυποῦται μὲν πρώτως τῷ ἐν τῇ ἐμπροσθίῳ κοιλίᾳ τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου πνεύματι, ἐντεῦθεν δὲ τῇ μέσῃ παραπέμπονται, ἐν ἧ, φασὶ τινες, τὸ λογιστικὸν ἐνιδρύεται, διὰ δὲ τούτου τῷ μνημονευτικῷ, ἐν τῇ ὀπισθεν κοιλίᾳ τεταγμένον τὸ ὄργανον ἔχοντι, ὅπερ εἶναι τὸ ἐν τῇ παρεγκεφαλίδι πνεῦμα. εἰσὶ δ' οἱ τὴν μέσῃ κοιλίᾳ τῷ μνημονευτικῷ ἀπονέμουσι, τὸ αἰσθητικὸν δὲ καὶ λογιστικὸν ταῖς ἐτέραις ἐντάττουσιν· ἅπερ δεχόμενα τὰ οἰκεῖα ἐκάτερον, τὸ μὲν τὰ αἰσθήματα, τὸ δὲ τὰ νοήματα, ὡς φύλακί τι ἐν μέσῳ παρατιθέασιν. εἰ οὖν τοῦτο εἶναι τὸ λατρευόμενον τὸ ἐν τῇ φαντασίᾳ ἢ τῇ μνήμῃ τυπούμενον, εἰ βούλοιο καὶ τῷ λογισμῷ καὶ τῷ νῷ, πάλιν ἤξει τὰ πρότερα, καὶ διαστήμασιν ἐσόμεθα καὶ σχήματι λατρεύοντες, τῷ ὑποκειμένῳ μόνῳ διαφέρουσι τῶν προτέρων· ὅπερ ἐκεῖνα μὲν χρυσοῦ ἢ ἀργύρου ἢ χρώμασιν ἐντετύπωτο, ταῦτα δὲ φαντασίᾳ ἢ μνήμῃ ἢ νῷ· καὶ ὀφείλοντες ἐνὶ λατρείᾳ μόνῳ [157] ἀκαταλήπτῳ Θεῷ, ὑπερουσίῳ μὲν ὄντι, τὰ σύμπαντα δ' οὐσιοῦντι, ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ οὐσί πράγμασι, πολυφύεσι λατρεύομεν. φασὶ δὲ αὖθις, ὡς οὐ σχήματα τῆς ὕλης ἀφαιροῦντες τῆς λατρείας ἀξιοῦμεν, ἀλλὰ τὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου λόγον καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἐπινοοῦντες, ὡς θεοὑποστάτῳ τούτῳ χαρακτήρι λατρεύομεν. ἀλλ' ὁ λόγος ὁ οὐσιώδης τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐδὲν ἐστὶν ἕτερον ἢ ἡ ἀνθρωπότης αὐτή, ἡ ἐν πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἐπίσης θεωρουμένη, καὶ ὁ ταύτη λατρεύων οὐ μᾶλλον λατρεύει τῷ ἐν τῷ Θεῷ Λόγῳ ὑποστάντι προσλήμματι, ἢ ἐκάστῳ τῶν κατὰ μέρος ἀνθρώπων. καὶ ὁ ταύτη λατρεύων δόξειεν ἂν δικαίως ἀνθρωπολάτρης· ἐπεὶ καὶ ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος οὕτω διὰ τοῦ προσλήματος τὴν φύσιν ἐθέωσεν, ὡς τῆς φύσεως τελείας ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ κατ' ἀριθμὸν ὑπαρχούσης. ἔπειτα ὁ λόγος ὁ οὐσιώδης ἐπὶ πάντων τῶν ἐνύλων καὶ φυσικῶν ἐπινοεῖται μὲν καθ' ἑαυτὸν, οὐχ ὑφίσταται δὲ χωρὶς τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα, ἐν τούτοις ἔχων τὴν ὑπαρξίν· ὡς ὄλον οὐκ ἐκ μερῶν, ἀλλ' ἐν μέρεσιν ὡς ἐν ἐκάστῳ ὑπάρχων ὄλον αὐτῶν· καὶ ὁ τῷ Λόγῳ λατρεύων γυμνῷ, ἐπινοήματι μᾶλλον λατρεύει ἢ πράγματι. ἔτι δὲ οὐδὲ χαρακτήρ τούτου οἰκεῖος, ἀλλὰ λόγος οὐσιώδης καὶ εἶδος ἐστὶ τε καὶ λέγεται. χαρακτήρ δὲ τοῦ καθ' ἕκαστα οὐδὲν ἕτερον, ἢ διαχάραξις καὶ οἷον διάγραφίς τε καὶ διατύπωσις τῶν ἰδίως συμβεβηκότων αὐτῷ, ὧν τὸ ἄθροισμα οὐκ ἂν ἐπ' ἄλλου τινὸς τῶν ὁμοφυῶν εὐρεθείη ποτέ, διὸ καὶ ἐκ τούτων αὐτὸν εἰκονίζοντες, ἢ λόγῳ ποτὲ ὑπογράφοντες, διιστᾶν τῶν ἄλλων καὶ χαρακτηρίζειν δυνάμεθα. οὐδ' εἰκονισθήσεται ἂν

Are these secondary things substance or accident? By which I mean, color, height, the shape of the nose, the particular coiffure, the particular line of the cheeks, of the lips, of the eyes, and of every other part of one's outward appearance, whose depiction in icons lets us know who exactly it is that the image depicts. If therefore you will say that these things are substance, either they will be the same in all instances, or they will be different in each. If they are all the same, how would we know the image of each, if not by finding difference in them? But if they are different, it turns out that the substance of depicted men is not the same in them all, which is nonsense. For all men share one nature, even if they differ by number and person. And if you were to remove one of the substantial properties from his nature, his substantial form would be altered. But not only this, according to this argument the Savior will also not be of the same nature as the *proslomma*.

But if these things are cast aside as nonsense and impossible, you will say that the things depicted in icons are accidents,⁶ and will demand that they be adored (separating these from the material [of the icon] and imagining them per se), and so it will happen that you are adoring accidents, which is even more unworthy than pagan mythologizing.

But some say that the adoration is not to be understood as being offered to the form in the icon, but having separated the *character* per se from the material, this, being divine, would be worthy of adoration. To this we say [156] that he who looks at what is in an icon, surpasses the sensual, and separated from this he bears within himself the fashioning and shape of the form, having done nothing more than representing in his imagination the dimensions in the material and the composition of the form, which is what always naturally occurs with sensibles. For the sensible spirit, which is located in the frontal cavity of the brain, grasping the impressions of the sensibles through the sense organs, possesses these in itself, in such a way that sensual experiences are said to be imaginary, which, when they last sufficiently long we call memory and remembering.⁷ Hence the imagination is named for the condition of what appears and memory alone [is named] in turn for the permanence of what is known. For while the things that appeared, that is to say, were sensed, are first impressed on the spirit in the frontal cavity, and are thence passed on to the middle, in which, some say, the logical faculty is based, and through this to the faculty of memory, the organ of which is located in the posterior cavity, which is said to be the spirit in the cerebellum. But there are some who assign the middle cavity to the faculty of memory, and the sensory and logical faculties to the others; so as each of these receives what is theirs, [the sensory faculty] the sensibles and the [logical faculty] the intelligibles, they place [the faculty of memory] in the middle as a kind of guardian. If therefore that which is adored is impressed in the imagination or in the memory, or, if it is preferred, in both the logical faculty and in the mind, what we have said above will again follow, and we will then adore dimensions and forms, differing from the preceding only in the underlying [medium]; for while those had been impressed in gold or silver or in colors, these [are impressed] in the imagination or in the memory or in the mind; and we, who should adore the [157] one and only incomprehensible God, who while being superessential, is essential to everything, [end up] worshiping the multiplicity of things that exist in the underlying [medium].

τὸ καθόλου, ἵνα καὶ ἐν εἰκόσι τούτῳ λατρεύει τις, ἀλλ' ἢ μόνον σχῆμα καὶ ἔνυλον τοῦ καθ' ἕκαστα καὶ αὐτὸ τὸν καθ' ἐπιφάνειαν.

Ἔτι δέ φασιν, ὡς αὐτὸν τὸν χαρακτήρα λαμβάνοντες, ὃν ὁ Θεὸς Λόγος ἑαυτῷ ὑπεστήσατο, τούτῳ λατρεύειν λέγομεν. [158] ἀλλὰ φαμεν, ὡς οὐκ εἰκὼν τοῦτο, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ τὸ πρωτότυπον. θεοῦπρόστατος γὰρ χαρακτήρ ἐστὶ τε καὶ λέγεται οὐχ ὁ ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ χρυσῷ ἢ ἀργύρῳ ἢ χαλκῷ ἢ χρώμασι χαραττόμενος κατὰ τέχνην, ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὁ τῆ φαντασίᾳ ἡμῶν ἢ τῆ διανοίᾳ τυπούμενος, ἀλλ' ὁ τῆ θεότητι ὑποστάς καὶ αὐτῇ συνυπάρχων ἀδιαιρέτως καὶ ἀσυγχύτως, τὸ μὲν τῆ ὑποστάσει, τὸ δὲ ταῖς φύσεσιν· ὃν εἰκόνα φάσκων, ἀναφερομένην ἕξει πάντως πρὸς τι πρωτότυπον. ἢ γὰρ εἰκὼν πρωτοτύπου πάντως· καὶ τί ἐστὶ τὸ τοῦ χαρακτήρος ἐκείνου πρωτότυπον λεγέτω. εἰ δὲ πάλιν φασίν, ὡς οὐχὶ δύο ὑποστάσεις ἢ εἰκὼν ἐστὶ καὶ τὸ πρωτότυπον, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ὁ γράφων τὴν εἰκόνα ἐκείνον γράφει αὐτὸν τὸν εἰκονιζόμενον, θαυμάζω εἰ μὴ νοοῦσι παραλόγως ἐκλαμβανόμενοι τὸ παρὰ τῶν θείων Πατέρων λεγόμενον, ὡς οὐχὶ δύο ὑποστάσεις ἢ εἰκὼν τε καὶ τὸ πρωτότυπον. εἰ γὰρ οὕτω νοήσομεν μίαν εἶναι ὑπόστασιν ταῦτα, ὡς τὸν γραφέα ἢ ἀνδριαντοποιὸν ἐκείνο αὐτὸ ποιεῖν, ὅπερ τὸ πρωτότυπον, ἔσσονται ποιηταὶ οἱ τεχνῖται ἐκείνων αὐτῶν τῶν πραγμάτων, ἃ γράφουσιν, ἢ ἄλλως ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις μιμοῦνται· καὶ οὕτως ἔσται τεχνητὸν καὶ τὸ θεωθὲν καὶ ἀφθαρτισθὲν πρόσλημμα· οὐ μόνον δὲ ἀλλὰ καὶ ῥευστὸν καὶ τῷ τυχόντι παθητὸν καὶ φθαρτὸν· καὶ πῶς οὐ θεοὶ μᾶλλον οἱ τεχνῖται, θεοὺς ἡμῖν ἐργαζόμενοι; ὣν τί ἂν εἴη καταγελαστότερον; ἀλλ' εἴρηται μὴ εἶναι ἑτέραν τοῦ πρωτοτύπου ὑπόστασιν, καὶ τῆς εἰκόνος ἑτέραν, διότι μὴ ἐστὶν ὑπόστασις ἢ γραφή, ἀλλ' ὑποστάσεως μίμημα, τὴν ἐκείνης μιμούμενον θεάν καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν, ὥστε ὑπόστασις μὲν τὸ ἐν μιμήσει γινόμενον πρᾶγμα, ὃν καθ' ἑαυτὸ ὑφεστώς. τοῦτο δὲ μὴ ὃν ὑπόστασις καθ' ἑαυτὸ, πῶς ἕξει πληθυνομένου δι' ἑαυτὸ [159] τὴν τοῦ πρωτοτύπου ὑπόστασιν; οὐ γὰρ οὕτως μία ὑπόστασις ὡς ὑφεστάναι μετὰ τῶν ιδιωμάτων καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ πρωτοτύπου ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐκείνου ὄντος ὑποστάσεως· τούτων δὲ μὴ ὑφισταμένων καθ' ἑαυτά, ἀλλ' ἐν ἑτεροφυεῖ ὕλῃ μιμουμένων ἐκείνο τὸ ὑφιστάμενον. σχήματα γὰρ καὶ ἀριθμοὶ ἔνυλοι ἑτέροις ἐστὶν ἐνυπόστατα, καθ' ἑαυτὰ δὲ οὐχ ὑφίσταται. ἀλλὰ, φασιν, οὐ τῇ εἰκόνι λατρεύομεν, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι τὸν θεάνθρωπον Λόγον. καὶ δὴ λέγομεν, ὡς δύο οὐσῶν τῶν φύσεων, αἱ τὴν μίαν τοῦ Χριστοῦ συμπληροῦσαι ὑπόστασιν, ἢ τῆ θεότητι λατρεύειν ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι, ἢ τῆ ἀνθρωπότητι, ἢ ἀμφοτέροις, ἀλλ' ἢ μὲν θεότης οὐκ εἰκονιστόν. πῶς οὖν ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι τὸ ἀνεικονιστόν λατρεύεσθαι λέγεται ἢ καθ' ἑαυτὸ μόνον ἢ σὺν ἑτέρῳ τινί; εἰ δὲ τῇ ἀνθρωπότητι, καθ' ἑαυτὴν μὲν αὕτη εἰκονιστή, οὐ μὴν δὲ καὶ καθ' ἑαυτὴν λατρευτή, ὥστε οὐχ ἢ εἰκονιστὴ λατρευτή. καὶ συλλογίσαιτο δ' ἂν τις οὕτως. ὁ Χριστὸς καθὼ Θεὸς λατρευτός ἐστίν· ὁ Χριστὸς καθὼ Θεὸς εἰκονιστὸς οὐκ ἔστιν· ὁ εἰκονιστὸς ἄρα, καθὼ εἰκονιστὸς, λατρευτός οὐκ ἔστιν, ὥστε κατ' οὐδένα τρόπον ἐνδέχεται ἢ εἰκόνος λέγειν λατρείαν χειροκμήτου, ἢ ἐν εἰκόνι τοιαύτην. ἄλλως τε καὶ τὸ καινοφωνίας εἰσάγειν λέγοντας τοῖς θείοις Πατέρας, καὶ πρὸς τὰ διαβήρηθην λεγόμενα παρ' αὐτῶν ἐνίστασθαι ἀναισχύντως, πῶς οὐκ ἐσχάτης ἀτοπίας ἐστὶ; δεῖν γὰρ τὴν ἁγίαν εἰκόνα Χριστοῦ τιμᾶν τε καὶ προσκυνεῖν, καὶ τὴν τῆς παναχράντου αὐτοῦ μητρός, καὶ τὰς τῶν εὐαρεστησάντων αὐτῷ, τὴν τιμὴν δι' αὐτῶν τοῖς πρωτοτύποις διαβιβάζοντας καὶ παρελάβομεν καὶ δεδιδάγμεθα. σχετικὴν δὲ ἡμᾶς οἱ Πατέρες, ἀλλ' οὐ λατρευτικὴν ἐδίδαξαν τὴν τιμὴν ταῖς ἁγίαις εἰκόσι προσφέρειν καὶ

Then again, they say: “we do not consider [His] forms to be worthy of adoration after we have separated them from [their] material but when we conceive of [His] human logos in and of itself, we adore this *character* as a divine hypostasis.” But [His] substantial human logos is nothing other than humanity itself, which is seen equally in all men, and the one adoring this adores the *proslomma* existing in God the Logos no more than any other particular man. And the one who adores this could justly be called an *anthropolater*,⁸ because God the Logos also deified [his = man’s] nature on account of the *proslomma*, since [this] nature [now] exists perfected in a single individual. Therefore, when the substantial Logos per se is conceived in all material and physical things, it does not exist apart from the particulars, in which it has its existence (since it is a whole not from the parts, but in the parts, existing wholly in each of them); and the one who adores the Logos alone, adores a concept more than a reality. Moreover, the *character* is not even proper to this [i.e. reality], but is and is said to be a substantial logos and form. But the *character* of the particular is none other than a “carving,” and like an outline and an impression of the accidents specific to it, the aggregate of which would never be found in any other thing of a similar nature.

Therefore, when depicting it from these [accidents], or sometimes subscribing it with a word, we are able to distinguish it from others and to characterize it. The universal will never be depicted, so that someone could adore this in images, but only the material outline of the particular, and this according to appearance. And yet, they say, that as the *character* itself is understood to be that which God the Logos hypostasized to Himself, we can talk of adoring this. [158] But we declare that this is not the image, but the prototype itself. For the divinely hypostasized *character* is and is said to be not that which is carved artistically in the underlying gold or silver or copper, or with colors, nor that which is impressed in our imagination or intellect, but rather that which is in the Godhead and exists with it indivisibly and without mingling, with respect to both its hypostasis and natures.

When one speaks of images, one will always have to consider the relation to the prototype. For the image belongs entirely to a prototype, and let the prototype of that *character* declare its substance.

But if they repeat that the icon and the prototype are not two hypostases, and because of this that the one painting the icon paints the very thing depicted, I wonder if they have completely misunderstood the fathers when they say that the icon and the prototype are not two hypostases. For if we consider these to be one hypostasis, so that the painter or the sculptor makes the prototype itself, artists will be the makers of the very things they depict, rather than imitating [them] in their works. And so the divinized and immortalized *proslomma* will be a work of art; not only this but it will also be changeable and subject to chance and corruptible; and how is it that artists are not now the gods who make gods for us? Which of these things would be the more ridiculous? But it has been said that there is not a hypostasis of the prototype and another of the image, because the depiction is not the hypostasis, but the imitation of the hypostasis, imitating the look and the appearance of it. Given that the hypostasis is the thing that comes to be in the imitation – which exists in and of itself there, but is not in and of itself the hypostasis – how would it

τὴν προσκύνησιν, ὡς σχέσιν ἐχούσαις πρὸς τὰ οἰκεῖα πρωτότυπα· καὶ αὕτη πανταχοῦ ἢ παράδοσις τοῖς θεοπνεύστοις [160] ἐκείνοις διακεκήρυκται· λατρείαν δὲ εἰκόνας ἢ ἐν εἰκόνι οὐδαμῆ οὐδαμῶς παραδιδόντες εὐρίσκονται, μᾶλλον γε μὴν καὶ ἀναιροῦντες καὶ ὡς ἀσεβῆς γενναιότατα τὸ οὕτω δοξαζόμενον ἢ λεγόμενον· καὶ τοῦτο φανήσεται εὐκαίρως παρατεθειμένων ἐπ’ αὐτῆς λέξεως τῶν πατρικῶν χρήσεων. ἦν μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἄλλα εἰπεῖν λογισμοῖς καθ’ ἑαυτὸ τὸ πρᾶγμα ἐπιξαινουσιν· ἀλλὰ ἱκανὰ καὶ ταῦτα τοῖς συνιεῖσι. πιστέον δὲ ἤδη τὸ πρόβλημα καὶ ἐξ ὧν οἱ Πατέρες ἐν γράμμασι παραδεδώκασιν.

possess the hypostasis of the prototype, which has [now] been multiplied⁹ on its account? [159] For it is not a single hypostasis [in the sense] that the substance of the prototype [comes into] existence with the particulars in the icon, but rather the [prototype] is the hypostasis. The particulars [in the icon] do not exist in and of themselves, but rather they imitate in the material of a different nature that which does exist. For forms and material numbers exist in others, but they do not exist in and of themselves.

“But,” they say, “we do not adore the image, but the God-man Logos in the image.” So let us say that as Christ’s single hypostasis consists of two natures, either the divinity is adored in the image, or the humanity, or both. But since divinity cannot be depicted, how then can it be said that the unrepresentable in the image is adored, either alone, in and of itself, or with something else? But if [His] humanity [is adored], this can be depicted per se, but might not be adored per se, hence the depicted might not be adored. And so one might syllogize in this way: Christ as God is adored; Christ as God cannot be depicted; therefore, the depicted, as depicted, is not adored. So that in no way can we speak of the adoration of a manufactured icon, or of adoration in an icon.

Nonetheless, they both introduce innovations by speaking against the divine fathers and also shamelessly oppose what they clearly said; how are these not the final insult? For we have both received and learned that one must honor and venerate the holy icon of Christ and that of His undefiled mother, and those of those who were well pleasing to him – an honor which is passed on through them to their prototypes. And the Fathers taught us to offer relative but not adoring honor and veneration to the holy icons, since they possess a relation to their own prototypes. And this is the tradition that has always been proclaimed by those who are divinely inspired. [160] They are in no way found teaching adoration of the icon or in the icon, rather they even most nobly reject this as profane if it is so believed or said. And this will appear obvious when the patristic passages on this subject are read. For while it is possible to say other things against the arguments which have brought this matter to a head, these [passages] should be sufficient for intelligent people. Hence, the issue should hereafter be resolved on the basis of what the Fathers have transmitted in their writings.

Commentary

1. The Utrecht manuscript (f. 71) offers a lengthier title, which suggests that the *Sylogistic Demonstration* may have been written when Eustratios served as a deacon of the Great Church: “Dialogue by Eustratios deacon of the Great Church of God and most famous master of the rhetoricians, now metropolitan of Nikaia: That the divine and sacred icons are not be worshipped in terms of adoration, but relatively, as has been clearly shown by the fathers of God’s church.”
 2. The *proslomma* is “that which has been added” to the divine Logos in the incarnation of Jesus, i.e. His human nature. Although the nature of the divine Logos divinizes and immortalizes the *proslomma*, the *proslomma* does not in any way reduce the Logos to flesh.
 3. *Third Theological Oration* (Oration 29), 2:12.
 4. The orthodox Trinity is understood to be a single nature (φύσις) differentiated by three persons (πρόσωπα) or hypostases (ὑποστάσεις).
 5. The sentence can be corrected from the Utrecht manuscript (72v): “Ἐτι τὸ εἰκονιστὸν ἔχει ὡς διαστατό· οὐδὲν δὲ διαστατὸν ἢ διαστατόν, λατρευτόν· ἔδει γὰρ οὕτω πάντα τὰ διαστατὰ εἶναι λατρευτά . . .
 6. In Aristotle, accidents (συμβεβηκότα) are opposed to substance (οὐσία) in order to differentiate between a being’s accidental and substantial properties. For instance, a horse is still substantially a horse no matter what its color accidentally happens to be. Aristotle identified nine types of accident, which taken together with substance account for his ten ontological categories.
 7. Eustratios’ argument here is taken largely from Nemesius (*On the Nature of Man*, ch. 13), who developed his theories of sensation, perception, and memory based largely on Aristotle and Galen.
 8. A worshiper of the human being.
 9. Demetrakopoulos supplies πληθυνομένου, but the Utrecht manuscript has πληθυνομένην, which is a better reading.
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Text C | Euthymios Zigabenos (fl. c.1110)***Dogmatike Panoplia*. Chapter 22: *Against the Iconomachs***

Ed.: PG 130: 1164D–1169D; other editions: J. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca ad Photium ejusque Historiam Pertinentia* (Regensburg, 1869), 53–61

MSS.:¹³⁷ A survey of 72 manuscripts of the *Dogmatike Panoplia* can be found in A. N. Papavasileiou, *Εὐθύμιος–Ἰωάννης Ζυγαδηνός: Βίος–Συγγραφαί* (Nicosia, 1979), 2nd ed., 59–76

Other Translations: None

Significance

Against the Iconomachs is drawn from the lengthy account of past and present heresies, the *Dogmatike Panoplia*, which Euthymios Zigabenos prepared for Emperor Alexios I Komnenos; see Hergenröther (1969). Leaning upon the authoritative testimonies of Theodore Stoudites and Nikephoros of Constantinople in particular, the text addresses the question of the proper veneration of icons that had arisen during the Leo of Chalcedon affair. Euthymios' chapter was to remain a key statement on icons and their worship in Byzantium.

The Author

Not much is known about the life of Euthymios. He was active in the first years of the twelfth century, when he was commissioned, c.1110, to prepare the *Dogmatike Panoplia*. He also wrote commentaries on the Psalms, the Gospels, and the Pauline epistles.

Text and Context

See Introduction.

¹³⁷ Not consulted.

Text

Κατὰ Εἰκονομάχων ἐπιτομή τις ἠκριβωμένη ἀπὸ τε τῶν πρακτικῶν τῆς ἑβδόμης συνόδου, καὶ τῶν Γερμανοῦ καὶ Νικηφόρου τῶν πατριαρχῶν Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, καὶ τῶν τοῦ μακαρίου Θεοδώρου τοῦ Στουδιώτου.

[1164D] Ἀρχετύπον ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ καὶ παράδειγμα ὑφειρηκὸς τοῦ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ χαρακτηριζομένου εἴδους, καὶ τῆς παραγωγῆς τοῦ προσεικότος αἴτιον.

Εἰκὼν ἐστὶν ὁμοίωμα τοῦ ἀρχετύπου ὅλον ἐν ἑαυτῇ [1165A] τοῦ ἐντετυπωμένου τὸ εἶδος διὰ τῆς ἐμφερείας ἐναποματτομένη, τῷ διαφόρῳ τῆς οὐσίας κατὰ τὴν ὕλην μόνον παραλλάττουσα· ἢ μίμησις ἀρχετύπου, καὶ ἀπείκασμα, ἢ τέχνης ἀποτέλεσμα κατὰ μίμησιν τοῦ ἀρχετύπου εἰδοποιούμενον τῇ οὐσίᾳ διαφέρον.

Εἰκὼν λέγεται παρὰ τὸ εἰκέειναι. ἄλλο φυσικὴ εἰκὼν καὶ ἄλλο μιμητικὴ· ἡ μὲν οὐ φυσικὴν διαφορὰν ἔχουσα πρὸς τὸ αἴτιον, ἀλλ' ὑποστατικὴν, ὡς ὁ Υἱὸς πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα· μία μὲν γὰρ τούτων φύσις, δύο δὲ ὑποστάσεις· ἡ δὲ τούναντίον οὐχ ὑποστατικὴν διαφορὰν ἔχουσα πρὸς τὸ ἀρχετύπον, ἀλλὰ φυσικὴν, ὡς ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς τὸν Χριστόν. μία μὲν γὰρ τούτων ὑπόστασις, δύο δὲ φύσεις. ἄλλη γὰρ φύσις ὑλογραφίας καὶ ἄλλη Χριστοῦ κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον, καθ' ὃ καὶ περιγράφεται, καὶ ἀρχετύπον εἰκό [1165B] νος καθίσταται. ἐπὶ μὲν τῆς μιμητικῆς εἰκόνος κατὰ τὴν ἰδέαν, ἥτοι μορφήν ἢ ὁμοίωσις· ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς φυσικῆς καὶ κατὰ οὐσίαν, ἥτοι θεότητα ἢ ταυτότης· καὶ ἐπὶ μὲν τῆς φυσικῆς, διότι μία φύσις Υἱοῦ καὶ Πατρός, διὰ τοῦτο μία καὶ προσκύνησις τούτων, ἀλλ' οὐ δύο κατὰ τὸ διάφορον τῶν ὑποστάσεων· ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς μιμητικῆς, διότι μία ὑπόστασις εἰκόνος Χριστοῦ, καὶ αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ, μία καὶ προσκύνησις τούτων, ἀλλὰ οὐ δύο κατὰ τὸ διάφορον τῶν φύσεων. οὐ γὰρ ἰδιοὑπόστατός ἐστιν ἡ μιμητικὴ εἰκὼν, ἀλλὰ τοῦ ἀρχετύπου τὴν ὑπόστασιν φέρει, καὶ κατὰ ταύτην εἰκὼν αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν. ὑπόστασιν δὲ νῦν λέγομεν οὐ τὸ ἀπλῶς ὑφειρηκός, ἀλλ' οὐσίαν τινὰ μετὰ ἰδιωμάτων, καθ' ἃ διαχωρίζεται τῶν ὁμοειδῶν. Τὸ γοῦν ἰδιοὑπόστατον [1165C] οὐκ εἰκὼν, ἀλλ' ἀρχετύπον.

Ἡ τῆς εἰκόνος τιμὴ ἐπὶ τὸ πρωτότυπον διαβαίνει, καὶ ἔστι τούτων μία προσκύνησις διὰ τὸν ἐν ἀμφοῖν ἓνα χαρακτήρα.

Παντὸς μιμητικῶς εἰκονιζομένου οὐχ ἡ φύσις, ἀλλ' ἡ ὑπόστασις εἰκονίζεται, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ταυτόν τῷ ἀρχετύπῳ ἢ εἰκὼν αὐτοῦ οὐ τῇ φύσει, ἀλλὰ τῇ ὑποστάσει, ἥγουν τῇ μιμήσει τῆς ὑποστάσεως.

Ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι ἢ εἰκονιζομένη τοῦ ἀρχετύπου ὑπόστασις προσκυνεῖται, καὶ οὐχ ἡ ὕλη τῆς εἰκόνος· ὁ ἐναποσφραγισθεὶς αὐτῇ χαρακτήρ, καὶ οὐχ ἡ τῆς εἰκόνος οὐσία.

[1165D] Ὅτε μὲν πρὸς τὴν τῆς εἰκόνος φύσιν ἀπίδοι τις, οὐ μόνον οὐ Χριστόν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ εἰκόνα Χριστοῦ εἶποι ἂν τὸ ὀρώμενον· ἔστι γὰρ ξύλον τυχόν, ἢ χρυσός, ἢ ἄργυρος, ἢ

Translation

Against the Iconomachs. An accurate summary of the acts of the Seventh Oecumenical Council, of Germanos and Nikephoros, the Patriarchs of Constantinople, and of the blessed Theodore the Studite.

[1164D] The archetype is the underlying principle and paradigm of the form characterized from it, and the cause from which derives the resemblance.

An icon is a likeness of an archetype, having received in itself [1165A] by means of likeness the impression of the entire form of the one being represented, distinguished only by a difference of substance with respect to matter; or an imitation and copy of an archetype, or the artistic result according to the imitation of the archetype, characterized by its form but different in substance.¹

The image is called such because it likens.² The natural image is one thing and the mimetic image is another. The first possesses no difference in nature with regard to its cause, but a difference of person, such as the Son with regard to the Father. For while they are of one nature, [they are] two in terms of their person. The second [type of image] is the opposite, not possessing a difference of person with regard to the archetype, but a difference of nature, such as the icon of Christ with regard to Christ. For these are of one person, but two natures. For the nature of material paint is one thing and Christ's human nature (according to which he is circumscribed and which is the archetype of the image) another.³ [1165B] In the case of the mimetic icon, the likeness [is] according to appearance, i.e. form, but in the case of the natural icon, the identity is also according to substance, i.e. divinity. Also in the case of the natural icon, since the Son and the Father are of one nature, there is only one worship addressed to them, and not two because of the difference of [their] persons. But in the case of the mimetic icon, since the icon of Christ and Christ are of one person, there is also one worship addressed to them, and not two according to the difference of [their] natures. For the mimetic icon is not self-existent, but bears the person of the archetype, and because of this is its icon.⁴ When we speak of "person" in this instance it is not "person" per se, but a substance with [its own] particularities, according to which it can be differentiated from those of similar form. Therefore, that which self-exists is not an icon, [1165C] but an archetype.⁵

The honor addressed to an icon is conveyed to the prototype, and there is one worship on account of the one *character* in both.⁶

In the case of anything depicted mimetically, nature is not depicted but rather the person, and therefore the icon and the archetype are the same, not by nature, but by person, that is, by an imitation of the person.⁷

The person of the depicted archetype is worshiped in the icon, and not the material of the icon; the *character* which is impressed in it, and not the substance of the icon.⁸

[1165D] When one considers the nature of the icon, not only would one not say that the thing seen is Christ, but one would not even say that it is the icon of Christ. For it is

τι τῶν ἄλλων ὑλῶν· ὅτε δὲ πρὸς τὴν δι' ἐκτυπώματος ὁμοίωσιν τοῦ ἀρχετύπου, καὶ Χριστὸν, καὶ Χριστοῦ, ἀλλὰ Χριστὸν μὲν καθ' ὁμωνυμίαν, Χριστοῦ δὲ κατὰ τὸ πρὸς τι.

Ἡ εἰκὼν σχέσιν ἔχει πρὸς τὸ ἀρχέτυπον, καὶ αἰτίου ἐστὶν αἰτιατόν. ἀνάγκη οὖν διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τῶν πρὸς τι εἶναι ταύτην καὶ λέγεσθαι. τῶν πρὸς τι γὰρ ἢ σχέσις, τὰ δὲ πρὸς τι αὐτά, ἅπερ ἐστὶν ἐτέρων εἶναι λέγεται, καὶ ἀντιστρέφει τὴν σχέσιν πρὸς ἄλληλα. ἀρχέτυπον γὰρ εἰκόνας ἀρχέτυπον· καὶ εἰκὼν ἀρχετύπου εἰκὼν. καὶ οὐκ ἂν τις ἄσχετον [1168A] εἰκόνα τὴν τινὸς εἰκόνα φαίη. ἅμα γὰρ συνεισάγεται, καὶ συνεπιθεωρεῖται θατέρω θάτερον.

Ὅσοις ὀνόμασι τὸ ἀρχέτυπον καλεῖται, τοσοῦτοις καὶ ἡ εἰκὼν αὐτοῦ. ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν ὡς ἀρχέτυπον καὶ δι' ἑαυτὸ, καὶ κυρίως· ἡ δὲ ὡς εἰκὼν αὐτοῦ, καὶ δι' ἐκεῖνο καὶ καταχρηστικῶς.

Προσκυνουμένης τῆς εἰκόνας, ὁ Χριστὸς προσκυνεῖται, οὗ ἐστὶν ὁμοίωσις, καὶ οὐχ ἡ ὑποδεξαμένη τὴν ὁμοίωσιν ὕλη. καὶ ὡσπερ ἐπὶ τοῦ κατόπτρου διαγράφεται τρόπον τινὰ τὸ πρόσωπον τοῦ βλέποντος αὐτό, καὶ μένει τῆς ὕλης κεχωρισμένον· κἄν θελήσειέ τις ἀσπάσασθαι τὴν ἐμφαινόμενην ἰδίαν εἰκόνα, τῇ μὲν ὕλῃ προσέφυ, τὴν εἰκόνα δὲ περιεπτύξατο, καὶ μεταστάντος αὐτοῦ συναπέπτυ καὶ [1168B] τὸ ἴνδαλμα διὰ τὸ κεχωρῆσθαι τῆς ὕλης τοῦ κατόπτρου· τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον ὁ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ Σωτῆρος, ἢ τῆς Θεομήτορος, ἢ τινος τῶν ἁγίων ἀσπαζόμενος, εἰ καὶ προσφύεται τῇ ὕλῃ, τὴν εἰκόνα, καὶ οὐ τὴν ὕλην ἀσπάζεται, καὶ ἀφανισθέντος τοῦ ἐκτυπώματος, ἐφ' ᾧ ἡ προσκύνησις, ἔμεινεν ἀπροσκύνητος ἡ ὕλη, μηδὲν τι κοινωνοῦσα τῷ ὁμοιώματι.

Ἐστω δακτύλιος ἐγκεχαραγμένος εἰκόνα βασιλικήν, εἶτα ἐκτυπούτω ἐν κηρῷ, καὶ ἐν πίσσῃ, καὶ ἐν πηλῷ. ἡ μὲν οὖν σφραγὶς μία καὶ ἀπαράλλακτος ἐν τούτοις, αἱ δὲ ὕλαι διάφοροι, διὰ τὸ μηδὲν τι ταῖς ὕλαις τὴν σφραγίδα κοινωνεῖν, ἀλλ' εἶναι αὐτὴν τῇ ἐπινοίᾳ τούτων κεχωρισμένην ἐν τῷ δακτυλίῳ μένουσαν. οὕτως οὖν καὶ τὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁμοίωμα, εἰ καὶ ἐν διαφόροις ὕλαις ἐκτυπωθῆ, ἀκοινωνητόν [1168C] ἐστὶ τῶν ὑλῶν, ἐν τῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μένον ὑποστάσει.

Τὰς ἱερὰς εἰκόνας ἀνασθηλοῦμεν, ἵνα ταύτας ὁρῶντες δι' αὐτῶν δοκῶμεν ὁρᾶν τὰ τούτων ἀρχέτυπα, καὶ γίνονται ἡμῖν ὑπομνήματα, καὶ παρηγορία τοῦ πόθου τοῦ πρὸς τὰ τούτων πρωτότυπα.

Ὅσον συνεχῶς αἱ εἰκόνες ὁρῶνται, τοσοῦτον οἱ ταύτας ὁρῶντες διανίστανται πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀρχετύπων μνήμην καὶ ἐπιπόθησιν.

Ἡ μὲν ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ λατρεία τῇ μακαρίᾳ Τριάδι παρὰ τῶν ὀρθοδόξων ἀπονεύμηται· ταῖς δὲ ἁγίαις εἰκόσιν οὐ λατρεία πάντως, ἀλλὰ προσκύνησις, καὶ ἀσπασμός, καὶ τιμὴ. εἰ γὰρ καὶ ἡ τιμὴ τῆς εἰκόνας ἐπὶ τὸ πρωτότυπον διαβαίνει, ἀλλ' ἡ λατρεία τῆς μακαρίας ἐστὶ μόνως Τριάδος καὶ οὐ [1168D] τῶν σεπτῶν εἰκόνων, ἵνα μὴ κτισματολάτραι καὶ ὑλολάτραι δόξωμεν.

Ἐπ' αὐτοῦ μὲν τοῦ Χριστοῦ λατρευτικὴ ἢ προσκύνησις καὶ φυσικὴ (εἶς γὰρ ἐστὶ τῆς ἁγίας Τριάδος κατὰ τὴν θεῖαν αὐτοῦ φύσιν), ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς εἰκόνας τοῦ Χριστοῦ σχετικὴ καὶ

perhaps wood, or gold, or silver, or one of the various materials. But when one considers the likeness to the archetype by means of a representation, it is both “Christ” and “of Christ.” It is “Christ” by homonymy, “of Christ” by relation.⁹

The icon has a relation with the archetype and is the effect of its cause. Therefore it is necessary that [the icon] is and is said to be of the “relative” category of being. Those of the relative category are relations; they themselves are and are said to be of another and are reciprocal with that other. For the archetype is the archetype of an icon. And an icon is the icon of an archetype. And no one would say that an icon [1168A] of something has no relation. For both appear together, and the one is seen in the other.¹⁰

The icon is called by whatever names the archetype is called. But one is as the archetype, and on account of itself and essentially, and the other is the icon of this, and on account of this, and derivative.¹¹

When one worships the icon, one worships Christ, whose likeness it is, and not the material which bears the likeness.¹² And just like in a mirror the face of the one who looks at it is depicted in some way, although it remains separate from the material [of the mirror itself] – and if one wished to kiss his own image which appears [in a mirror], he would have clung to the material and clasped the image, and then standing back, the appearance [of this] would have disappeared on account of his being separated [1168B] from the material of the mirror. In the same way, the one kissing the image of the Savior, of the Theotokos, or of one of the saints, even if he clings to the material, kisses the image and not the material. And if the representation which receives the veneration is destroyed, the material would no longer remain an [object] of worship since it no longer has anything in common by means of likeness.¹³

Consider, for example, an image of the emperor engraved on a seal ring. This might now be impressed in wax, in resin or in clay, yet the impression is the same and unchanged in any of these, though the materials are different, because the impression has nothing in common with any of them, but is separated from them in thought, remaining in the ring. And so too, the likeness of Christ, even if it is impressed in different materials, has nothing in common [1168C] with these materials, but remains in the person of Christ.¹⁴

We set holy icons up so that when we see them we believe that we see their archetypes through them, and they become reminders for us and an exhortation to desire their prototypes.¹⁵

The more images are continuously viewed, the more those viewing them are roused to the memory of and longing for their archetypes.¹⁶

Adoration in spirit and truth has been apportioned by the orthodox to the blessed Trinity, while no adoration at all is addressed to the holy icons, but veneration, kissing, and honor. And even if the honor passes from the icon to the prototype, adoration is for the blessed Trinity alone and not [1168D] for the holy images, so that we do not appear to be adorers of the creation and of matter.¹⁷

όμωνυμική. προσκυνῶ γάρ τὸν ἐν αὐτῇ Χριστόν, τὸν διὰ τὸ σαρκωθῆναι εἰκονιζόμενον κατὰ τὴν σωματοειδῆ θέαν αὐτοῦ, ὅπερ ἐστὶ σχετική προσκύνησις καὶ ὑποστατική.

Ὡσπερ ἡ πίστις, οὕτω καὶ ἡ λατρεία τῇ ἀγίᾳ Τριάδι ἀποκεκλήρωται. ὁ γοῦν λατρεύων τῇ εἰκόνι τοῦ Χριστοῦ εὐρεθήσεται τετράδι λατρεύων, καὶ συνεισκρίνων τῇ ἀγίᾳ Τριάδι καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα· τῆς Τριάδος γάρ, ὡς εἴρηται, τὸ λατρεύεσθαι.

Εἰ σώματος σκιὰν μερισθῆναι οὐχ οἶόν τε παρ[1169A]υφεστῶσαν αὐτῷ πάντοτε, κἄν μὴ φαίνοιτο, οὐδὲ τὴν εἰκόνα Χριστοῦ δυνατὸν διαιρεθῆναι αὐτοῦ. ἀλλ' ὡσπερ ἡ σκιά τῇ τοῦ ἡλίου βολίδι φαίνεται, οὕτω καὶ ἡ τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰκὼν τῇ διατυπώσει τῆς ὕλης.

Δύο τούτων ὄντων περὶ τὸ σῶμα, σκιᾶς καὶ εἰκόνας, ἡ μὲν σκιά σημασίαν ἀμυδρὰν τινὰ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου δείκνυσιν, ἡ δὲ εἰκὼν ἀριδηλοτέραν. εἰ οὖν τὸ ἀεὶ τοῦ ποτε καὶ τὸ καθ' ὕπαρξιν τοῦ κατὰ στέρησιν, καὶ τὸ τηλαυγὲς τοῦ ἀμυδροῦ βέλτιον, καὶ ἡ εἰκὼν ἄρα βέλτιον τῆς σκιᾶς. ἀλλὰ μὴν αἱ τῶν ἀγίων σκιαὶ καὶ ἄγιοι καὶ ὀνησιφόροι· αἱ εἰκόνας αὐτῶν ἄρα πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἀγιώτεροι καὶ σεβασμιώτεροι.

Ὁ μὲν Χριστὸς ὁράται ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι αὐτοῦ, αὐτὴ δὲ ὑφίσταται ἐν αὐτῷ.

Οὐχ ὡς θεοὺς τὰς εἰκόνας προσκυνοῦμεν, οὐδὲ [1169B] τὰς ἐλπίδας τῆς σωτηρίας ἐν αὐταῖς ἔχομεν, οὐδὲ τὸ θεῖον σέβας ἀπονέμομεν· τοῦτο γάρ οἱ Ἕλληνες· ἀλλὰ μόνον τὴν σχέσιν καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην τῆς ἡμῶν ψυχῆς, ἣν ἔχομεν πρὸς τὰ πρωτότυπα, διὰ τῆς τοιαύτης προσκυνήσεως ἐμφανίζομεν. ὅθεν τοῦ χαρακτῆρος λειανθέντος, ὡς ξύλον ἀργὸν τὴν ποτε κατακαίνομεν εἰκόνα.

Τὸν τοῦ σταυροῦ τύπον ἐκ δύο ξύλων συνάπτουντες, ἡνίκα τις ἡμῖν τῶν ἀπίστων ἐγκαλέσειεν, ὡς ξύλον προσκυνοῦσι, δυνάμεθα, τὰ δύο ξύλα χωρίσαντες, καὶ τὸν τύπον τοῦ σταυροῦ διαλύσαντες, ταῦτα νομίζομεν ἀργὰ ξύλα, καὶ τὸν ἄπιστον ἐπιστομίζομεν, ὅτι οὐ τὸ ξύλον, ἀλλὰ τὸν τοῦ σταυροῦ τύπον σεβόμεθα.

[1169C] Σὺν φόβῳ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ προσιτέον, καὶ προσκυνητέον τὰς ἀγίας εἰκόνας, καὶ πιστευτέον χάριν θεῖαν ἐπιφοιτᾶν αὐταῖς ἀγιασμοῦ μεταδοτικῆν.

Ὡσπερ κατὰ φύσιν ἀχωρίστου μενούσης τῆς ἀγίας Τριάδος, ἐπειδὴ ὁ Υἱὸς ἐσαρκώθη, οὐ διὰ τοῦτο φῆσει τις καὶ τὸν Πατέρα, καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα σεσαρκῶσθαι· οὕτω καθ' ὑπόστασιν ἐνωθείσης τῆς θεότητος τῇ ἀνθρωπότητι τοῦ Υἱοῦ, καὶ ἀδιαιρέτου μενούσης, οὐκ ἐπειδὴ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον αὐτοῦ περιγράφεται, καὶ γράφεται ἐν εἰκόνι, διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τὴν θεότητα αὐτοῦ περιγράφεσθαι καὶ γράφεσθαι φῆσει τις, ἐκεῖ μὲν τῆς κατὰ φύσιν συναφείας μὴ συγχεούσης τὰς ὑποστάσεις, ἐνταῦθα δὲ τῆς καθ' ὑπόστασιν ἐνώσεως μὴ ἐξιστάσης τῶν οἰκείων ὄρων τὰς φύσεις. ὅρος γὰρ θεότητος μὲν τὸ ἀόρατόν τε καὶ ἀπερίγραπτον, [1169D] ἀνθρωπότητος δὲ τὸ ὁρατόν καὶ περιγραπτόν.

In regard to Christ himself veneration is both in terms of adoration and natural, for He is one of the Holy Trinity according to His divine nature. In regard to Christ's icon [the veneration] is relative and homonymic, for in it I venerate Christ, who on account of His incarnation is depicted in terms of a bodily image, which is a relative and hypostatic veneration.¹⁸

According to the faith, adoration is specific to the Holy Trinity. Whoever adores the icon of Christ will be found to be adoring a Quaternion, because he has added the icon to the Holy Trinity. As has been said, adoration is for the Trinity.¹⁹

If the shadow cannot be separated from the body, [1169A] but always subsists along with it, even if it does not appear, in the same way Christ's own image cannot be separated from him. But just as the shadow appears with the radiation of the sun, so also does Christ's image appear by the imprinting of matter.²⁰

Of these two things concerning the body, shadow and image, the shadow displays the somewhat obscure outline of man, the image something clearer. Therefore, if eternity is better than that which is of time, and existence better than deprivation, and brilliance is better than obscurity, then the image is better than the shadow. [So if] the shadows of the saints are both holy and beneficial, their images are much more holy and worthy of reverence.²¹

Christ becomes visible in his icon and this subsists in Him.²²

We do not venerate images as gods, nor [1169B] do we place our hopes of salvation in them, nor do we apportion them divine reverence. This is what the Hellenes did. But we only exhibit the relation and love of our soul, which we have towards the prototype, on account of such veneration.²³ Therefore when the portrait has been smoothed away, we burn what was once an icon as useless wood.

When one of the unbelievers accuses us of being venerators of wood because we fashion the sign of the cross out of two pieces of wood, by separating these two pieces and dismantling the sign of the cross, we are able to regard them as useless wood and to silence the unbeliever, since it is not the wood but the sign of the cross that we revere.²⁴

[1169C] One should approach the holy images in fear and truth and venerate them, and one should believe that divine grace visits them, imparting holiness.²⁵

Even though the Holy Trinity remains undivided in its nature, when the Son became incarnate, no one will say that because of this the Father and the Holy Spirit also become incarnate. So, although divinity was united with the humanity of the Son in His person and remains inseparable from it, when His humanity is circumscribed and depicted in an icon, no one will say that because of this His divinity is also circumscribed and depicted. On the one hand the union according to nature does not obliterate the persons, and on the other, the union according to person does not rob the natures of their proper definitions. For the definition of divinity is that which is invisible and uncircumscribable, [1169D] of humanity, that which is visible and circumscribed.²⁶

Εἰ διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν σαρκὶ ἐσταυρωῖσθαι τὸ συμπεπονθέναι καὶ τὴν θεότητα λέγειν ἀσεβές, ἄρα καὶ διὰ τὸ σαρκὶ περιγραφέσθαι αὐτὸν τὸ συμπεριγραφέσθαι καὶ τὴν θεότητα λέγειν ὁμοίως ἀσεβές, κακῆϊνο μὲν Θεοπασχιτῶν, τοῦτο δὲ Εἰκονομάχων.

Τῇ πολλῇ καὶ ἀφράστῳ πρὸς τὸν Χριστὸν στοργῇ σεβόμεθα, καὶ προσκυνοῦμεν καὶ τοὺς τόπους ἔνθα περιεπάτησεν, ἢ ἐκάθισεν, οὐ τοὺς τόπους προσκυνοῦντες ἀπλῶς, ἀλλὰ δι' αὐτῶν τὸν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀναστραφέντα, καὶ διὰ τῶν τόπων ἐκείνῳ τὴν τιμὴν ἀναφέροντες.

If it is impious to say that because Christ was crucified in the flesh, so too did the Godhead suffer, it is also impious to say that because He was circumscribed in the flesh, so too was the Godhead circumscribed. The former is the opinion of the Theopaschites, the latter, of the Iconoclasts.²⁷

We pay reverence by means of a great and unspeakable love for Christ, and we venerate those places where he walked about and sat, not venerating the places themselves, but the one who dwelt in them for their sake, and [so] honor Him through these places.²⁸

Commentary

1. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 53; this is an edited version of PG 100: 277A from Nikephoros, *Antirrhetic* I.28.
2. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 53; cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Antirrhetic* II.23 (PG 99: 368C): εἰκὼν λέγεται παρὰ τὸ εἰκέναι.
3. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 53–54; adapted from Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57.33–40 (*Letter to Plato*): Ἄλλο δὲ φυσικὴ εἰκὼν καὶ ἄλλο μιμητικὴ, ἡ μὲν οὐ φυσικὴν διαφορὰν ἔχουσα πρὸς τὸ αἴτιον, ἀλλ' ὑποστατικὴν, ὡς ὁ Υἱὸς πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα (ἄλλη γὰρ ὑπόστασις τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ ἑτέρα τοῦ Πατρὸς, μία δὲ φύσις δῆλον ὅτι), ἡ δὲ τὸ ἀνάπαλιν, φυσικὴν διαφορὰν ἔχουσα, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὑποστατικὴν, ὡς ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς τὸν Χριστόν· ἄλλη μὲν γὰρ φύσις ὑλογραφίας καὶ ἕτεραι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, οὐκ ἄλλη δὲ ὑπόστασις, ἀλλὰ μία καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ τοῦ Χριστοῦ κὰν τῇ εἰκόνι γεγραμμένη.
4. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 54; adapted from Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57.40–53 (*Letter to Plato*): ὁ οὖν ἐστὶν ἐνταῦθα μιμητικῶς ἡ εἰκὼν, τοῦτο ἐκεῖ φυσικῶς ὁ Υἱός· καὶ ὡσπερ ἐπὶ τῶν τεχνιτῶν κατὰ τὴν μορφήν ἡ ὁμοίωσις, οὕτως ἐπὶ τῆς θείας καὶ ἀσυνθέτου φύσεως τῇ κοινωνίᾳ τῆς θεότητος ἡ ἕνωσις. ὄρα οὖν τὸ διάφορον· ὅτι ἐπὶ τῆς φυσικῆς εἰκόνος καὶ τοῦ αἰτίου, ἤγουν τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Πατρὸς, ἡνίκα μία φύσις, μία καὶ προσκύνησις κατὰ τὸ ταῦτόν τῆς φύσεως, οὐ τῆς ὑποστάσεως (ἐπειδὴ ὡς μίαν φύσιν, μίαν καὶ προσκύνησιν καὶ δοξολογίαν ὁμολογοῦμεν τῆς Ἁγίας Τριάδος, τρεῖς δὲ ὑποστάσεις, Πατὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ καὶ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος), ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς μιμητικῆς εἰκόνος καὶ τοῦ ἀρχετύπου, ἤγουν τῆς εἰκόνος Χριστοῦ καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἡνίκα μία ὑπόστασις Χριστοῦ, μία καὶ ἐνταῦθα προσκύνησις ἐστὶ, κατὰ τὸ ταῦτόν δῆλον ὅτι τῆς μιᾶς ὑποστάσεως, οὐ τὸ ἕτεροῖον τῶν φύσεων Χριστοῦ καὶ τῆς εἰκόνος. [The same text is quoted by Theophanes III of Nicaea in the fourteenth century at line 182 of his *Fourth Homily on the Light of Thabor* (Soteropoulos 1990: 79–206). It is also quoted in Neophytos Prodromenos, *Questions and Answers*, Question 2a, section 3, ll. 41–43.]
5. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 54; PG 130: 1165B–C. [Neophytos Prodromenos, *Questions and Answers*, Question 2a, section 3, ll. 43–46.]
6. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 54. Nikephoros, *Refutation*, ch. 123, ll. 15–16; cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 491.12–14 (*Letter to Diogenes Asekretes*): ἡ γὰρ τιμὴ τῆς εἰκόνος ἐπὶ τὸ πρωτότυπον διαβαίνει. ἔστι γὰρ τῶν ἀμφοτέρων μία ἡ προσκύνησις.
7. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 55. cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Antirrhetic* III.A.34 (PG 99: 405A).
8. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 55; from Theodore Stoudites, *Antirrhetic* III.B.3 (PG 99: 421A).
9. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 55; from Theodore Stoudites, *Antirrhetic* I.11 (PG 99: 341B–C).
10. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 55–56; from Nikephoros, *Antirrhetic* I.30 (PG 100: 277C–D).
11. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 56; source not identified. [Passage appears in Neophytos Prodromenos, *Questions and Answers*, Question 2a, section 4, ll. 75–78.]

12. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 56. cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 476.31–33 (*Letter to Niketas Spatharios*): διὸ καὶ προσκυνουμένης τῆς εἰκόνος ὁ Χριστὸς προσκυνεῖται, οὗ ἔστι καὶ ὁμοιότης, καὶ οὐχὶ ἡ ὑποδεξαμένη ὕλη.
13. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 56–57; adapted from Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57.91–101 (*Letter to Plato*): ὅπερ ἔστιν ἴδιον τῆς ὑποστάσεως Χριστοῦ, κεχωρισμένον τῆς ὕλης, κἂν ἐν αὐτῇ ὁράται. καὶ μοι δοκεῖ τῷ ἐν κατόπτρῳ παραδείγματι εἰοικέναι· κάκεῖ γὰρ οἶονεὶ διαγράφεται τοῦ ὁρῶντος τὸ πρόσωπον καὶ μένει ἔξω τῆς ὕλης τὸ ὁμοίωμα. κἂν δόξειεν ἀσπάσασθαι τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐκεῖσε εἰκόνα, οὐ τὴν ὕλην προσεπτύξατο, ὅτι μηδὲ δι’ αὐτὴν πρόσεισιν, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ ἀπεικονισθὲν αὐτοῦ ὁμοίωμα, δι’ ὃ καὶ προσέφυ τῇ ὕλῃ. ἀμέλει μεταστάντος αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἐσόπτρου συναπέστη αὐτῷ ἅμα καὶ τὸ ἴνδαλμα, ὡς μὴ κοινωνοῦν τι τῇ τοῦ ἐσόπτρου ὕλῃ, ὥσπερ οὖν καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς εἰκονικῆς ὕλης, ὅτι ἀφανισθέντος τοῦ ἐν αὐτῇ ὁρωμένου ὁμοιώματος, ἐφ’ ᾧ ἡ προσκύνησις, ἔμεινεν ἡ ὕλη ἀπροσκύνητος, ὡς μηδὲν κοινωνοῦσα τῷ ὁμοίωματι.
14. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 57; cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57.102–10 (*Letter to Plato*): Ἔστω πάλιν δακτύλιος ἐγκεχαραγμένος βασιλικὴν εἰκόνα, εἶτα ἐκτυπούσθω ἐν κηρῷ, ἐν πίσσῃ, ἐν πηλῷ. ἡ μὲν οὖν σφραγὶς μία καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ ἀπαράλλακτος ἐν ἀμφοτέραις ταῖς ὕλαις, αἱ δὲ πρὸς ἀλλήλας διαφορούμεναι· οὐκ ἂν δὲ ἐν ταῖς διαφορουμέναις ἀπαράλλακτος ἔμεινεν ἢ παρὰ τὸ μηδὲν ταῖς ὕλαις κοινωνεῖν, ἀλλ’ εἶναι αὐτὴν τῇ ἐπινοίᾳ τούτων κεχωρισμένην, μένουσαν ἐν τῷ δακτυλίῳ. οὕτως οὖν καὶ τὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁμοίωμα, κἂν ἐν ὁποιοῦν ὕλῃ κεχαρακτήρισται, ἀκοινωνητόν ἐστι τῇ ἐν ἧ δέικνυται ὕλῃ, μένον ἐν τῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὑποστάσει, ἥσπερ ἔστι καὶ ἴδιον. Cf. Germanos, *Letter to John of Synada* (PG 98: 160C/Mansi 13.100B–105B). *Acts of the Seventh Oecumenical Council*, p. 442–50.
15. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 57. *Horos of the Seventh Oecumenical Council*, ed. Mansi 13.377D.
16. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 57. *Horos of the Seventh Oecumenical Council*, ed. Lamberz and Uphus 315, ll. 180–84.
17. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 58; PG 130: 1168CD. Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 445.22–42 (*Letter to Severianos*). [Included in Matthew Blastares’ extensive quotation of this Euthymios text (PG 130: 1165A–69C) in his 1334/5 *Syntagma alphabeticum*, Rhallés–Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, 6, 31–518 and also in Neophytos Prodromenos, *Questions and Answers*, Question 2a, section, 7 line 103–08.] Cf. the points raised in Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 546.12–19 (*Letter to John the Grammarian*): καὶ μὴν οὐχ ὡς ὕλη δεῖν προσάγειν τῇ Χριστοῦ εἰκόνι τὴν προσκύνησιν, ἀλλ’ ὡς αὐτῷ Χριστῷ, εἴπερ ἡ τῆς εἰκόνος τιμὴ ἐπὶ τὸ πρωτότυπον ἀναβαίνει, ὑπεξαιρουμένης τῆς ὕλης τῷ τῆς ἐπινοίας λόγῳ ἐκ τοῦ ἐν αὐτῇ σχηματιζομένου χαρακτήρος. καὶ λατρευτῶς προσακτέον, ὡς φῆς, τὴν προσκύνησιν τῷ σωτῆρι Χριστῷ καὶ πρὸ σαρκὸς καὶ μετὰ σάρκωσιν καὶ πρὸ τῆς εἰκόνος καὶ δι’ αὐτῆς, καὶ οὐδεις τῶν εὖ φρονούντων οἶμαι ἀντιφέρεσθαι τοῖς ὀρθῶς δεδογματισμένοις.
18. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 58; cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 445.27–32 (*Letter to Severianos*): ἐπειδὴ ἡ λατρεία, ὥσπερ καὶ ἡ πίστις, τῇ Ἁγίᾳ Τριάδι μόνῃ ἀναφέρεται, τὰ δ’ ἄλλα τοῖς ἄλλοις, τῇ μητρὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ, τῷ ζωοποιῷ σταυρῷ, τοῖς ἁγίοις, τῇ

- σεπτῆ εἰκόνι Χριστοῦ καὶ πάσαις ἄλλαις ἀγιωτικαῖς εἰκόσιν, καὶ τοσοῦτον, ὅσον ὑπερέχει τὰ πρωτότυπα τῶν κατὰ ταῦτα παραγώγων. εἰ οὖν λατρεύεται, ὡς φῆς, ὁ Χριστὸς ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι, ἐπειδὴ τῆς Τριάδος τὸ λατρεύεσθαι.
19. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 58–59; cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 546.34–38 (*Letter to John the Grammarian*): δυοῖν γὰρ θάτερον, ἢ τὸ κατ’ αὐτὴν λατρευτὸν τῇ τριαδικῇ λατρεῖα συνεισκρίνειν, ὅπερ ἀδύνατον (ἐπεὶ περ οὐκ ἐνδέχεται προσθήκην τινὰ συνεισοῖσιν τῇ Τριάδι· εὐρεθήσεται γὰρ τετράς οὐσα), ἢ, μὴ συνεισκρινομένου ἐκέϊσε, καθ’ ἑαυτὸ δὲ ὄντος λατρευτοῦ, δύο τὰς λατρείας ἡμῶν δογματίζεις; cf. also Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 428.4–10.)
 20. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 59 cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Antirrhetic* III D 12 (PG 99: 433B).
 21. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 59. [This passage is quoted by Neophytus Prodromenos, *Questions and Answers*, Question 2a, section 9, ll. 125–29.]
 22. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 59; PG 130: 1169A; quoted in Theophanes III, *Fourth Homily On the Light on Thabor*, Oratio 4, l. 202.
 23. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 59–60 cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 221.111–114 (*Letter to his Monks*, quoting Pseudo-Athanasios, *Quaestiones ad Antiochum* (PG 28: 621B)): φωνὴ Ἀθανασίου τοῦ πολυάθλου ἐστίν· οὐχ ὡς θεοῦς τὰς εἰκόνας προσκυνοῦμεν οἱ πιστοὶ (μὴ γένοιτο) ὥσπερ οἱ Ἕλληνες, ἀλλὰ τὴν σχέσιν μόνον καὶ τὸν πόθον τῆς ἡμῶν ἀγάπης πρὸς τὸν χαρακτῆρα τοῦ προσώπου τῆς εἰκόνας ἐμφανίζοντες. Also, in *Acts of the Seventh Oecumenical Council*, session six, Mansi 13.225A.
 24. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 60; from Leontios of Neapolis in *Acts of the Seventh Oecumenical Council*: Mansi 13.44D. *Acts of the Seventh Oecumenical Council*, ed. E. Lambertz, ACO 2,3,2 (Berlin and Boston, Mass., 2012), 348–52.
 25. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 60 cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Letters* 57.118–21 (*Letter to Plato*): καὶ διὰ τοῦτο, ὃ θεῖε πάτερ, σὺν φόβῳ καὶ εὐλαβείᾳ προσιτέον καὶ προσκυνητέον αὐτῇ, ὡς τῆς προσκυνήσεως ἐπὶ τὸν Χριστὸν διαβαινούσης, καὶ πιστευτέον χάριν θεῖαν ἐν αὐτῇ ἐπιφοιτᾶν καὶ ἀγιασμοῦ αὐτὴν ὑπάρχειν μεταδοτικὴν τοῖς πίστει προσιοῦσιν.
 26. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 60; cf. Theodore Stoudites, *Questions* (PG 99: 484D).
 27. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 61; Theodore Stoudites, *Third Antirrhetic* A 33 (PG 99: 404D).
 28. Hergenröther, *Monumenta Graeca*, 61; from Leontios of Neapolis in *Acts of the Seventh Oecumenical Council*: Mansi 13.45A, ed. E. Lambertz, 352.

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I.1.2 John Zonaras, Theodore Balsamon, and Alexios Aristenos

Twelfth-Century Commentaries on Canons 73 and 82 of the Quinisext Council

NATHAN LEIDHOLM

Ed.: Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, 474–76, 492–95¹

MSS.: Rhalles and Potles produced their edition using a single manuscript, MS Trapezunt. (a. 1311), supplemented by the seventeenth-century edition of the same commentaries by Beveregius.² Beveregius himself used the Oxford Bodleian manuscripts mss. Barocci 194 (s. XV) and 205 (s. XIII) for the commentaries of Balsamon.³ For Zonaras, in addition to these Bodleian manuscripts (which contain both Balsamon's and Zonaras' commentaries), Beveregius utilized MSS Paris, BnF, gr. 1322 (XVI s.) and Coisl. 39 (s. XVI or XVII). For Aristenos, Beveregius relied primarily on ms. Oxford, Bodleian, Barocci 221 (s. XIV)⁴ The Canons of the Quinisext Council survive in whole or in part in a large number of manuscripts, but the list of the most common witnesses has remained fairly stable for more than a century⁵

Other Translations: The standard English translation of the Canons of the Quinisext Council is that of Percival, while a more recent one can be found in the volume edited by George Nedungatt and Michael Featherstone.⁶ An even more recent German translation appeared in 2006.⁷ There currently exists no other translation of the following commentaries by Zonaras, Balsamon, or Aristenos

1 An alternate edition of the same Canons and Commentaries can be found in Migne, PG: 137, 762D–764, 789B–792D.

2 Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, 1: i–xix; further discussion of the manuscript tradition behind the works of Balsamon can be found in Tiftixoglu 1991.

3 Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, 1: v.

4 Beveregius also used two additional codices from private collections for the text of Aristenos' commentaries, but they had not been catalogued at the time of publication. While the works of Balsamon and Zonaras frequently appear side by side in the manuscript tradition, Aristenos' commentaries seem to have always remained separate. See Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, 1: vi–vii.

5 The list is as follows: MSS Ambros. G 57 sup., Ambros. E 94 sup., Ambros. B 107 sup., Vatic. Barber. 578, Mosquen. Syn. 398 (Vlad. 315), Paris. Coisl. 209, Paris. Coisl. 211, Columnen. 23 = Vatic. 2184, Laurent. V 22, Laurent. IX 8, Laurent. X 1, Laurent. X 10, Monac. 380 bombyc., Vatic. Palatin. 376, Trapezunt. a. 311 (as reproduced in Rhalles and Potles), Vallicelianus F 47, Vatic. 827, Vatic. 1980, Vatic. 2060, and Vatic. 1287.

6 Ed. Percival 1988: 356–408; ed. Nedungatt and Featherstone 1995: 41–186.

7 Ohme 2006.

Significance

Both of the Canons included here represent major developments in the history of the Byzantine church's theology of images. Canon 73 is concerned with representations of the cross on the floor or ground,⁸ while Canon 82 addresses the depiction of Christ.⁹ The language and arguments in the latter became especially important during the period of Iconoclasm.¹⁰ Neither Canon speaks directly to any major, theological controversy of the twelfth century, but the period witnessed something of a golden age of Canon Law in Byzantium. The three commentators included here represent the leading elements of this development.¹¹

The Authors¹²

Born some time in the late eleventh century, John Zonaras probably wrote his commentaries to the conciliar Canons in the late 1150s or early 1160s.¹³ He held several high positions in the imperial administration over the course of his career, particularly under Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118), including *droungarios* of the guard (head of the imperial bodyguard) and *protasekretis*.¹⁴ Zonaras ended his life as a monk at the monastery of St. Glykeria on the island of Propontis, where he completed much of his surviving writing.¹⁵ His literary output was not limited to his commentaries on the Holy Canons. He is perhaps best known for his *Epitome of Histories*, which was designed as a history of the world from the Creation to his own day.¹⁶

Theodore Balsamon, undoubtedly the best known and most influential of the three authors discussed here, flourished under emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–81), having held the positions of *nomophylax*, then *chartophylax* (the latter put him high in the patriarchal administration) before being appointed titular bishop of Antioch, which office he held at the time he wrote his commentaries on the Canons.¹⁷ Balsamon has recently been called one of “the two most distinguished twelfth-century canonists” in both East and West (the other being Gratian).¹⁸ Like Zonaras, Balsamon ended his life as a monk, in his case at the monastery *τῶν Ζηπῶν*. He died sometime after 1195.

8 Ohme 2006: 105–06. This practice had technically been outlawed by imperial edict since 427, but this seems to have been largely ignored until the cross took on a renewed significance during the wars against the Persians in the seventh century.

9 Christ was thenceforth to be depicted only in his human form, rather than the allegorical lamb, a practice that had been common from the earliest Christian times.

10 Ohme 2006: 106. The Canon was even read out at the Second Council of Nicaea in 787.

11 Konidaris 1994: 133.

12 See also Troianos 2012: 170–214.

13 Pieler 1991: 176–77.

14 Troianos 2012: 177.

15 *Ibid.*

16 A. Kazhdan, *ODB*, s.v. “Zonaras, John.”

17 Balsamon never actually visited the city of Antioch itself, due in large part to its occupation by Latin crusaders. On Balsamon see also A. Walker, I.3.13 in this volume and A. Rhoby, I.7.7 in this volume.

18 Gallagher 2002: 184.

Alexios Aristenos held numerous positions within both the church and the civil administration, including *nomophylax*, *protekdikos*, *orphanotrophos*, and *meqas oikonomos*.¹⁹ He accomplished much of his work under John II Komnenos (r.1118–43) and died sometime after 1166 (he was present at a synod that year), though we do not know exactly when.²⁰ Aristenos, or at least his work, was known to and praised by the famous twelfth-century courtier and poet Theodore Prodromos.²¹

Text and Context

The text below includes the full, Greek versions of Canons 73 and 82 of the Quinisext Council, followed by the commentaries of Zonaras, Balsamon, and Aristenos. The text, including its format, appears as it does in the edition of Rhalles and Potles.

The Quinisext (or Πενθέκτη) Council, also known as the *Council in Trullo*, was convened by Emperor Justinian II in 691–92. Its purpose was to confirm the acts of the Fifth and Sixth Oecumenical Councils, held in 553 and 680–81, respectively. Hence it has come to be known as the “fifth–sixth” (Quinisext/Πενθέκτη) Council. It took its alternative moniker (*Council in Trullo*) from the imperial hall in which the Sixth Council had been held roughly a decade earlier. The synod resulted in the promulgation of 102 Canons, designed to give some lasting results from the previous two Oecumenical Councils.²²

The three commentaries included here do not represent a single project in the twelfth century, despite the fact that they appear together in the modern edition. Rather, each of the three commentators undertook his work independently, even if they were aware of each other’s work.²³ In fact, Balsamon was certainly aware of Zonaras’ work and frequently cites it. The connection between the two is also attested in the manuscript tradition, as the commentaries of Balsamon and those of Zonaras occasionally appear in the same codex. Aristenos represents a more independent tradition, since his much shorter work was drawn from a different, abridged version of the conciliar Canons. Still, it remains possible that Zonaras, at least, was familiar with his work.

John Zonaras undertook his commentary on the holy canons of the apostles, councils, and church fathers sometime after 1159, perhaps at roughly the same time that he composed his history.²⁴ Zonaras’ contribution to Byzantine Canon Law has not received nearly the amount of scholarly attention as that of his near-contemporary, Theodore Balsamon, despite the latter’s debt to and reliance on Zonaras’ work.²⁵ Like Balsamon, Zonaras was clearly versed in Civil Law, though he makes far fewer explicit references to it

19 Troianos 2012: 179.

20 Troianos 2012: 179.

21 Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 466ff.

22 Herrin 1987: 284–85.

23 See Troianos 2012: 177.

24 Troianos 2012: 177; Macrides 1991: 591.

25 According to Troianos, Zonaras’ work “had a decisive impact on subsequent interpreters of the canons, especially Theodore Balsamon, and on the literature of canon law in general,” see Troianos 2012: 177; Pieler 1991: 601.

than his more famous counterpart. Unlike Balsamon and Aristenos, who were commissioned by reigning emperors to write their commentaries on the Holy Canons, it is not known who or what prompted Zonaras to undertake his work.²⁶

Around the year 1170, Balsamon was commissioned by Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, in conjunction with Patriarch Michael III Anchialos, to bring clarity to Canon and Civil Law. The result was a lengthy collection of commentaries on the *Nomokanon in Fourteen Titles*, as well as the apostolic, conciliar, and patristic Canons, which included a large number of allusions to and contributions from the Civil Law Code (the tenth-century *Basilika*). Though he began work sometime around 1170, Balsamon seems to have continually amended and added to his hermeneutical work on the *Nomokanon in Fourteen Titles* and the Canons throughout the remainder of his life.²⁷

The general format of Balsamon's commentaries on the Canons is largely consistent throughout his work and has been described astutely by Troianos. "He set down a paraphrase of the text, interpreted the difficult concepts, made reference to the reason that led to the enactment of the decree and also to the historical framework in which it appeared, compared similar Canons, and pointed out conflicts with later canonical or civil provisions – usually based on the practice followed in his time."²⁸ His commentaries have also provided a wealth of information about more quotidian aspects of twelfth-century Byzantine life as a result of what Troianos has called Balsamon's "rather pedantic love of detail."²⁹ Balsamon stands out among the three commentators not only in the length and sophistication of his comments, but also in the obvious grounding in secular law, displayed most notably through numerous references to the *Basilika*.³⁰ This monumental Law Code, based upon that of Justinian, had been compiled in the tenth century during the reign of Leo VI "the Wise" (r.886–912) and henceforth formed the basis of Byzantine law.³¹

Among modern scholars, Balsamon has been consistently recognized for the strength of his grasp of both secular and Canon Law. His concern for and grounding in the theological and practical issues of his own day have also earned him praise.³² He has also, however, been criticized for what many modern observers have viewed as his endorsement of Caesaropapism.³³ Still, the quality of his work as a canonist cannot be underestimated. As Paul Magdalino puts it, "Had later commentators built on his method of treating these

26 While the person or persons behind Zonaras' work remain unknown, it is clear that he wrote both his commentaries and his history "at the bidding of other people;" see Macrides 1991: 591.

27 Troianos 2012: 181.

28 Troianos 2012: 182.

29 Browning 1989: 421.

30 Stolte 1989.

31 The collection also served, briefly, as the basis of law in the emergent Greek state in the 1820s.

32 Angold, *Church and Society*, 148. "Balsamon displayed a concrete grasp of the problems of his day, unlike his predecessors Alexios Aristenos and John Zonaras."

33 Angold, *Church and Society*, 101–03; Magdalino, *Manuel*, 294.

decisions [i.e. Canons] as a body of ‘case law,’ Byzantine Canon Law could have become as professional and specialized a discipline as it was becoming in the West.”³⁴

Alexios Aristenos’ work is the earliest of the three commentaries represented here, despite the fact that his contribution appears last below (following the edition of Rhallés and Potles). It is also the shortest, which is consistent with the rest of his commentaries when compared to those of Zonaras and Balsamon. This is at least partly due to the fact that Aristenos used the abbreviated version of the canons, rather than the full *Syntagma*.³⁵ These abbreviated versions of the Canons themselves appear as the first component of each of Aristenos’ entries in the edition (and below). The rest of his comments are typically limited to a short explanation, often little more than a rewording, of the Canon itself. His commentaries were undertaken at the request of Emperor John II Komnenos. Despite this, Angold has argued that, unlike his father and, later, his son, John II Komnenos “seems to have had little interest in the church.”³⁶

³⁴ Magdalino, *Manuel*, 294.

³⁵ Troianos 2012: 179. Aristenos utilized a version of the *Synopsis of Canons* that was produced in the eleventh century, rather than the longer *Syntagma of Canons*.

³⁶ Angold, *Church and Society*, 75. Angold does concede that “in so far as the question of the union of churches was pertinent to the conduct of foreign policy John took an interest in this side of ecclesiastical affairs.”

Text

Κανών ΟΓ'.

Τοῦ ζωοποιοῦ σταυροῦ δείξαντος ἡμῖν τὸ σωτήριον, πᾶσαν σπουδὴν ἡμᾶς τιθεῖναι χρή, τοῦ τιμὴν τὴν ἄξιαν ἀποδιδόναι τῷ δι' οὗ σεσώσμεθα τοῦ παλαιοῦ πτώματος. ὅθεν καὶ νῶ, καὶ λόγῳ, καὶ αἰσθήσει, τὴν προσκύνησιν αὐτῷ ἀπονέμοντες, τοὺς ἐν τῷ ἐδάφει τοῦ σταυροῦ τύπους ὑπὸ τινων κατασκευαζομένους, ἐξαφανίζεσθαι παντοίως προστάσσομεν, ὡς ἂν μὴ τῇ τῶν βαδιζόντων καταπατήσει τὸ τῆς νίκης ἡμῖν τρόπαιον ἐξυβρίζοιτο. τοὺς οὖν ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν τοῦ σταυροῦ τύπον ἐπὶ ἐδάφους κατασκευάζοντας, ὀρίζομεν ἀφορίζεσθαι.

ΖΩΝΑΡ. Τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος Χριστοῦ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ κρεμασθέντος, ἡμεῖς σεσώσμεθα, καὶ τῆς ἀρχαίας δουλείας τῆς ἀμαρτίας ἠλευθερώμεθα. τούτῳ τοίνυν τῷ τῆς νίκης ἡμῖν αἰτίῳ τὴν τιμὴν ἀπονέμειν χρήναι φασιν οἱ ἱεροὶ Πατέρες, καὶ νῶ, καὶ λόγῳ, καὶ αἰσθήσει· νῶ μὲν οὖν ἀποδιδόαμεν, ὅτε καθ' ἑαυτοὺς ἐνθυμούμενοι, καὶ λογιζόμενοι ὅσων ἀγαθῶν ἐτύχομεν δι' αὐτοῦ, ἐκπληττόμεθα τὴν εἰς ἡμᾶς εὐεργεσίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ· λόγῳ δὲ, ὅτε καὶ πρὸς ἑτέρους ταῦτα λέγοντες, χάριτας ὁμολογοῦμεν τῷ σώσαντι ἡμᾶς· αἰσθήσει δὲ, ὅτε αὐτὸν ὀρῶντες, τιμῶμεν καὶ κατασπαζόμεθα. ἐπεὶ δὲ τινες, ὡς τάχα πλείονα τιμὴν νέμοντες τῷ σταυρῷ, πανταχοῦ ἐτύπουσαν αὐτόν, πρὸς δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις, καὶ ἐν ἐδάφει· τοῦτο ὁ παρῶν ἀπαγορεύει κανὼν, κελεύων μὴ ἐν ἐδάφει τυποῦσθαι σταυρόν, καὶ οὕτω τὸ τῆς νίκης ἡμέτερον τρόπαιον ἀτιμοῦσθαι καταπατούμενον· τοὺς δὲ τοῦτο τολμώντας, ὑπάγει ἀφορισμῶ.

ΒΑΣΣ. Τινὲς ἐν ἐδάφεσιν ἐκκλησιῶν, ἢ καὶ ἄλλων τόπων σταυρικὰ σημεῖα ἀπὸ λίθου, ἢ ἀπὸ ἑτέρου τινὸς εἴδους ἐχάραττον. τοῦτο οὖν κωλύων ὁ κανὼν, φησὶν, ὅτι ἡ σωτηρία τῶν ἀνθρώπων διὰ τοῦ ζωοποιοῦ σταυροῦ γέγονε, καὶ χρὴ ἡμᾶς τὴν ἀνάλογον τιμὴν καὶ προσκύνησιν αὐτῷ ἀπονέμειν, νῶ, καὶ λόγῳ, καὶ αἰσθήσει· ἤτοι νῶ μὲν, δι' εὐχαριστίας σιωπηρᾶς· λόγῳ δὲ, διὰ τῆς πρὸς πάντας ὁμολογίας τοῦ γεγονότος ἀγαθοῦ πρὸς ἡμᾶς· καὶ αἰσθήσει, ὅταν καὶ πραγματικῶς τοῦτον ὀρῶντες, κατασπαζόμεθα· ὅθεν καὶ τοὺς ὀπουδήποτε εὐρισκομένους τύπους τοῦ σταυροῦ ἐν ἐδάφει, διωρίσατο ἀφανισθῆναι, ὡς ἂν μὴ καταπατῆται παρὰ τῶν βαδιζόντων τὸ κατὰ τοῦ διαβόλου τρόπαιον ἡμῶν. τοὺς δὲ ἐπιχειρήσαντας σταυροῦ τύπον ἐν ἐδάφει κατασκευάσαι, ἀφορισμῶ καθυποβάλλεσθαι. φησὶ δὲ καὶ τὸ ε'. κεφ. τοῦ α'. τίτλου τοῦ α'. βιβλίου· μήτε μοναχός, μήτε ἕτερός τις, ἐν δημοσίῳ τόπῳ, ἢ ἐν ᾧ θεὰ ἐπιτελεῖται, σταυρόν ἐπιβαλλέτω, ἢ λείψανα ἀγίων· καὶ κεφ. ζ'. μηδεὶς ἐν ἐδάφει, ἢ μυλίτῃ λίθῳ, ἢ ἐν μαρμάρῳ ἐδαφικῶ ἐγγλυφέτω, ἢ γραφέτω σταυρόν· ἀλλὰ περιαιρείσθω, τὴν βαρυτάτην τοῦ παραβαίνοντος ὑφισταμένου ποινήν. καὶ κεφ. μη'. τοῦ α'. τίτλ. τοῦ γ'. βιβ. τῶν βασιλικῶν λέγον ἐν μέρει· ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς τιμίους σταυρούς, μεθ' ὧν ἐν ταῖς λιταῖς ἐξέρχονται, μὴ ἀλλαχόσε, πλὴν εἰμὴ ἐν εὐαγέσι τόποις ἀποτίθεσθαι. ταῦτα τοῦ κανόνος καὶ τῶν νόμων διοριζομένων, σταυρόν μὲν ἐν ἐδάφει οὐ τολμᾷ τις κατασκευάσαι ἀπὸ τινος ὕλης· ἅγια δὲ εἰκόνες καὶ σταυροὶ ἐν δημοσίαις ὁδοῖς παρὰ τοῦ θέλοντος ἀναστηλοῦνται. καὶ ἡμεῖς μὲν, διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, καὶ τοὺς ἁγίους αὐτοῦ καθαρὰν πίστιν, τὰ ὀπουδήποτε ἀναστηλούμενα τοιαῦτα ἅγια προσκυνοῦμεν καὶ κατασπαζόμεθα· οἱ δὲ νόμοι, ὡς ἔοικε, διὰ τὰς τῶν ἀπίστων, καὶ τῶν ἀδιαφόρων ζώντων κακίας, τὰ ῥηθέντα γεγράφασιν. οἶομαι δὲ, ὅτι ἐκεῖνοι καθυποβάλλονται ἀφορισμῶ, οἱ

Translation

Canon 73

Since the life-giving cross has shown us salvation, we ought to make every effort to render appropriate honor to it, through which we have been saved from the ancient fall. Hence rendering veneration upon it with thought, word, and perception, we ordain that images of the cross in the floor, which some have made, be entirely removed, lest the trophy of our victory be treated with insolence by being trampled underfoot. Thus, from now on, those who make an image of the cross upon the ground, we determine to be cut off.³

ZONARAS. We have been saved and freed from the ancient slavery of sin by our Lord God and Savior, Christ, when he hung from the cross. The Holy Fathers thus decree that it is right for us to honor this reason for [our] victory, both in mind, in word, and in perception; we render [honor] in thought when, pondering within ourselves and considering how much good we have enjoyed through it [i.e. the cross], we are struck by the benefactions God has done for us; [we render honor] in word, when we also tell these things to others, [and] we concede graces to that which saves us; and in perception, when we see it, we revere and venerate it. Since some [people] perhaps impart more honor to the cross, they create it everywhere, even on the ground, in addition to other places. The present Canon forbids this, ordering that the cross not be drawn on the ground, thus dishonoring our trophy of victory by being trampled underfoot. Those who dare [to do] this, [this Canon] subjects to excommunication.

BALSAMON. Some have made images of the cross in the floors of churches or even other places from stone or some other material. The Canon forbids this, it says, since the salvation of men came about through the life-giving cross, and we ought to render the appropriate honor and veneration to it, in thought, and in word, and in perception; that is, in thought, [as] through silent thanksgiving, in word through sharing⁴ with all the good deed [done] for us, and in feeling, when we have actually seen it [the cross] and venerate it. Hence it is decided that those images of the cross found wheresoever on the ground are to be removed, so that our trophy against the devil might not be trampled underfoot. Those attempting to construct an image of a cross on the ground are subject to excommunication. So too states the fifth chapter of the first title of the first book [of the *Basilika*],⁵ “Let neither a monk, nor anyone else erect a cross or traces of saints, in a public space or one in which public spectacles are held.” Also the sixth chapter [of the same book and title of the *Basilika*], “Let no one carve or draw a cross on the ground, either on a millstone or a marble floor. But let the offender be taken away and subjected to the heaviest penalty.” And the forty-eighth chapter of the first title of the third book of the *Basilika* states, in part, “But also the honorable crosses, which are brought out during prayers, are not to be stored anywhere other than holy places.” Since these things have been set forth in the Canon and in the [Civil] Laws, no one dares to construct a cross on the floor from any material. Holy images⁶ and crosses, however, are set up on public roads contrary to the desire [of the law]. And we, because of [our] pure faith in God and his saints, revere and venerate such holy things wherever they are erected. The laws, it seems, because of the

ἀπλούστερον, καὶ δι' εὐσέβειαν δῆθεν κατασκευάζοντες ἐν τῷ ἐδάφει τίμιον σταυρόν· οἱ γὰρ κακῆ διαθέσει τοιοῦτόν τι ποιοῦντες, χάριν τοῦ τὸν σωτηριώδη τύπον τοῦ σταυροῦ, διὰ τοῦ καταπατεῖσθαι περιϋβρίζεσθαι, ὡς ἀσεβεῖς κολασθήσονται.

ΑΡΙΣΤ. Ὁ ἐν ἐδάφει σταυρὸς ἀφανίζεται.

Πᾶσαν σπουδὴν χρῆ τιθέναί ἡμᾶς, τὴν ἀξίαν ἀποδιδόναι τιμὴν τῷ ζωοποιῷ σταυρῷ, δι' οὗ τοῦ πάλαι σεσῶσμεθα παραπτώματος. καὶ ἔαν ἐν τῷ ἐδάφει ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ τύπος κατεσκευάσθῃ ὑπὸ τινος, ἀπαλειφέσθω, ἵνα μὴ τῇ τῶν βαδισμάτων καταπατήσῃ τὸ τῆς νίκης ἡμῶν ἐφυβρίζεται τρόπαιον.

Κανὼν ΠΒ'.

Ἐν τισὶ τῶν σεπτῶν εἰκόνων γραφαῖς, ἀμνὸς δακτύλῳ τοῦ Προδρόμου δεικνύμενος ἐγχαράττεται, ὃς εἰς τύπον παρελήφθη τῆς χάριτος, τὸν ἀληθινὸν ἡμῖν διὰ νόμου προϋποφαίνων ἀμνὸν Χριστὸν τὸν Θεὸν ἡμῶν. τοὺς οὖν παλαιούς τύπους, καὶ τὰς σκιὰς, ὡς τῆς ἀληθείας σύμβολα τε καὶ προχαράγματα, τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ παραδεδομένους κατασπαζόμενοι, τὴν χάριν προτιμῶμεν, καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ὡς πλήρωμα νόμου ταύτην ὑποδεξάμενοι. ὡς ἂν οὖν τὸ τέλειον κἂν ταῖς χρωματουργίαις, ἐν ταῖς ἀπάντων ὄψεσιν ὑπογράφηται, τὸν τοῦ αἵροντος τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου ἀμνοῦ, Χριστοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν, κατὰ τὸν ἀνθρώπινον χαρακτήρα καὶ ἐν ταῖς εἰκόσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν, ἀντὶ τοῦ παλαιοῦ ἀμνοῦ, ἀναστηλοῦσθαι ὀρίζομεν· δι' αὐτοῦ τὸ τῆς ταπεινώσεως ὕψος τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου κατανοοῦντες, καὶ πρὸς μνήμην τῆς ἐν σαρκὶ πολιτείας, τοῦ τε πάθους αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῦ σωτηρίου θανάτου, χειραγωγούμενοι, καὶ τῆς ἐντεῦθεν γενομένης τῷ κόσμῳ ἀπολυτρώσεως.

ΖΩΝΑΡ. Ὁ τοῖς Ἑβραίοις παρὰ Μωϋσέως ἐνταλθεὶς σφαγιασθῆναι ἀμνός, οὗ τῷ αἵματι αἱ φλιαὶ τῶν οἴκων αὐτῶν χρισθεῖσαι, ἄβατοι τῷ τῶν πρωτοτόκων ἦσαν ὀλοθρευτῆ, τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν προετύπου καὶ προεικόνιζεν. ὅθεν καὶ ὁ Βαπτιστῆς, δεικνύων τοῖς λαοῖς τὸν Χριστὸν, ἶδε ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἔφη, ὁ αἵρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου. ἐγράφετο οὖν ἐν εἰκόσιν ἀμνός, καὶ ὁ Πρόδρομος τῷ δακτύλῳ δεικνύων αὐτόν. τοῦτο δὲ μὴ γίνεσθαι ἢ σύνοδος αὕτη θεσμοθετεῖ λέγουσα, ὅτι τοὺς μὲν τύπους, καὶ τὰς σκιὰς, τιμῶμεν ὡς σύμβολα τῆς ἀληθείας, καὶ προχαράγματα· προτιμῶμεν δὲ τὴν χάριν, καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, *ἤγουν αὐτὰ τὰ πράγματα, τὰ διὰ συμβόλων δηλούμενα*² καὶ ὀρίζομεν, μηκέτι ἐν εἴδει ἀμνοῦ γράφεσθαι τὸν αἵροντα τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου· ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸν ἀνθρώπινον χαρακτήρα ἀναστηλοῦσθαι αὐτὸν ἐν εἰκόσιν, ἵν' οὕτω κατανοῶμεν τὴν συγκατάβασιν τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου, καὶ τὸ τῆς αὐτοῦ ταπεινώσεως ἄμετρον, καὶ μνημονεύωμεν τῆς ἐν σαρκὶ ἀναστροφῆς αὐτοῦ, καὶ τοῦ πάθους, καὶ τοῦ σωτηρίου θανάτου, καὶ ὅσων εὐεργεσιῶν ἐτύχομεν δι' αὐτοῦ.

ΒΑΣ. Ὅτε τὴν κατὰ τῶν πρωτοτόκων Αἰγυπτίων ἀπειλὴν διελάλησε, κατὰ κέλευσιν τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ Μωϋσῆς, ἐνετείλατο τοῖς Ἑβραίοις σφαγιάσαι ἀμνόν, καὶ τῷ αἵματι τούτου χρισθῆναι τὰς Ἰουδαϊκὰς φλιας, ὡς ἂν ἄβατοι ὡς τῷ τῶν πρωτοτόκων ὀλοθρευτῆ· προετύπου οὖν ὁ τοιοῦτος ἀμνός τὸν Κύριον. ὅθεν καὶ ὁ μέγας ἐν Προφήταις καὶ ἰσάγγελος Πρόδρομος, ἰδὼν τὸν Κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ Θεὸν ἡμῶν, εἶπεν· ἶδε ὁ ἀμνός τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Πατρός, ὁ αἵρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου. τινὲς οὖν ἐν ἀγίαις εἰκόσιν τὸν ἅγιον Πρόδρομον ἀναστηλοῦντες, ἀμνὸν ἄντικρυς αὐτοῦ ἐνεχάρατον, ὑπὸ τοῦ Προδρόμου δακτυλοδεικτούμενον. τοῦτο τοῖνυν ἢ ἀγία σύνοδος ἀποτρέπουσα,

evils of unbelievers and those living indifferently,⁷ have established the aforementioned things. I believe that those who erect the honorable cross on the ground out of ignorance and even those [who do it] truthfully out of piety are subject to excommunication. For those who do such a thing with wicked intent, because they insult the salvific image of the cross by trampling on it, they will be punished as impious.

ARISTENOS. The cross in the ground is done away with.

We ought to make every effort to offer the proper honor to the life-giving cross, through which we have been saved from the ancient fall. And if the image of the cross should be made by someone on the ground, let it be expunged,⁸ so that the trophy of our victory might not be insulted by being trampled underfoot.

Canon 82

In some venerable images,⁹ a lamb is depicted, indicated by the finger of the Forerunner [John the Baptist], which is interpreted as the image of grace, foreshadowing¹⁰ for us through the law the true lamb, Christ our God. Thus, we venerate the ancient *typoi*¹¹ and shadows as symbols and prefigures of the truth, as they are passed on to the church. We prefer grace and truth, receiving it as the fulfillment of the law. We ordain that the lamb who takes of the sin of the world, Christ our God, henceforth be depicted in his human form in images, rather than the ancient lamb, in order that he who is perfect might be portrayed in view of all, even if [just] in paints. In this way we comprehend the height of God's humility and [we] are led to the remembrance of His becoming flesh, his suffering, his salvific death, and his redemption, which was done for the [whole] world.

ZONARAS. The lamb Moses ordered the Hebrews to slaughter, with whose blood the doorjambs of their houses were christened and [thus] made impassible to the destroyer of [their] firstborn [sons], prefigured and foreshadowed our Lord Jesus Christ.¹² Hence also the Baptist (John) showed Christ to the people, "Behold the lamb of God," he said, "who takes away the sin of the world."¹³ Thus is depicted in images a lamb, and the Forerunner points to him with his finger. This synod set down in law that this is forbidden, saying that we honor the types and shadows as symbols and prefigurations of the truth, but we prefer grace, and the truth, **that is, the very things shown through symbols.**¹⁴ And we ordain that he who takes the sin of the world no longer be depicted as a lamb, but that he be displayed in his human form in images, so that, in this way, we might understand the condescension of God the Logos and his immeasurable humility, and we might commemorate his becoming flesh, his suffering, his salvific death, and the many benefits we enjoy because of him.

BALSAMON. When Moses spoke the threat against the first born [sons] of the Egyptians, according to God's command, he ordered the Hebrews to slaughter a lamb and to anoint the Jewish doorjamb with its blood in order that they would become impassible to the destroyer of firstborn [sons]. This sort of lamb prefigured the Lord. Hence also the Forerunner, great among the prophets and equal to the angels, saw our Lord and God Jesus Christ and said, "Behold the lamb of God, the Son of the Father, He who takes the sin of the world."¹⁵ Thus some [people] place the holy Forerunner in holy images, depicting a lamb opposite him, being pointed to by the Forerunner. This the holy synod

ᾠρισεν· ὡς, ἐπεὶ ὁ ἄμνός εἰς τύπον τῆς ἀληθείας παρελήφθη, αἱ σκιαὶ δέ, καὶ οἱ τύποι, καὶ τὰ σύμβολα παρῆλθον, ὡς τῆς ἀληθείας παρῤῥησιασθείης· κατασπαζόμεθα μὲν καὶ τοὺς τύπους, καὶ τὰς σκιάς, ὡς τῆς ἀληθείας σύμβολα, προτιμώμεθα δὲ τὴν ἀλήθειαν· διὸ καὶ ᾠρισαν, τὰ μὲν τοῦ τύπου σχολάσαι· ἀντὶ δὲ ἄμνου, ἐν ταῖς ἀγίαις εἰκόσιν ἀναστηλοῦσθαι αὐτὸν τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ Θεὸν ἡμῶν, κατὰ τὸν ἀνθρώπινον χαρακτῆρα. εἰ δὲ ταῦτα οὕτως ἔχουσι, νομίζω, ὅτι κακῶς ποιοῦσιν οἱ ἐπ' ἐκκλησίας περιστερεὰς ἀπολύοντες, ἀντὶ Πνεύματος ἀγίου ἐπιδημίας, καὶ ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀστέρους ἐκείνου τοῦ ὑπερφουῶντος καὶ καινοφανοῦς, κηρία ἀνάπτοντες· καὶ τὴν ἀπόρρητον καὶ σωτήριον ἐν σπηλαίῳ γέννησιν τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, διὰ παιδὸς καὶ στρωμνῆς ὑποτυποῦντες, καὶ τὰ ὑπὲρ λόγον καὶ ἔννοιαν ἀνθρωπίνους ἐπιτηδεύμασι διαγράφοντες.

ΑΡΙΣΤ. Οὐ χαράξεις ἄμνον εἰς τύπον Χριστοῦ· ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνον αὐτόν.

Ὁ ἄμνός εἰς τύπον παρελήφθη τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν· καὶ οὐ χρὴ τὸν τύπον προτιμᾶσθαι τῆς ἀληθείας, καὶ ἄμνον ἐν ταῖς σεπταῖς εἰκόσιν ἐγγράφειν, τῷ δακτύλῳ τοῦ Προδρόμου δεικνύμενον· ἀλλ' αὐτὸν τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ Θεὸν ἡμῶν, καὶ ἐν ταῖς χρωματουργίαις κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον ἐγχαράττειν.

[Quinisext Council] forbade, declaring that, while the lamb has been received by tradition as the model of the truth, the shadows, types, and symbols have now passed on after the bold assertion of the truth. We venerate the types and the shadows as symbols of the truth, but we prefer the truth. Because of this they decided to stop the [depiction] of the type; instead of a lamb, our Lord and God himself, Jesus Christ, is to be depicted in [his] human form in sacred images. If this is the case, I think that they act wrongly,¹⁶ who set loose doves in a church in place of a visit of the Holy Spirit, who set alight honeycomb for that newly appeared and extraordinary star, those who represent the ineffable and saving birth of the Lord God our savior, Jesus Christ, by a child and bed, and those who delineate matters beyond reason and thought using the arts of man.

ARISTENOS. You will not depict a lamb as the type of Christ, but the man himself.

The lamb has been received (through tradition) as the type of the true Christ, our God. And it is not right to prefer the type to the truth, and to depict a lamb being indicated by the finger of the Forerunner in sacred images. Rather, [we ought] to depict Christ himself, our God, in human form in images.

Commentary

1. In the Byzantine period, the noun θεσμός typically referred to a specifically religious law or doctrine, while νόμος usually designated a civil (imperial) law.
2. This portion of the text does not appear in most manuscripts; see Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, 2: 494 n. 4.
3. The passage refers to a particular form of excommunication. This verb and its corresponding noun (ἀφορισμός) typically meant a temporary exclusion from the sacraments, especially Eucharist, for a layperson or the potential loss of priestly office for members of the clergy.³⁷
4. Lit. “acknowledgement” or “confession.” The noun (ὁμολογία) is the same as that used to refer to the confession of one’s sins.
5. The *Basilika* consists of 60 books, each divided into titles (τίτλοι) and chapters (κεφάλαια).³⁸
6. Here, and elsewhere, “image” has been preferred to “icon” as a translation for the Greek εἰκών.
7. The adverb ἀδιαφόρως (and its corresponding adjective) held strongly moralistic undertones, indicating as it did the opposite of a careful, virtuous life. It was also used in descriptions of sexual promiscuity.³⁹
8. Or “wiped out/erased.”
9. Lit. “In certain images of the venerable icons ...”
10. The verb προὔποφάνειν is very often used in Byzantine literature to describe the relationship between Old Testament “types” and their New Testament “antitypes” in the context of biblical typology.⁴⁰ Figures or stories from the Old Testament were understood to “prefigure” or “foreshadow” (προὔποφάνειν) a specific counterpart in the New Testament.
11. This passage is clearly influenced by the tradition of Old Testament “types” and their New Testament “antitypes” (i.e. typology), which is as old as the New Testament itself. Hence, the Greek τύπους has been left untranslated.⁴¹
12. Cf. Ex.12: 21–23.
13. Cf. Jn 1: 29, 36.
14. See n. 2, above.
15. Cf. Jn 1: 29, 36.
16. Or potentially “wickedly.”

37 Lampe, s.v.; A. Papadakis, s.v. “Excommunication,” *ODB* 2: 768.

38 A. Kazhdan, s.v. “Basilika,” *ODB* 1: 265–66; an edition of the *Basilika* is in eds. Scheltema *et al.* 1953–88.

39 Lampe sv.

40 Lampe sv.

41 For more on this tradition see Pentiuć 2014.

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I.1.3 Theodore Laskaris (1221/2–1258)

Devotion to the Patriarch and the Church

DIMITER ANGELOV

Ed.: N. Festa, *Theodori Ducae Lascaris epistulae CCXVII* (Florence, 1898) no. 99, 133–35, with emendation in P. N. Papageorgiu, “Zu den Briefen des Theodoros Laskaris,” *BZ* 11 (1902), 21

MS.:¹ Florence, BML, Plutei 59.35 (s. XIV), ff. 138r–140r

Other Translations: None

Significance

Letter no. 99 of Festa’s edition is a profuse praise of the patriarch. It reveals familiarity with Byzantine theories of icon veneration.

The Author

Theodore Laskaris (Theodore Doukas Laskaris, Theodore II Laskaris), born in Nicaea, was a crown prince, co-emperor since at least 1241, and sole emperor of the empire of Nicaea between 1254 and 1258. He was one of the most prolific and original Byzantine literary figures and intellectuals. His writings include natural and political philosophy, orations on many different subjects, hymnography, and theology. In his letters he mentions art works, luxury objects, and precious materials which were clearly part of the everyday life of the Nicaean royal elite.² He refers to art often within the context of literary comparisons and philosophical musings. For example, in one letter he contrasts his love of knowledge to the way people around him are attached to “precious stones, gold, pearls and different textiles.”³ He likens in another letter his satirical description of a bishop to an image made “with color and [engraved] on metal.”⁴ When he presents six gold-embroidered purple robes made of silk to his friend George Mouzalon, recently promoted at Christmas 1255 as his leading minister, he compares their perfect number to the perfect love and affection between them.⁵ In the letter on his visit to Pergamon

1 Consulted.

2 See, for instance, the mention of an icon of the Virgin presented to him by George Mouzalon: 235–36. The icon is said to have inspired him to compose a hymn dedicated to the Virgin.

3 Ep. 1.4–19: 1–2.

4 Ep. 158.9–11: 219.

5 Ep. 213.3–7: 264.

translated here he remarks that the ancient ruins show the fame of his Hellenic ancestors “as in enamel.”

Text and Context

The letter addresses the patriarch Manuel II (1243–1254), a former first chaplain (*protopappas*) of the imperial clergy whom Theodore Laskaris would have known since his adolescence, if not earlier.⁶ Theodore praises him as Patriarch of Constantinople (the patriarchate was moved in 1208 to Nicaea), asks for his prayers, and reassures him, strikingly, of his willingness to sacrifice his life for the Church.

The letter interprets traditional ideological attributes of the patriarch of Constantinople. The patriarch was defined as “a living and animate image of Christ” (εἰκὼν ζῶσα Χριστοῦ καὶ ἔμψυχος) in the *Eisagoge*, an influential ninth-century collection of public law drafted, partly at least, by the great Photios.⁷ Twelfth-century panegyrics lauded the patriarchs, just as the letter does, as imitators of God and bridegrooms of the Church.⁸ Theodore introduces Manuel as a likeness of Christ and uses the veneration of religious images as a template and a literary motif. In the manner of people venerating icons, Theodore is uplifted toward union with the divine prototype, of whom the patriarch is said to be an image, a reflection, a copy, an impression, and a seal. (The similarity of the patriarch with Christ pertained even to the way in which he empathized with Christ’s suffering.) Notions of veneration, honor, and even worship of images are juxtaposed side by side. The association with religious art is made closer by the comparison of the aesthetic enjoyment felt by artists with the veneration of icons elevated toward union with God. The cognate words οἰκειόω, οἰκειοῦσθαι, οἰκεῖος, ἀνοἰκεῖος, οἰκειακῶς are frequently used in the letter (eleven times in total), mostly in order to convey the idea of mystical union with God through the mediation of the patriarch. The root οἶκος, οἰκία (“house”) prompts the author to engage in wordplay on the “people domiciled” (ὑπκειωμένοι) in the “house” of the patriarch’s love. The translation of these allusive words has been determined by the context. A contemporary social reality is perhaps worth noting: the *oikeioi* formed the circle of trusted men around the emperor (his “house companions”) from whom the holders of court titles were selected.⁹

6 Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos in PG 147, 465D; see Laurent 1969: 129–50 at 138–39.

7 *Eisagoge*, 3,1 in Zepos, *Jus*, vol. 2: 242; the same definition is reported in the fourteenth century by Matthew Blastares, *Syntagma*, in Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, 4, 428.

8 See the useful survey by Loukaki 1990; Theodore calls Patriarch Manuel II an “image of the Lord and God” also in Ep. 95.27–30: 129.

9 See Verpeaux 1965: 89–99.

Text

Ἀγιώτατέ μου δέσποτα καὶ οἰκουμενικὲ Πατριάρχα·

Πᾶσα ἀνάγκη τὸν λατρευτὴν τῆς εἰκόνος διὰ τῆς λατρείας οἰκειοῦσθαι ὄντως πρὸς τὸ πρωτότυπον· ἀνάγκη δὲ πᾶσα καὶ ὄντως τελικωτάτῃ ὁδῷ, τὰ μέλη ἀριδῆλως ἐνοῦσθαι τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ τοῖς ταύτης συνάγεσθαι καὶ ἐνοῦσθαι παθήμασιν, ἐπομένως καὶ συναλγεῖν τοῖς ἐκείνης ὁδουηροῖς πολλῶν πλέον, ἢ τῶν ἔγγιστα πρὸς αὐτὰ ἀνιαρῶν καὶ δεινῶν. καὶ γὰρ ὁ μὴ τὴν εἰκόνα φέρειν ὅλως λύπην παραχωρῶν, οἷαν ἂν πρὸς τὸ πρωτότυπον οὐκ ἐνδείξαιτο σπουδῆν καὶ προαίρεσιν; πάντως καὶ σώματος καταφρονήσῃ, καὶ πνεῦμα αἰχμαλωτίσῃ, καὶ ὅλην σχεδὸν ἰσχὺν ῥοπή μιᾶ καὶ ἀκαριαίῳ ὥρας καιρῷ δώσει εὐκόλως διὰ τὴν τοῦ πρώτως καὶ ὄντως προσκυνουμένου καὶ δοξαζομένου θεῖαν¹ τιμὴν.

Καίτοι γε καὶ οἱ περὶ τὰς τέχνας καταγινόμενοι καὶ τῆς τῶν βαναύσων τυχόντες μερίδος πρότερον ἐν φυλακῇ τὸ τῆς τέχνης οἰκονομητικὸν καὶ ἐκτελεστικὸν ὄργανον εὐτρεπίζουσιν ὡς εἰς τέλος τῶν βεβουλευμένων διὰ τούτου χαρμονικῶς τύχωσιν, μετέπειτα δὲ τούτων προφανῶς τρυγῶσι τὴν ἡδονὴν καὶ τυγχάνουσι τοῦ καλοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἐκ τῶν ὑποκειμένων διὰ τῶν ὀργάνων τέλους εὐμοιροῦσιν ἀληθινῶς, καθὼς καὶ οἱ τὴν εἰκόνα τιμώντες καὶ πρὸς αὐτὴν ἐμψύχως ὀλικῶς ἀναγόμενοι διὰ ταύτης πρὸς τὸ πρωτότυπον ὅση δύναμις, εἴπερ εἰσὶν ἄξιοι, ἀνατρέχουσιν.² ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ ταύτης οἰκειοῦνται πρὸς τὸ κυριώτερον τοῦ εἰκονίσματος πλήρωμα.

Ἄντικρυς γοῦν τῶν προειρημένων καὶ γὰρ τῷ πρώτῳ φωτὶ ἐκ ψυχῆς ἀληθινῶς θέλων οἰκειῶσαι ψυχὴν τὴν ἐμὴν, σὲ τὸ ἐκτύπωμα τούτου καὶ ὄντως ἐκμαγεῖον ἀληθινὸν καὶ ἰσότυπον κατὰ χάριν καὶ θέλησιν καὶ θεῖαν ὄντως σφραγίδα προσκυνῶ καὶ σεβάζομαι. σὺ γὰρ ὅλως εἰκὼν τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ὄντως ὠκειωμένος αὐτῷ εἰκονικῶς ὁμοῦ τε καὶ κατὰ θέλησιν. σὺ εἶ ὁ μεσίτης Θεοῦ διὰ σοῦ καὶ γὰρ πᾶσα λατρεία τῷ κτίστῃ, ὁσμῆ³ καθαρωτάτου μύρου ὥσπερ, προσάγεται. χρῆ καὶ γὰρ ὅλως ἐκ τῶν οἰκειῶν λαμβάνειν τὰ ὁμοούσια καὶ διὰ τῶν ἀνοικειῶν⁴ ἔλκειν τὰ ὅμοια. ἀλλὰ σὺ ἡμῖν κατὰ μὲν τὴν τῆς σαρκὸς ὑλικὴν κρᾶσιν καὶ σύναρσιν ὁμοούσιος, κατὰ δὲ χάριν θεῖαν καὶ θέλησιν καὶ τῶν πολυομάτων, ὡς ὁ ἐμὸς νοῦς ἐστοιχείωσε τοῦτ' αὐτό, ἀληθῶς ὑπερίπτασαι· πάντας καὶ γὰρ ἀληθῶς ὑπερῆρας τῇ ἐνώσει τοῦ πρωτοτύπου σου.

Καὶ γὰρ ἡ σὴ ἀρετὴ καὶ ὄντως ἀληθῆς τοῦ συνειδότος ἡγιασμένη διάκρισις ἀνῆψε πυρσόν, τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς σου λαμπάδα τὴν εὐπρεπῆ, ἣν καὶ οὐχ ὑπὸ τὸν μόδιον παρὰ τοῦ ἀντικειμένου κρυβῆναι συνεχώρησεν ὁ Θεός, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὴν λυχνίαν τὴν ἀρχικὴν, τὴν φωταυγῆ, τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ μου νύμφης, τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, οἷα πυρσὸς ἀκοίμητος, ἐπεκάθισας⁵ καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῇ τῆς σῆς ἀγάπης ὠκειωμένους οἰκία φωτίζεις οἰκειακῶς δι' εὐχῆς, δι' ἀρετῆς, διὰ νουθεσίας, διὰ τῆς καθ' ἐκάστην ἐπιμελείας, διὰ μιμήσεως, καὶ ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν διὰ πάσης ἀρετῆς οἰκειοῖς αὐτοὺς πρὸς Θεόν. σὲ καὶ γὰρ ὅλως ὀρώντες, ὀρῶμεν τὸν κτίσαντα· εἰκάξεις γὰρ αὐτὸν τῇ ὄντως ἀληθινή καὶ θεομιμητῷ πραότητι, εἰκάξεις δὲ καὶ τῇ οὐσιώδει εὐποίᾳ καὶ χάριτι. φαίδρυνόν μου τὴν κεφαλὴν σαῖς εὐχαῖς ἐλαίῳ καθάρσεως, ἄλειψον δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς μου εισόδους τὰς μερικὰς μύρω τῷ διὰ τῶν σῶν μοι, ὡς πέποιθα,⁶ καθ' ἐκάστην προχεομένων εὐχῶν, τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς μου αἰσθητήρια τῷ τῆς σῆς παρρησίας πρὸς Θεὸν ἐμπύρω συναρμόσας εἰς ἀρετὴν ὅλως ζωπύρησον· καὶ γὰρ νεκρωμένα τῇ ἀναισθησίᾳ ὑπάρχουσιν. ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ σταθρὸν νεύρωσον, εἴπερ

Translation

My holiest master and oecumenical patriarch,

It is absolutely necessary that the worshipper of an image be joined in reality to the prototype through <the act of> worship. It is absolutely necessary – and this is indeed the most perfect path – that the limbs be visibly united with the head and be drawn to and united with its feelings, and therefore share in suffering its pain much more than the woes and grief nearest them. For unless someone permits the image to feel fully sorrow, what kind of esteem and devotion would he demonstrate to the prototype?⁸ He would totally neglect his body and lock his soul, and would readily give away, in one moment and in the very nick of time, almost his entire strength for divine honor to the One who is firstly and truly venerated and glorified.

Indeed, people engaged in arts, who have been allotted the portion of artisans, prepare in advance, in secure confinement, the tool able to produce and execute art,⁹ so that through it they could obtain with delight the planned end results; then they openly derive pleasure from them, attain beauty, and are truly enriched with the accomplishment made out of [material] bases through the tools, just as people who honor an image and who are uplifted toward it in their souls rise quickly and to the best of their ability, if they are worthy, through the image toward the prototype. But through <the image> they are also joined to the lordliest perfection of the likeness.

In view of what has just been said, I myself also wish from the depth of my soul to make my soul truly joined to the First Light.¹⁰ I venerate and revere you as its reflection, a really true impression, a copy in grace and will, and a divine seal indeed. For you are fully an image of Christ and are really joined to Him both as an image and will. You are God's intermediary. For every act of worship is transmitted through you to the Creator as fragrance of purest myrrh. For one should receive consubstantial things even from people within his household (*oikeioi*) and draw similar things from those outside (*anoikeioi*). But you, being consubstantial with us in material mixture and the support of the flesh, are truly soaring above the many-eyed [angels]¹¹ in accordance with the divine grace and will, as my intellect reckoned this. For you have truly risen above everybody through the union with your prototype.

Your virtue and your really truthful, hallowed power of mental discernment has lighted a fire, the dignified candle of your soul, which God did not allow to be hidden under the bushel by the Adversary,¹² but you placed it as sleepless fire upon the original lampstand, the luminous one, that of the Church, the bride of my Christ.¹³ And you illuminate as in a house all those who have been domiciled in the house of your love, through prayer, through virtue, through admonition, through daily care, through imitation – and to say it simply, through every virtue you draw them close to God. For when we actually see you, we see the Creator. For you resemble Him in your really truthful and godlike mildness, you resemble Him also in essential generosity and grace. Lighten my head with your prayers as the cleansing oil,¹⁴ anoint the special entryways of my soul with myrrh through your prayers that are, as I believe, poured out daily on my behalf. Ignite the senses of my

τῆς σοὶ συνεζευγμένης Ἐκκλησίας, ὡς οἶδας, γόνος εἰμί. ὑπὲρ τῆς μητρὸς καὶ γὰρ ἀεὶ προμαχήσομαι, συναρηγουσῶν μοι τῶν σῶν ἀδιαδόχως εὐχῶν πατρικῶν.

Ἄλλα μηδὲ τῇ τῶν ἀντιπάλων παραχωρήσης, ὦ πάτερ, ψυχὴν τοῦ ὄντως ἀνθρώπου συνελεύσει τοῦ σοῦ υἱοῦ λυπησαί τι πρὸς καιρόν. ἐπιτίμησον τῷ θυμῷ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ· ἀσφαλῶς οἶδα ὡς στήσης τὴν φορὰν.⁷ τὸ δὲ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας ἰδίωμα νυμφικῶς πρὸς τὴν ἁγίαν τοῦ Κυρίου συναγωγὴν συγκατάταξον, τὸν λόγον πρὸς τὸν λόγον δι' εὐχῆς εἰλικρινοῦς χειραγωγήσας σύναψον, καὶ ὅλως εἰπεῖν πρὸς ὃν εἰκονίζεις Λόγον ὀλικῶς ἐξομοίωσον. οἰκείωσον δὲ τοῦτον ὡς ὄντως ᾠκειωμένος αὐτῷ ἐν παντί, ἔλκυσσον τὸ μὴ ὄν, ἐκτέλεσον ὡσπερ ὄν, ἐξ ἀναξίου ἄξιον σύναξον, εἰς τὴν οὐράνιον καὶ θεῖαν συναγωγὴν ὡς ὄντως στόμα Χριστοῦ. ἀλλὰ καὶ σαῖς εὐχαῖς κατὰ τῶν ἀντιπάλων ἐνίσχυσσον, ἵνα καὶ ἐν μεγίσταις πραγμάτων φοραῖς οἰονεὶ χύδην ἐκκενουμέναις πρὸς τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου συναγωγὴν ὡς υἱὸς τῆς μητρὸς στηριζόμενος προμαχήσω στερρῶς· καὶ συναλγήσω τῇ ὄντως μητρὶ ὡς ὄντως δοῦλος θεῖος αὐτῆς, καὶ σοὶ τῷ πατρὶ ἀπονέμω πᾶσαν ὑπακοὴν οὐ κατὰ τὴν τοῦ ἔγῳ κύριε' μὲν εἰπόντος, οὐκ ἀπέλθοντος δέ· ἀλλ' ὁ γέγραφα ἅπαξ ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ μου Ἐκκλησίας προθύμως ἀποθανεῖν, εὐχαῖς σαῖς στηριζόμενος ἀεὶ ἐκπληρῶ, ἵνα, εἰ ὑπὲρ τῶν τοῦ προστάτου τοῦ χριστωνύμου λαοῦ βουλευμάτων ὄση δύναμις προμαχῶ, ἔξω θεῖον ὄντως μισθόν. εὐχαῖς δὲ τῆς σῆς πατρικῆς ὡς εἰπεῖν οἷον οὐσιώδους γνησιότητος τῷ πρώτῳ πατρὶ γνήσιος γόνος ἐκτελεσθῶ καὶ τῆς αὐτοῦ βασιλείας κληρονόμος, κἂν πρὸς με τοῦτο ἀνάξιον.

soul through the ardor of your devotion to God, for they lie dead because of the lack of sensation. But tighten, too, my firmness, since, as you know, I am a child of the Church, your bride. For I will always be in the forefront of the fight for my mother [the Church], as long as your paternal prayers continually help me.

But do not, my father, allow a host of opponents to cause at times grief to the soul of a true human being, your son. Impose a penalty on anger and reasoning (*logos*). I certainly know that you will stop the impulse. In the manner of a bridegroom [of the Church], cast down the state of passion before the holy congregation of the Lord,¹⁵ bind reason with reason by guiding them through sincere prayer, and to put it briefly, be assimilated fully to the Word that you represent. Make the Word your own ally as a man joined to it in everything, extract the non-existent, make it as it were existent, gather together as a true mouthpiece of Christ the worthy from among the unworthy in the heavenly and divine congregation. But give me strength against the opponents through your prayers that are poured like a flood before the congregation of the Lord, so that even in the influx of the greatest troubles I, as son of the mother [Church], will lead the fight for her with your firm support. And I will feel pain with the true mother as her true divine servant and will give you, my father, every obedience not like that of the phrase “I, my lord,” said by the man who speaks up, but does not go [to his father’s vineyard].¹⁶ But supported by your prayers, I will always carry out what I once wrote – to die on behalf of the Church of my Christ – so that I will obtain a truly divine remuneration, since I am in the forefront of fighting, to the best of my ability, for the agendas of the protector of the Church of the Christ-named people.¹⁷ Through the prayers of an essential, so to say, and genuine genuine father, may I become a genuine child of the First Father and an heir to His kingdom, even if this might be undeserved for me.

Commentary

1. The duplication of the word *θείων* in Festa's edition has been deleted; it is absent from the MS.
2. Festa's punctuation in this sentence has been modified.
3. Ὅρμη found in the MS and in Festa's edition has been emended to ὄσμη following Papageorgiu's suggestion.
4. The MS reading *ἀνοικείων* (not reported by Festa in the apparatus) has been preferred to *οἰκείων* of his edition.
5. Festa's punctuation in this sentence has been modified.
6. The MS reading *πέποιθα* (not reported by Festa in the apparatus) has been preferred to *πεποιθήμεν* of his edition.
7. Festa's punctuation has been modified in this sentence.
8. If the sorrow was that caused by the death of the patriarch's only son which Theodore mentions in a consolatory letter to Manuel (who himself had comforted Theodore one year earlier for the passing of his wife), then the current letter would date to the last two years of Manuel's patriarchate, namely 1253 or 1254.¹⁰
9. Both *οἰκονομητικός* and *ἐκτελεστικός* are very rare adjectives. On *οἰκονομητικός*, see Kriaras, *Lexikon*, s.v. The *LBJ* refers to this letter as the sole example of the use of *ἐκτελεστικός*.
10. That is, the uncreated light of God.¹¹
11. The adjective "many-eyed" (*πολυόμματος*) refers here to angels. See, for example, Romanos Melodos, *Hymn* 39, §10.6, ed. J. Grosdidier de Matons, IV, 336; Patriarch Germanos II, *Fifth Homily*, ed. S. Lagopates, 245.30.
12. Mt. 5: 15–16, Mc. 4: 21–23, Lc. 11: 33–36.
13. Eph. 5: 25–27.
14. Theodore refers elsewhere to the cleansing power of oil when applied to a wounded or sick body. See *Oration in Praise of John Vatatzes*, ed. L. Tartaglia, 31.164–65, 50.632–33 (*ἐλαίω δὲ καθαίρουσα τούτων τὰ τραύματα*); Ep. 77.21: 104. The inspiration is scriptural: Lc. 10: 34.
15. "Congregation of the Lord" (*συναγωγή τοῦ Κυρίου*), see Num. 27:17, 31:16; see also the use of the phrase in hymnography: *Typikon of the Great Church*, ed. J. Mateos, I, 364.8–9.
16. That is, the son who does not fulfill his promises according to the parable in Mt. 21: 28–31.
17. "Christ-named people" (*χριστώνυμος λαός*) can refer to the subjects of the emperor and the community of the faithful in general.¹²

¹⁰ See Ep. 94: 125–28; Angelov 2011–12: 239.

¹¹ See Gregory Nazianzen, *Or.* 40, PG 36, 364.372; *Or.* 44, PG 36, 609; Pseudo-Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy*, 3, ed. Heil and Ritter 2012: 7 9.24.

¹² See, for example, John of Damascus, *Defense Against the Calumniators of Holy Images*, III, 42.2, ed. Kotter III:143; Patriarch Germanos II, *Fifth Homily*, ed. S. Lagopates, 245.31; Akropolites, *History*, §76, in Heisenberg and Wirth 1978, I: 152.4; Theodore Laskaris, *Oration in Praise of John Vatatzes*, in Tartaglia 2000: 37.308–09, 43.468, 53.688–89.

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I.1.4 John IX Merkouropolos (twelfth century)

The Icon of the Theotokos and the Mutilated Hand of St. John of Damascus

MARTIN HINTERBERGER

Ed.: A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *AIΣ IV* (St. Petersburg 1894; repr. Brussels 1963), ch. 19, 324–25 (= *BHG* 395)

MS.:¹ Athens, National Library of Greece, EBE 983 (a.1367), ff. 315v–357v

Other Translations: None

Significance

The icon of the Mother of God becomes alive and assumes thaumaturgic properties for John of Damascus, the most important defender of the veneration of icons.

The Author

After a monastic career in Mar Saba close to Jerusalem and possibly in the John Chrysostom monastery on mount Koutsovendis in Cyprus, John Merkouropolos held the title of patriarch of Jerusalem (as John IX, 1156/57–1161?). He resided in the Diomedes monastery in Constantinople, whose abbot he had become *ex officio*. Merkouropolos was an icon-painter and probably also an author (or commissioner) of epigrams about icons. The vita of John of Damascus and Kosmas of Maiouma from which this passage is taken is his only known work in prose.²

Text and Context

As patriarch of Jerusalem, albeit exiled in Constantinople, John Merkouropolos had a special relationship with John of Damascus and Kosmas the Hymnographer (of Maiouma), two saints who were active in the region of Jerusalem during the seventh and eighth centuries. The oldest preserved vita, the so-called Jerusalem-Vita (*BHG* 884) had been composed by a patriarch of Jerusalem (John VII, d. 966 or 969). Nothing else is known about the circumstances under which our text was composed.

1 Consulted. The manuscript contains a so-called “mixed” Metaphrastic menologium for the months February to April. About the manuscript see Halkin 1983: 71–72; Ehrhard 1937–52: II 395. Leone 1989: 407–10 points to the close connection between Athens, EBE, 983 and Vienna, ÖNB, hist. gr. 3, an eleventh-century manuscript which, however, does not contain our text.

2 On Merkouropolos’ life see now Spingou 2016. On the identification of John Merkouropolos with John IX patriarch of Jerusalem see Cesaretti and Ronchey, 2014: 97*–99*; Pahlitzsch 2001: 140–45; Plank 1994.

John of Damascus' energetic struggle for the veneration of icons is the focus of his *vitae*.³ The story of John's amputated hand is one of the most famous miracles related to his *vita* and the subject of the passage below. The miracle soon became an iconographic theme and it was repeated in various texts, including *vitae* and hymns.⁴ However, it is only in the Jerusalem-*Vita* and the present text that the healing of the severed hand is brought about by an icon.⁵ Merkouropolos' double-*vita* of John and Kosmas is primarily based on the Jerusalem-*Vita*, whose wording Merkouropolos follows closely.⁶ The changes Merkouropolos introduced into the story are not without importance. From being a narrative about John alone, this version now offers an account of both John and Kosmas. As regards the story of the amputated arm, which is the focus of the passage below, the earlier *vita* has John dreaming the incident,⁷ whereas in our text it is Kosmas who experiences a vision (or daydream), while John dreams in his sleep. The introduction of important changes into a text that betrays close dependence on the Jerusalem-*Vita* may be the reason for the slightly confused and confusing text. For, according to Merkouropolos' text, the miracle seems to unfold in two stages, yet the transition from one stage to the other is not entirely clear: Is Kosmas observing the miracle at the same time as John is seeing it in his dream? Or should we rather interpret the scene as a sequence of actions: first Kosmas observes that the painted figure has disappeared raising the expectation that something wondrous has happened, then John's dream vision, in which he sees the Mother of God approaching him and restoring the severed limb to its original place, follows? Note that according to the Jerusalem-*Vita* John is simply seeing the "image" (εἰκὼν) of the Mother of God, who looks at him with merciful and joyful eyes and announces the miracle.⁸ In other words, while in Merkouropolos' textual model John's vision proposes a simple alteration to an icon which seems to look directly at and to speak to John, our text gives a less conventional version of the miracle, for it is not just the icon that comes alive, but the figure depicted there also obtains independence and separates itself from the material icon, becoming "really" alive.

The text is very rhetorical and highly rhythmical. It generally adheres to the rules of prose rhythm, such that between the two last stressed syllables of a syntactical unit or before a pause, there is an even number of unstressed syllables, usually two or four. As with many Byzantine rhetoricians, the author is particularly fond of the rhetorical figure of *hyperbaton*. There are four instances in this passage alone.

3 See, e.g., in Merkouropolos' text, esp. ch. 15, p. 319.

4 Cf. Detorakis 1979: 45–46 and PmbZ 2969.

5 On the various versions of John's (and Kosmas') *vita* see PmbZ, "Prolegomena," in Lilie *et al.* 1998: 64–65; Kolovou 2003: 7–9; Detorakis 1979: 15–80.

6 As Detorakis 1979: 40–42 has shown, the present text thus constitutes a kind of metaphrasis of the former.

7 PG 94: c. 457.

8 PG 94: 457C: ὁρᾷ τὴν τῆς Θεομήτορος ἁγίαν εἰκόνα ὀμμασιν εὐσπλάγχθοις καὶ ἰλαροῖς αὐτὸν ἀποβλέπουσάν τε καὶ λέγουσαν ...

Text⁹

Τῶν γοῦν οἰκετῶν τίς ὁ παρ' ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν παρακαθήμενος τῇ χειρὶ καὶ πολλὰ προσεπιστένων αὐτῇ οἷ προσαπερρίφη παραβαλῶν καὶ ταύτην λαβῶν, δρομαῖος ἐπάνεισιν· τὴν ἐκμηθεῖσαν ἐγκεκρυμμένην ἀποκομίζων τῷ δεσποτεύοντι· ὃ δ' αὐτὴν εἰληφῶς, εἴσεισιν εἰς τὸν κατ' οἶκον εὐκτήριον σὺν τῷ ἐκ δεσποτηρίου ἐπανιόντι Κοσμά· καὶ ἄμφω πεσόντες πρηνεῖς πρό' τινος θείας εἰκόνας τὸν χαρακτηῖρα φερούσης τῆς Θεομήτορος· καὶ τὴν ἐκτετμημένην τῇ πρὶν ἄρμονίᾳ, συμπαραθέμενος, τοιῶνδε λόγων πρὸς ταύτην ἐνήρξατο· οἶδας δέσποινα καὶ μήτηρ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸν τρόπον δι' ὃν ἡ χεὶρ ἀποκέκοπται· οὐκ ἀγνοεῖς τὴν αἰτίαν δι' ἣν τὸ ξίφος ἠκόνηται· σὺ τῆς τομῆς ἢ ὑπόθεσις· τὸ πάθος οὐκ ἄλλω τῷ δὲ υἱῷ σου καὶ σοὶ ἀνατίθεται· σὺ καὶ πρὸς τὴν θεραπείαν ἀπόδουθι· εἰ μὴ γὰρ οὐκ² ἦν ἐφορμῶσα κατὰ τῶν τοῦ τυράννου Λέοντος θεσπισμάτων, καὶ στήλην ἔνθεν ἀντανήγειρεν ὀρθοδοξίας διὰ γραμμάτων, τάχα ἂν οὐκ ἂν³ ἀδοκῆτοῖς ἐμπέπτωκεν· ὁ δὲ ζῆλος ὁ περὶ σέ καὶ τῆς σῆς εἰκόνας καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ σου ἢ ὕβρις καὶ ἢ ἀθέτησις ταυτί μοι ἐπήγαγε τὰ δεινὰ σωρηδόν· τούτων οὕτω λεγομένων, ὁ Ἰωάννης εὐχῆ καὶ σταυρῷ, καὶ δάκρυσι κέχρηται· τῆ μὲν, ὡς φαρμάκω· τῷ δὲ, ὡς ὄργανω· τοῖς δὲ, ὡς χρίσμασιν· οἷς καὶ τὴν τετμημένην τὸ δεσποτικὸν ἐπάσας ὄνομα περιήλειφε· καὶ εἰς ὕπνον αὐτίκα τρέπεται· ὁ δὲ Κοσμάς, ὑπῆρχεν ἐγρηγορῶς· καὶ ὁρᾷ τῶν φώτων ὑπαυγαζόντων, ὅτι ἡ γραφή τῆς εἰκόνας τῆς Θεομήτορος, ὡ τοῦ θαύματος, ἐκλέλοιπεν ἐκ τοῦ πίνακος· καὶ ὡς ἂν μὴ Ἰωάννης ἀφυπνισθῆ, ὑπῆδεν ἡσύχως πρὸς τὴν ἐκπληξιν· θαῦμα τί τὸ γενησόμενον ἀναμένων ἰδεῖν· ἡ δὲ παρθένος ἐφίσταται κατ' ὄναρ τῷ πάσχοντι· καὶ τῶν τμημάτων ἐφαπτομένη καὶ δοκοῦσα συναρμόττειν αὐτὰ, ἴδε γέγονας φησὶν ὑγιῆς· χρεῖα μοι γὰρ τῆς ἀρτιουμένης πρὸς τὴν μεγίστην τῶν διοικήσεων, ἐν ἧ Θεὸς αὐτὸς συνεισέρχεται· γράψει γὰρ οὐ πλάσματα, ἀλλὰ ὄσματα καὶ δογμάτων ὕμνους, ἐμοὶ προσαρμόττοντας.

9 The text is based on the edition of Papadopoulos-Kerameus with a few minor changes concerning accentuation and punctuation. Following the only manuscript and in accordance with general Byzantine practice, the grave accent is used also before punctuation. The manuscript makes use only of two different punctuation marks, the comma indicating a weak pause, and the semi-colon indicating a stronger pause.

Translation

Thus,⁴ one of the servants who had stayed the entire day close to the hand, bemoaning [the events], went where it had been disposed of, collected it, and quickly returned (to his house), discreetly bringing the amputated hand back to his lord. (John) took the hand and together with Kosmas who was just coming back from prison, entered into the prayer room (situated) in the house. Both men prostrated themselves before a divine icon bearing the form of the Mother of God. John, then, connecting the amputated hand to the joint (where it had been) before, said the following words to her [the Mother of God]:

“My Lady and Mother of the Son of God, you know the way my hand was cut off. You are very well aware of the reason for which the sword was sharpened. It is you who are the reason for which it was amputated. My suffering is an offering to no one else but to your Son and yourself. Thus, you yourself should readily heal me. For if my hand were not storming against the decisions of the unlawful ruler Leo and had not erected a column of orthodoxy through writings against him, it would not have encountered (these) unexpected (troubles). My zeal for you, and the very insult and rejection of your image and that of your Son heaped a load of dreadful disasters on me.”

While speaking thus, John made use of prayer, a cross and tears: the first as a remedy, the second as a tool, and the third as an ointment⁵ with which he anointed his amputated hand, while invoking the Lord’s name; and then he fell asleep immediately. But Kosmas was still awake and thanks to the gleaming light he sees the depiction of the Mother of God leave the panel – what a miracle! And so he started quietly chanting before the wonder, so as not to wake John up, and he waited to see what the miracle would be. In a dream (John sees) the Virgin to approach (himself) the sufferer, to touch the (separated) parts (of the arm), and to appear⁶ to assemble them together saying “Behold, you have been healed. For I need your hand which is intact (again) for the greatest of services in which God Himself participates. For your hand shall write not fictitious stories, but songs and hymns about the [right] beliefs which befit me.”⁷

Commentary

1. Both the ms. and the edition have πρὸς.
2. Double negation used for emphasis.
3. The second ἄν is probably a scribal error.
4. Because of a plot on behalf of the iconoclastic Emperor of Byzantium, John of Damascus, who held the office of chief counsellor of the caliph of Damascus, had been falsely accused and condemned for high treason. Since his crime allegedly consisted in writing letters inviting the Emperor to conquer Damascus, his right hand was cut off. After the execution of this punishment, John's hand was publicly exposed. John did receive his amputated limb back, as a medical expert had advised that his pains would not stop without this. Following the quoted passage, John presents his healed hand to the caliph, who pardons John and restores him to his office. Nevertheless, John and his adoptive brother Kosmas decide to leave Damascus for the Holy Land, where they enter the monastery of St. Sabas.
5. Wonder-working tears: pure tears shed by a pure soul that had repented were supposed to be saintly and healing.¹⁰
6. The verb δοκοῦσα indicates that a dream is related and is thus semantically equivalent with the expression κατ' ὄναρ "in a dream/in the form of a dream."
7. On the famous story of the amputated hand see generally Detorakis 1989 and Rochow 2007 (both without particular reference to our text).

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¹⁰ On Byzantine tears see, e.g., Hinterberger 2006.

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I.1.5 Ṣalībā ibn Yuḥannā al-Mawṣilī (fl. 1335)

“Books of Mysteries”/ *Asfār Al-Asrār*

THOMAS A. CARLSON

Ed.: Ṣalībā ibn Yuḥannā al-Mawṣilī, *Kitāb asfār al-asrār*, ed. G. Gianazza (Beirut: Centre de Documentation et de Recherches Arabes Chrétiennes, 2018)¹

MSS.:² Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Sachau 12 (a.1767)

Birmingham, Mingana, Christian Arabic 98 (s. XIX)

Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, Add. 2889 (a.1730)

London, British Library, Or. 2438 (undated)³

Paris, BnF, Arabe 4811 (a.1724)

Paris, BnF, Arabe 6732 (dated 28 May 1885)

Paris, BnF, Arabe 6744 (s. XIX)

Vatican City, BAV, Arabo 110 (s. XIV)

Vatican City, BAV, Arabo 687 (s. XVIII)

Vatican City, BAV, Borgia arabo 198 (s. XIX)

Vatican City, BAV, Neofiti 54 (s. XVIII)

Other Translations: Ṣalībā ibn Yuḥannā al-Mawṣilī, *I libri dei misteri: Kitāb asfār al-asrār*, transl. G. Gianazza, *I libri dei misteri = (Kitāb asfār al-asrār) / Ṣalībā ibn Yuḥanna al-Mawṣilī. Introduzione, traduzione note e indici* (Canterano RM, 2017), (Italian)

Significance

The text provides an Arabic defense of the Christian use of icons, based on practical pastoral needs and two examples from para-biblical Christian legend. This contrasts with the more elaborate biblical, rational, and patristic approach used earlier by John of Damascus in Greek and Theodore Abū Qurrah in Arabic. The text is also the latest to indicate East Syrian use of icons, before nineteenth-century American Protestant missionaries would assert that the Church of the East has always been aniconic.⁴

¹ The author wishes to thank G. Gianazza for sharing part of his edition and Italian translation.

² Not consulted. This list, with the exception of Paris, BnF, ar. 6732 and ar. 6744, was compiled by Holmberg 1993: 272, who labels the text “The Five-Chapter Work.” The two additional Paris manuscripts were utilized by Teule 2006: 236, n. 7.

³ Rieu (1894: 23) dated the manuscript to the thirteenth century on the basis of paleography, which is manifestly impossible.

⁴ Grant 1841: 354; for an overview of both the nineteenth-century misconceptions and the evidence for earlier usage of icons among the Church of the East see Teule 2007b.

The Author

Very little is known of the author of this work, a priest of the Church of the East (erroneously known to the Greeks and others as “Nestorians”).⁵ He is likely the Ṣalībā ibn Yuḥannā al-Mawṣilī who copied MS. Paris, BnF, arabe 204.⁶ A scribal note in that manuscript indicates that in June 1315 he was in the city of Jazīra (modern Cizre), and he finished copying the manuscript in August 1336 in Famagusta, Cyprus.⁷ Between these dates, Ṣalībā completed his *Asfār al-asrār* in 1332, according to the rubric of an eighteenth-century manuscript.⁸ An Eastern Syriac community played a significant social role in Famagusta at this time, and it is possible that the work was composed or completed in Cyprus rather than in Mosul.⁹

Text and Context

The *Asfār al-asrār* (“Books of Mysteries”) is an Arabic theological and historical compendium which defends Christianity against its detractors, demonstrates the primacy of the East over the West¹⁰ in everything important for humanity and the Christian faith, summarizes the history of Christianity, and provides a categorization of other religions. The work draws extensively from earlier authors in Arabic and Syriac.¹¹ Teule suggests that the text may be intended to justify Eastern Syriac Christianity to the Latin Christians who ruled Cyprus.¹²

In his account of iconoclasm during the reign of Emperor Theophilos (r.829–842), Ṣalībā quoted a sermon of Sophronios I, the Greek Patriarch of Alexandria (833–860), which defended the veneration of icons. The same excerpted sermon in support of icon veneration was quoted earlier by the tenth-century Arabic Christian annalist Saʿīd Ibn Baṭrīq, a source very familiar to Ṣalībā and from which he presumably drew this quotation.¹³ Following the quotation of the patriarch’s sermon, Ṣalībā provided additional reasons in support of the practice of venerating icons.

In this passage, the author does not cite earlier Eastern Syriac authorities, but he was not the first representative of the Church of the East to write in defense of icons, nor

5 See Brock 1996.

6 Troupeau (1972: 172–73) dates the manuscript 1335, but also gives the date as Āb 1647 A.G. = August, 1336; Gianazza 2016: 11 accepts the latter date.

7 Gianazza 2016: 11.

8 Gismondi 1896: vi; Holmberg 1993: 259. The work itself claims that the author saw the exhumation of Catholicos Ḥnānīshōʿ I (d. 699) 650 years after his death; see Gismondi 1896: 60. The date 1349 was taken by early scholars as a *terminus post quem* for the authorship of the work, but Holmberg (1993: 261) suggests that this is merely an approximate round number.

9 Teule 2006: 236. For the Eastern Syriac community of Famagusta see citations in Gianazza 2016: 11.

10 These are the author’s terms. It is perhaps important to remember that for Christians from Iraq, the “West” includes all the lands presently or formerly belonging to the Roman Empire. After enumerating 24 Ecumenical Councils, Ṣalībā titled the following chapter, “The Easterners did not need a Council,” Gianazza 2016: 8.

11 See the detailed descriptions provided by Teule 2006: 239–44.

12 Teule 2006: 236–37, 239, 245.

13 Griffith 1982: 167, 176–78.

the first to do so in Arabic. Most recently, ‘Abdīshō’ bar Brikhā (d. 1318) had included a chapter on the veneration of icons in his *Kitāb uṣūl al-dīn* (*Book of the Fundamentals of the Faith*), although the only known manuscript of that work has lost the section.¹⁴ A century earlier, Ishō’yahb bar Malkōn (d. 1236) authored a short treatise defending icon veneration “against Jews and Muslims.”¹⁵ The excerpt given here clearly stands within this Eastern Syriac tradition.

¹⁴ Teule 2007b: 345.

¹⁵ Ishō’yahb, *Maqāla*; overlapping partial English translations are given in Teule 2007a: 163–66; Teule 2007b: 340–42.

Text

وَأَمَّا الَّذِي يَصْلُحُ أَنْ يُقَالَ فِي هَذَا الْمَعْنَى، أَيِ اتِّخَاذِ النَّصَارَى الصُّورَ فِي بَيْعِهِمْ وَفِي كَنَائِسِهِمْ وَإِكْرَامِهِمْ لَهَا فَلَيْسَ هُوَ كَمَا يُشْنَعُ عَلَيْهِمْ جَهَالُ النَّاسِ أَنَّهُمْ يَتَعَدُّونَ لَهَا

فَلْيُعْلَمَ أَنَّ لَيْسَ اتِّخَاذُهُمْ إِيَّاهَا عِبْتًا وَلَا جَهْلًا وَلَا كِرَامَةً لِحَوْهَرِ الْعَقَاقِيرِ وَالْأَصْبَاغِ، بَلِ الْقَصْدُ بِهَا تَذْكَارُ كُلِّ شَخْصٍ تَصَوَّرَتْ عَلَى اسْمِهِ مِنَ الْفِدْيِيِّينَ فِي وَقْتِ الْحَاجَةِ إِلَى ذَلِكَ فِي شَفَاعَةٍ فِي وَقْتِ شِدَّةٍ وَالتَّوَصُّلُ بِهِمْ إِلَى مَا يُرْضِي اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، إِذْ هُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَكْرَمُ وَأَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ. وَإِذْ كَانَ النَّاسُ مِنَ الْأَمَاكِنِ الْبَعِيدَةِ وَالْجِبَالِ الْمُقْفَرَةِ وَالْبَحَارِ الْهَائِلَةِ لَمْ تَصِلْ إِلَى قُبُورِهِمْ وَمَوَاضِعِ أَجْسَادِهِمْ لِيَسْتَشْفِعُوا بِهَا صَوَّرُوا صُورَهُمْ وَكَتَبُوا تَحْتَ كُلِّ صُورَةٍ مَا ظَهَرَ عَلَى يَدِ صَاحِبِهَا مِنَ الْعَجَائِبِ

وَكَذَلِكَ أَيْضًا صَوَّرُوا مَا كَانَ مِنْ خَلْقَةِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَجَمِيعِ الْكَائِنَاتِ مُنْذُ بَدَأَ الْخَلِيقَةَ، كَقَضِيَّةِ الطُّوفَانِ وَسَقِيَّةِ نُوْحٍ وَبُرْجِ بَابِلَ وَدَبْحِ إِسْحَاقَ وَنَحْوِ ذَلِكَ، لِيَفْهَمَ الْأَمْثُورُونَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَعْرِفُوا الْكِتَابَةَ وَالْقِرَاءَةَ وَيَقْرَبُ فَهْمُهُ عَلَى مَنْ نَقَصَرُ مَعْرِفَتُهُ عَنْ فَهْمِهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ حَتَّى شَمَلَتْ مَعْرِفَةُ ذَلِكَ جَمِيعَ النَّاسِ

وَمَعَ هَذَا فَإِنَّهُمْ لَيْسَ أَبْتَدَعُوا ذَلِكَ مِنْ دَاتِهِمْ، بَلْ إِنْ السَّيِّدِ الْمَسِيحِ هُوَ أَعْتَمَدَ ذَلِكَ وَشَرَعَهُ، إِذَا أَنْفَذَ إِلَيْهِ أَبْجَرَ مَلِكِ الرُّهَا يَسْأَلُهُ الْمَصِيرَ إِلَيْهِ لِيَتَبَارَكَ بِمُشَاهَدَتِهِ وَلِيَشْفِيَهُ مِنْ عِلَّةٍ كَانَتْ بِهِ. فَكَتَبَ إِلَيْهِ يَعْذِرُ عَنِ الْمَصِيرِ إِلَيْهِ، وَأَعْلَمَهُ أَنَّهُ يُرْسِلُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ تَلَامِيذِهِ مَنْ يَشْفِيهِ مِنْ عِلَّتِهِ

وَكَانَ الْمَلِكُ أَبْجَرَ قَدْ سَبَّرَ مَعَ رِسَالَتِهِ مُصَوَّرًا حَتَّى إِنْ كَانَ السَّيِّدِ الْمَسِيحِ لَمْ يُنْعَمَ لَهُ بِالْمَصِيرِ إِلَيْهِ يُصَوِّرَ الْمُصَوَّرُ صُورَةَ الْمَسِيحِ وَيَحْمِلُهَا إِلَيْهِ. فَاتَّخَذَ لَهُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَوْحًا مُنْتَخِبًا، وَوَضَعَهُ عَلَى أَحْسَنِ مَا يَنْبَغِي، وَصَارَ كُلَّمَا يَخُطُّ بِالْأَدْهَانِ الْمَعْمُولَةِ بِالْأَصْبَاغِ وَيُرْسِمُ الصُّورَةَ وَيَمْتَلِئُهَا يَلْتَفِتُ فَيَرَى اللُّوحَ نَفِيًّا خَالِيًّا مِنْ جَمِيعِ مَا حَطَّ فِيهِ

فَلَمَّا أَعْيَاهُ الْفِعْلُ وَعَجَزَ عَنْ عَمَلِ مَا رَامَهُ مِنْ تَمَثُّلِ الصُّورَةِ وَرَسْمِهَا شَكَا أَمْرَهُ إِلَى السَّيِّدِ الْمَسِيحِ. وَأَخَذَ مِنْدِيلًا مَسْحَ بِهِ وَجْهَهُ فَأَرْتَسَمَتْ صُورَتُهُ كَهَيْئَتِهِ وَمِثَالِهِ. وَأَنْفَذَهَا إِلَيْهِ لِيَبْلُغَ بِهَا قَصْدَهُ مِنْ مُشَاهَدَتِهِ

وَظَهَرَ مِنْ تِلْكَ الصُّورَةِ عَلَى طُولِ الزَّمَانِ مُعْجَزَاتٌ وَأَيَّاتٌ وَعَجَائِبٌ نَقَلَهَا الْمُخْبِرُونَ الْمُجْفُونَ مِنْ سَائِرِ اللَّغَاتِ. وَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ بِمُسْتَعْرَبٍ وَلَا مُسْتَنْكَرٍ عَنْ قُدْرَةِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى

وَكَذَلِكَ الْأَمْرَاءُ الَّتِي كَانَ بِهَا نَزِيْفُ الدَّمِ مُنْذُ سِنِينَ كَثِيرَةٍ وَكَانَتْ قَدْ أَنْفَقَتْ كُلَّ مَالِهَا عَلَى الْأَطِبَّاءِ فَلَمْ يَقْدِرُوا عَلَى شِفَائِهَا. وَإِنَّمَا لَمَسَتْ طَرْفَ ثُوبِ السَّيِّدِ الْمَسِيحِ مَا بَيْنَ زَحْمَةِ الْجَمْعِ فَبَرِنَتْ

Translation

As for that which is right to be said in this matter (namely that the Christians use images in their churches and in their gatherings, and that they honor them), it is not true that they worship them,¹ as the ignorant people slander them.

So one should know that their use of them is not vanity nor ignorance, nor [does it] honor the nature of drugs and dyes, rather the purpose is for them to remember every saintly person depicted by name at the time of need for that saint, [seeking] intercession during the time of affliction, and through them to attain that which pleases God (glorified and exalted), since they are more honored in God’s sight and nearer to him. Since there were people from distant places, desolate mountains, and vast seas, who could not come to their tombs and the places of their bodies² to seek intercession from them,³ they depicted their images and wrote under each image what kinds of miracles appeared through the person to whose [image] it was.

In the same way they also depicted what pertained to the creatures of the skies, the land, and all things since the beginning of Creation, such as the judgment of the flood, Noah’s ship, the tower of Babylon, the sacrifice of Isaac, and similar things, so that illiterate people who do not know reading and writing may understand it and understanding may come to anyone whose knowledge is too limited to understand it from the written word, until that knowledge has included all people.⁴

Nevertheless, they did not innovate this on their own authority, but the Lord Christ authorized that practice and prescribed it, when King Abgar of Edessa⁵ sent to Him, asking Him to come to him that he might be blessed by seeing Him and that he might be cured from a disease that he had. Jesus wrote to him excusing Himself from coming to him, and He informed him that He would send one of His disciples to him, who would heal him from his disease.

King Abgar had sent a painter with his letter, so that if the Lord Christ was not favorably disposed to come to him, the painter might paint the image of Christ and carry it to him.⁶ So the painter took a carefully selected panel, placed it on the best place he could, and began tracing everything with the oils made with dyes and outlining the image. He would paint and then turn away, then he would see the panel blank, devoid of all that he had traced upon it.

When the work exhausted him and he became incapable of making what he desired from the depiction of the image and its outline, he complained about it to the Lord Christ. He took a cloth⁷ and wiped His face with it, such that His image was stamped on it according to His appearance and His proportion. He sent it to Abgar so that he might achieve his purpose of gazing upon Him.

That image has produced wonders, signs, and marvels throughout time, which the truthful reporters recount in all languages, and such a thing is not strange or foreign, due to the power of God most high.

A similar case is the woman in whom there was a flow of blood for many years, who had spent all her money on physicians and they were not able to heal her, but she touched the edge of the garment of the Lord Christ among the press of the crowd, and she was healed.⁸

وَأَنهَآ عَمِلَتْ صُورَتَيْنِ مِنْ نُحَاسٍ مِثَالِ صُورَتَيْهَا وَصُورَةَ السَّيِّدِ الْمَسِيحِ، وَكَأَنَّتْ مِنْ أَهْلِ مَدِينَةِ بَانِيَّاسٍ مِنْ
 ذَوِي الْبَسَارِ وَالنَّسَبِ الْمَعْرُوفِ الْمَشْهُورِ، وَنَصَبَتْ تَيْنِكَ الصُّورَتَيْنِ ظَاهِرَ الْمَدِينَةِ لِيَعْلَمَ الْمُتَرَدِّدُونَ
 وَيُخْبِرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ بِقُوَّةِ تِلْكَ الْآيَةِ

.وَإِنْ حَثِيثًا نَبَتَ تَحْتَ تِلْكَ الصُّورِ وَكَانَ يَشْفِي كُلَّ مَنْ بِهِ مَرَضٌ وَسَقَمٌ

.وَمِثْلُ ذَلِكَ كَثِيرٌ، لَوْ شَرَحْنَاهُ لَقَصَرَ الزَّمَانُ عَنْ مُطَالَعَتِهِ

She made two images of bronze, the likeness of her image and the image of the Lord Christ. She was from the people of the city of Bāniyās,⁹ one of those who possess wealth and a known famous lineage, and she set up those two images outside the city so that those who visited may know it, and they might make known the power of that sign in the region.

And indeed, grass grew under those images, and it would heal everyone who had a disease or sickness.

There are many such things. If we were to comment on them, there would not be enough time for explaining them.

Commentary

1. The distinction is between “honoring” (*ikrām*) and “worshipping” (*taʿabbud*). Theodore Abū Qurrah likewise distinguished between the related terms “honor” (*karāma*) and “worship” (*ibāda*) as two legitimate purposes, depending on the recipient, for “prostration” (*sujūd*).¹⁶ In this he translated from Greek the distinction made by John of Damascus between “veneration” (or perhaps better, “prostration,” προσκύνησις/*proskynesis*) for worship (λατρεία/*latreia*) from “veneration offered in honor” (τιμή/*timē*).¹⁷ The central term of the discussion, however, for both John of Damascus and Theodore Abū Qurrah, was “prostration” (*proskynesis*, *sujūd*). Ṣalībā, by contrast, does not mention “prostration” (*sujūd*) to images, only the “use” (*ittikhādh*) of them. Ishōʿyahb bar Malkōn consistently uses “worship” (*ibāda*) for God and “exaltation” and “honor” (*iʿzām* and *ikrām*) for saints, but he draws a different distinction as his main point, namely between “what is worshipped without God” (*mā yuʿbad dūn Allāh*, i.e. idolatry) and “what is exalted because of God” (*mā yuʿzam li-ajli Allāh*).¹⁸
2. Visiting the tombs of saints was also a popular practice among Medieval Middle Eastern Jews and Muslims.¹⁹
3. The arguments of John of Damascus, Theodore Abū Qurrah, and Ishōʿyahb bar Malkōn focus on the permissibility of venerating icons, and the necessity of doing so in order to avoid imputing wrong-doing to God. The argument from distance provided here by Ṣalībā, by contrast, gives a practical reason for the use of icons in a culture that presumed that relics were acceptable. The goal of intercession seems not to be mentioned by John of Damascus or Ishōʿyahb bar Malkōn, and only in passing by Theodore Abū Qurrah.²⁰
4. While John of Damascus repeatedly referred to images as “books for the illiterate,” his conception of their operation seems to be more affective than instructive.²¹ Theodore Abū Qurrah²² develops the analogy between icons and writing as objects of veneration, but he only tersely alludes²³ to the value of images for those who cannot read. An instructional purpose for youths and illiterate people was ascribed to icons by Catholicos Elias II bar Maqlī (r.1111–31) of the Church of the East, who was followed by Ishōʿyahb bar Malkōn.²⁴
5. The story of Abgar’s correspondence with Jesus was well known among Middle Eastern Christians. A brief account was given by Eusebius,²⁵ but a fuller version was given

16 Theodore Abū Qurrah, *Maymar* 131; *idem*, 1997: 52.

17 John of Damascus, *Three Treatises*, 25.110.

18 Ishōʿyahb bar Malkōn 1929: 163; Teule 2007b: 341.

19 See Meri 2002: 120–22, 216–17.

20 Theodore Abū Qurrah, *Maymar*, 162; *idem*, *A Treatise*, 68.

21 John of Damascus, *Three Treatises*, 31, 46, 67, 91.

22 Theodore Abū Qurrah, *Maymar* 152–59; *idem*, *A Treatise*, 63–67.

23 Theodore Abū Qurrah, *Maymar* 52; *idem*, *A Treatise*, 64.

24 Ishōʿyahb 1929: 161; Teule 2007a: 165, 167; Teule 2007b: 338, 340.

25 Eusebius, *Church History*, I.13.

in the Syriac *Teaching of Addai*.²⁶ The story continued to be elaborated over the centuries.

6. No painter or image was mentioned by Eusebius in his account of the correspondence. The *Teaching of Addai*²⁷ specified that the painter and the messenger were the same, while the thirteenth-century version of Bar Hebraeus²⁸ presented them as different. On the other hand, John of Damascus ascribed the image to Christ rather than to a painter (he mentions none).²⁹ The inability of the painters (plural) was described in the Eastern Syriac foundation legend of Mar Mārī, although in a later development which is difficult to date.³⁰
7. The Arabic term *mandīl* is related to the Greek *Mandyllion*, though it came to be used for a range of wiping cloths. For additional sources mentioning the *Mandyllion* among the Church of the East.³¹
8. The story of the woman refers to Mc. 5:25–34, which however does not identify her place of origin, nor refer to statues. The statues were first mentioned by Eusebius.³² John of Damascus³³ quoted Eusebius, as well as a more elaborate version from John Malalas. Theodore Abū Qurrah likewise quoted Eusebius,³⁴ though not the account given by Malalas. Significantly, the Eastern Syriac foundation legend of Mar Mārī mentions only the Abgar correspondence and the account of the statues in Caesarea Philippi, which was also taken from Eusebius.³⁵ All of these versions specify that the statues were *inside* the city, while Ṣalībā’s account specifies that they were outside. It is unclear whether Ṣalībā used a source which located the statues outside the city, or whether he simply misunderstood the *Acts of Mar Mārī*.
9. A city in the Golan Heights, known as Caesarea Philippi and Paneas to the Greeks.

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26 Labubnā bar Sennāq, *The Teaching of Addai*, 6–11.

27 Labubnā bar Sennāq, *The Teaching of Addai*, 8–9.

28 Gregory Bar Hebraeus, *Chronicon Syriacum*, 47; *idem*, *The Chronography of Gregory Abū’l Faraj*, 48.

29 John of Damascus, *Three Treatises*, 41.

30 Teule 2007b: 327–28.

31 See Teule 2007b: 329–30, 340.

32 Eusebius, *Church History*, VII.18.

33 John of Damascus, *Three Treatises on the Divine Images*, 121–24.

34 Theodore Abū Qurrah, *Maymar* 118–20; Theodore Abū Qurrah, *A Treatise*, 45–46.

35 Teule 2007b: 327.

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I.2 Artists and Patrons

Introduction

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Περιπτύσσομαί σου τήν χεῖρα, γραφεῦ· ἀσπάζομαι τήν γραφίδα· χάριν ὁμολογῶ σοι πρός γε τοῖς ἄλλοις ὅτι μὴ τῷ στεφάνῳ τῆς ὄντως παρθένου τὸ ῥόδον συνέπλεξας.

I embrace your hand, painter; I kiss your paint-brush; I profess your grace to the others, because you did not weave roses for the garland of the real maiden¹

This chapter presents texts related to the “producers” of art in Byzantium. In the reality of a pre-modern, non-speculative art market, the one who paid for or conceived the idea for the creation of a work of art was also considered its “maker,” while the role of the artisan or technician was left to the one we moderns call an “artist.” The understanding of the role of an artist as being akin to that of an artisan had been common since Greco-Roman Antiquity and continued through the middle Byzantine era.² However, a gradual change occurs during the period addressed by this volume. Artists started signing their works more frequently, their status was vocally elevated, their skill became a cause for admiration, and patrons strove to employ masters from miles away. Furthermore, communal patronage re-emerges vigorously in Later Byzantium, while individual motivations become more fully articulated than ever before.³

A greater number of artists sign their works and the names of artists (exclusively male) start appearing next to their works, either in the form of artists’ signatures, or as short invocations to God or a Saint, or as part of dedicatory inscriptions.⁴ Also, as shown by the texts in the dossier compiled by Ivan Drpić (I.2.1 in this volume), *literati* discussed the names of renowned artists. The most famous of all Byzantine artists is “Eulalios,” the supposed painter of the church of the Holy Apostles. Either a real or an imaginary person, Eulalios had acquired a “canonical status” by the early fourteenth century. Indeed, the very concept of an artistic canon was inherited from Greco-Roman Antiquity, as it becomes evident from the numerous references to ancient masters, such as Polyclitus,

¹ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, Book 2, sect. 6, 31–5; see also A. Walker, I.3.11 in this volume.

² See Squire 2015: 186–89; Vollkommer 2014: 111–12. In the famous tenth-century *The Book of the Eparch* (§22), painters are considered *ἐργολάβοι* (contractors); for professions related to the erection of buildings see Ousterhout 1999: 43–49.

³ For a general introduction on the topic of the Byzantine artist see Vassilaki 2000; Bacci 2007.

⁴ Kalopissi-Verti 2000, which expands Kalopissi-Verti 1994; see also Lidova 2017 for a brief discussion of the subject of anonymity in Byzantine art covering from Late Antiquity to Late Byzantium.



Fig. I.2 Pendant seal with Virgin and suppliant John
2.8 x 1.3 x 0.4 cm, twelfth century. The Walters Art Museum, inv. no. 57.1008; the inscription reads: Μ(ήτηρ)ρ Θε(εο)ῦ Θε(στο)κέ βοήθισον τὸν δοῦλ(ον) Ἰω(άννην)/ Mother of God Theotoke help your servant John
© The Walters Art Museum used under a CCo license

Phidias, Myron, Praxiteles, Zeuxis, Apelles, and Lysippus, etc.⁵ The authors' interest in ancient artists reveals not only erudition (knowledge of the "classics"), but also that the acceptance of the concept of a canon and an appreciation of the artistic skills of an individual remained relevant in Later Byzantium. In more practical terms, the two letters by the thirteenth-century metropolitan of Nafpaktos, John Apokaukos, translated by Theocharis Tsampouras and Foteini Spingou (I.2.2 in this volume), reveal the fervent interest of the metropolitan of Nafpaktos in employing his preferred artists to decorate the metropolitan church. Similar demands from other patrons elevated the social role of artists, even though they were far from acquiring the fame and power of artists in the Italian Renaissance.⁶ In this regard, Apokaukos' requests are also notable for his commissioning of an individual rather than a workshop or a guild.⁷

5 See, for example, John Tzetzes, who in his commentary to his own letters (*Chiliades or Historiae*, 8.191–200) offers an overview of the Byzantine reception of the ancient masters; I am grateful to Aglae Pizzone for bringing this reference to my attention. For further references and bibliography see Kuttner-Homs 2018; Borbein 2014: 524–25; Ševčenko 1975: 50–51; for a reference to Apelles in the work of Manganeios Prodromos see E. and M. Jeffreys, I.3.16 in this volume.

6 Kalopissi-Verti 2012: 156–58; *eadem* 1994: 151.

7 On the Byzantine equivalent of workshops or guilds (*systemata* or *somateia*) see, e.g. Ousterhout 1999: 49–57.

Apokaukos' letters also reveal the itinerant nature of an artist's life. The thirteenth-century clergyman expected artists to travel in order to display their skills. The arrival of an important artist increased the prestige of the patron.⁸ Apokaukos' letters are one of the earliest witnesses to the occasional work of wandering artists – a practice that was common in the centuries to follow. Our texts also show that the job of the artist was itself haphazard. The two contributions by Alice-Mary Talbot and Alexander Alexakis speak about work-related accidents. In both texts, artists were saved thanks to the miraculous intervention of the Virgin Mary or a saint. The eleventh- or twelfth-century anonymous account of the Miracles of St. Photeine (translated by Alice-Mary Talbot, I.2.4 in this volume) describes the miraculous protection of stone-masons and painters working in the church of the saint in the Blachernai quarter in Constantinople. The passage from Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos' redaction of the tenth-century miracles of Pege (translated by Alexander Alexakis and Alice-Mary Talbot, I.2.3 in this volume) confirms that accounts of accidents remained relevant over the centuries. In this instance, the late thirteenth-century author re-worked and elevated stylistically a tenth-century narrative concerning a miracle involving mosaicists who had climbed onto high scaffolding, when a powerful earthquake struck. The Virgin Mary intervened miraculously and saved them from certain death.

Annemarie Weyl Carr's first contribution introduces the topic of patronage (I.2.5 in this volume). Records of private patrons became extremely prominent after the middle of the eleventh century.⁹ Such private patrons did not only reside in Constantinople, but could also be found in regional centers, such as the wealthy medieval town of Kastoria (Northern Greece).¹⁰ Here, Carr anthologizes passages on patrons and patronage from the vast literary production of Neophytos the Recluse from the island of Cyprus. Neophytos offers sharp comments about the earthly aspects of the act of commissioning works, discusses the motives for the production of icons, and also identifies the masters of his time.

The degree of responsibility of either the patron or the artist for the final appearance of the work remains an open question. Texts often attribute the role of the "maker" to the commissioner of the work, using terms appropriate for describing the manual labor involved in the production of an artwork. Commissioners appear "to paint," "to depict," "to make revetments," or even to have "refurbished."¹¹ Still more perplexing is a phrase used in a fourteenth-century inscription in the church of Panagia tou Arakos (discussed here by Annemarie Weyl Carr, I.2.7 in this volume), according to which a certain Leo asks the passer-by to pray for "the one who has written this book" (εὐχέσθαι τὸ γράψαντι τὴν δέλτον ταύτην).¹² These open but vague declarations of agency have inevitably caused uncertainty among modern scholars, who have grappled with what has proved to be a rhetorical convention.¹³

8 See Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 73–75, with further examples.

9 Kazhdan and Epstein, *Change*, 198, 221; for the case of individual donors in Mani see Kalopissi-Verti 2003.

10 See, e.g., the case of Theodore Lemniotes. *BEIÜ* 1: no. 84; Drakopoulou 1997: 47–49.

11 The most common terms are ζωγραφῶ, γράφω, εἰκονίζω, χροῶζω, νεουρωῶ, etc.

12 See A.W. Carr, I.2.7, Text B in this volume.

13 Discussed in Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 159; Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 316–18.

Various dated inscriptions found in the churches at Lagoudera and Asinou show that the church building could serve as a canvas for the expression of private piety. The inscriptions in the church of Panagia Phorbiotissa, Asinou, Cyprus, are also discussed by Annemarie Weyl Carr (I.2.6 in this volume). The church was initially built as a private chapel by the magistros Nikephoros Ischyrios, but more than ten years after its dedication the church became the *katholikon* of a monastery. Furthermore, lay patrons offered gifts in the late twelfth and the fourteenth centuries and their names appear on the walls of the church. The church of the Theotokos Arakiotissa was also initially built as a private chapel and after becoming part of a monastic complex, it also received further donations and added the names of the donors on the church walls.

Such numerous inscriptions (many of which were re-used or derived from different media) highlight another prominent aspect of the production of art in Later Byzantium: a taste for accompanying works of art with texts. As such, the artwork might only be considered complete once a text had been attached to it. A letter by Theodore Balsamon (I.7.7 in this volume) shows this fervent interest in both text and image. Balsamon was asked by a Komnenian donor to write verses for a cup depicting the Judgment of Paris. Balsamon responded to his friend's request with not one but three epigrams, all referring to the same object and conveying a nearly identical message. In this way, he provided his friend with options from which to choose a preferred epigram. The series of epigrams on the *epanoklibanon* (the Byzantine term for the Western surcoat) of Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118) translated by Foteini Spingou (I.2.9 in this volume), were also written so that the patron, his wife Eirene, could choose one of them to accompany her gift. The last contribution in this chapter by Annemarie Weyl Carr offers insight into the communal patronage of art (I.2.8 in this volume).¹⁴ Although communal or cooperative patronage was common in Late Antiquity, this trend fell out of fashion in the seventh century, when such attestations became fragmentary and scarce. The first testimony of communal patronage in Byzantium comes from the eleventh-century Mani, but it is only in the thirteenth century that evidence of this practice becomes widespread.¹⁵ References to the gifts from entire villages to churches and monasteries become more common.¹⁶ Among the most interesting attestations of such communal patronage is a fourteenth-century inscription from the Panagia Phorbiotissa, in Asinou, Cyprus. The inscription, also discussed by Annemarie Weyl Carr, tells us that the church was renovated thanks to the donations of “common people” (κοινοῦ λαοῦ).¹⁷

The role of and the relationship between artists and patrons were fluid in Later Byzantium. It is impossible for a single chapter to contain all relevant texts and studies or even to offer a complete overview of all possible aspects of patronage. The reader will find

¹⁴ For a categorization of patronage forms see Kalopissi-Verti 2012.

¹⁵ For the example of collective patronage in Mani see Kalopissi-Verti 2012: 126–30, with further bibliography; see also Kalopissi-Verti 2007: 335–38 and Gerstel, *Rural Lives*, 58 and 69 on local painters and collective patronage.

¹⁶ See Laiou 2012.

¹⁷ See A. W. Carr, I.2.5 in this volume.

further sources on the subject in Part II of the volume, where artists' signatures, dedicatory, tomb, and book epigrams (including those of female patrons) are discussed. Despite the major strides taken in the last two decades, much remains to be done regarding the roles of the artist and the patron in Later Byzantium. The preliminary lists of Byzantine painters, artisans, stone-masons, and mosaicists are constantly enriched thanks to the publication of new texts and new corpora of inscriptions.¹⁸ Furthermore, new methods of interpretation have been applied to well-known textual sources.¹⁹ These developments will inevitably result in a better knowledge of the motivations behind the creation of art in Later Byzantium.

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¹⁸ For lists of technicians see Mpouras 2010; see also Drandakis, 1975–76, 1980 for Niketas the stone-mason who appears to have worked at Mani. See also the corpus of metrical inscriptions in BEIÜ. The project "Byzantine Dedicatory Inscriptions and Donor Portraits (7th–15th c.*)" aims to offer a database with the relevant material; see Kalopissi-Verti 2015.

¹⁹ For a reconsideration of epigrams from an art historical scope see Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*.

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I.2.1

Eloquent Hands: Epigrams Featuring Named Artists and the Eulalios Dossier (Twelfth to Fourteenth Century)

IVAN DRPIĆ

Significance

Given the paucity of literary and documentary sources about Byzantine artists, the epigrams and other texts assembled in the present contribution constitute a critical body of evidence on the subject. Aside from illuminating various aspects of the role and status of the artist in Byzantine culture, the contribution also addresses the larger question of how the Byzantines conceptualized the relationship between the verbal and visual media.

Introduction

Due to the fragmentary nature of the historical record at our disposal, the Byzantine artist remains an elusive figure. To reconstruct various aspects of artists' training, their social standing, self-awareness, and interactions with patrons, scholars have to rely on bits and pieces of evidence preserved in a range of sources, from histories, letters, and saints' lives to inscriptions of different kinds, most notably artists' personal written marks or "signatures."¹ Epigrams on works of art are among the key sources for exploring the status and perception of the artist in Byzantine culture. This contribution introduces the reader to a group of epigrams featuring named artists, all of them painters.² Special consideration is given to the twelfth-century painter Eulalios. In addition to epigrams written in honor of Eulalios, the contribution presents excerpts from other texts that refer to this mysterious and almost mythical personage.

For all their attention to the making, material facture, and visual impact of works of art, Byzantine epigrams hardly ever mention individual artists. If the poem makes reference to the manufacturer of a work or sets out to praise or – more rarely – criticize him, it is almost always the "generic" artist without a name or biography. Among rare epigrams that depart from this kind of anonymity is a dedicatory inscription found in the small early Palaiologan church of Christ the Savior (also known as the church of the *Anastasis*) at Veria in Northern Greece (Text A).³ The inscription is displayed on the interior west wall, above the entrance to the nave, a location commonly reserved for such dedicatory

1 On artists in Byzantium see Patlagean 1986; Velmans 1987; Pontani 1999; Vassilaki 1997; Bacci 2007; Evseeva 2014. For the evidence of inscriptions see esp. Kalopissi-Verti 1994 (expanded in Kalopissi-Verti 1997); see also "Artists," *ODB* 1:198–201.

2 The chapter is not concerned with metrical "signatures," on which see Drpić 2013.

3 On the church see Pelekanidis 1973; Papazotos 1994: 100–03, 172–74, 253–57.

texts. Painted in black accentuated capitals within an elongated rectangular ocher field framed by a red border, the verses commemorate the patronage of a couple, one Xenos Psalidas and his wife Euphrosyne.⁴ Xenos, we are told, erected the church in an act of atonement for his numerous sins. Euphrosyne saw this pious work to completion, presumably following her husband's death. A patriarch – to be identified with Niphon I or, more likely, John XIII Glykys – consecrated the church in 1314/5, in the reign of Andronikos II Palaiologos (r.1282–1328). The verses further inform us that Kalierges, “the best painter of all Thessaly,” decorated the church with frescoes. The section of the epigram containing the reference to the artist (vv. 5–7) is difficult to comprehend and may be corrupt.⁵ How are we to understand the pendant accusative in line 6? And who are the artist's “good and decent brothers” mentioned in this line, his real brothers or his colleagues? Be that as it may, the possessive μου (“my”) at the end of the line leaves no doubt that Kalierges himself here assumes the “I” of the epigram. The prominence accorded to the artist in the Veria inscription is striking. Byzantine dedicatory epigrams, as a rule, attribute the creation of a work of art to the patron rather than to the work's actual manufacturer.⁶ It is as though the artist's skill and labor were subsumed into a higher form of agency, the one wielded by the patron in the act of initiating and sponsoring the work. In the Veria inscription, however, the painter is not only mentioned by name, but he is also allowed to speak and, moreover, to proudly declare his artistic excellence. His self-assertiveness, which the sheer quality of the murals in the church all but justifies, is a clear testament to the renown that some late Byzantine artists could enjoy. In all likelihood, Kalierges was summoned to Veria from Thessaloniki; he is probably to be identified with the painter George Kallierges, attested in a document of 1322 as a witness to the sale of some houses in this city.⁷ Several other fresco ensembles and panel-painted icons from Veria, Thessaloniki, Mount Athos, and elsewhere have been tentatively attributed to his paintbrush.⁸ Yet, far from being a straightforward declaration of an artist's pride, Kaliergis' self-assured pronouncement must be considered in relation to the epigram's overall message. Like other dedicatory texts of this kind, the epigram is primarily concerned with recording and celebrating an act of patronage. If Kaliergis asserts that he is “the best painter of all Thessaly,” it is ultimately to enhance the prestige of Euphrosyne Psalidas who had the taste and resources to employ such a painter.⁹

Text B, another rare example of an epigram celebrating a named artist, comes from the pen of Nicholas-Nektarios of Otranto. In the wake of the Fourth Crusade, this South Italian writer accompanied two papal delegations to Constantinople as an interpreter, one in 1205–7 and the other in 1214–15.¹⁰ During his sojourns in Constantinople, he visited

4 *PLP* no. 31260 and no. 6381.

5 On the whole, the epigram is of a poor literary quality and shows numerous metrical irregularities; for detailed philological analyses of this text see *BEIÜ* 1: 159–60; Pitsakis 2014.

6 See Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 159; Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 316–18.

7 *PLP* no. 10367; see Theocharidis 1955–60.

8 For these attributions see Tsigaridas 2010, with further bibliography.

9 See Kalopissi-Verti 1994: 146; Kalopissi-Verti 1997: 144.

10 See Hoeck and Loenertz 1965: 30–62.

the celebrated monastery of the Theotokos *Euergetis* outside the city walls – at that time, a dependency of Montecassino – where he admired the painted decoration of a *phiale*, or fountain, executed by his compatriot, the painter Paul of Otranto.¹¹ In due course, he composed an *ekphrasis* of this superb ensemble of wall paintings.¹² The *phiale*, as we learn from Nicholas-Nektarios’ description, stood in the courtyard of the monastery. It was a domed canopy-like structure on eight columns sheltering a font. The painted decoration graced its interior. A circle of heaven with angels depicted in grisaille occupied the summit of the dome. Beneath it, the story of Israel’s exodus from Egypt was illustrated in several episodes, from the crossing of the Red Sea to Moses’ receiving the Tablets of the Law on Mount Sinai. The lowest zone showed the Baptism of Christ as part of an extended cycle of aquatic scenes on the banks of the river Jordan. Depictions of prophets and saints further enriched the pictorial program. The author found himself completely mesmerized by the magnificence of Paul’s art. The images appeared to be alive and moving – such was their mimetic force. In response to this experience, Nicholas-Nektarios composed an epigram in honor of Paul, Text B. This poem was eventually inscribed at the *phiale*, beneath an image of the painter’s namesake, the apostle Paul. At a basic level, the inscribed verses functioned as a kind of identifying label, from which an inquisitive visitor could learn the name and birthplace of the artist who had decorated the *phiale*.¹³ The poet, however, conceived of it specifically as a reward, a due literary compensation for the artist’s masterful execution of the pictorial program. The verses extol the painter Paul by drawing a flattering comparison between him and his saintly namesake, a comparison that builds upon the analogy between verbal and visual representation. Both the apostle and the painter are unique among their respective peers; both speak to us, making themselves heard by means of words and pictures, respectively. And while Paul the apostle illuminated the whole world by spreading the message of the Gospel, Paul the painter adorned all churches with his artistic creations.

This enthusiastic appraisal of the artist was not merely an expression of the poet’s local patriotism. Paul of Otranto seems to have been a highly renowned painter whose activity can be dated to the closing decades of the twelfth century. Indeed, his name is most likely recorded in two other sources. During his visit to Constantinople in around 1200, the Russian pilgrim Dobrynia Iadreikovich (the future archbishop Antony of Novgorod) saw an ensemble of wall paintings in the baptistery of Hagia Sophia illustrating the story of Christ’s Baptism in an extended pictorial cycle not unlike the one exhibited in the *phiale* of the *Euergetis* monastery. “The skillful Paul painted all of this in my lifetime,” notes Dobrynia, “and there is no painting like this <elsewhere>.”¹⁴ The same pilgrim also saw a

11 On Paul of Otranto see Sola 1917; Magdalino and Rodley 1997, esp. 434; Falla Castelfranchi 2007: 306–09.

12 The *ekphrasis* is published in Sola 1917: 132–34; for an English transl. and commentary see Magdalino and Rodley 1997.

13 Quite exceptionally, the inscription was deemed worthy of being labeled itself on account of its high literary quality. As Nicholas-Nektarios records in the *ekphrasis*, admiring this poem, a monk of the *Euergetis* monastery by the name of Mark wrote an epigram in honor of their author (Sola 1917: 134). Mark’s epigram was likely inscribed at the *phiale*, next to the verses to which it referred.

14 *Kniga Palomnik*, 17.

bejeweled icon of Christ fashioned by Paul, which was displayed at Hagia Sophia.¹⁵ The fame of Nicholas-Nektarios' compatriot appears to have endured well into the Palaiologan period. Writing in the fourteenth century, the historian Nikephoros Gregoras records that the wall painting of Saint George on horseback in front of the chapel of the Theotokos *Nikopoios* (literally, "Victory-Maker") at the Blachernai Palace had been executed by Paul, "the best among the painters" (ὁ τῶν ζωγράφων ἄριστος). This mural was known for its prophetic powers for, as Gregoras relates, the neighing of the horse depicted in it was believed to have announced the end of the Latin rule over Constantinople in 1261.¹⁶

Paul of Otranto's fame notwithstanding, the painter most praised by Byzantine literati was Eulalios.¹⁷ As in the case of Paul, none of Eulalios' works has come down to us, so our knowledge of his artistic persona is entirely mediated through texts. Eulalios' activity can be dated to the twelfth century.¹⁸ In an anonymous poem from the reign of Manuel I Komnenos (Text C), he and two other masters, Chenaros and Chartoularis, are cited as the foremost among contemporary painters. Eulalios is believed to have worked on parts of the mosaic decoration of the vast five-domed church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, where he may have portrayed himself in the scene of the Women at the Sepulcher. A passage in the long *ekphrasis* of the church penned by Nicholas Mesarites in the early thirteenth century seems to suggest as much (Text D). Having described the composition with the empty tomb, the astounded women bearing unguents, the angel seated on the tombstone, and the sleeping soldiers, the author notes that "the man who with his own hand painted these things" may be seen standing by the Sepulcher like a "watchful guard." In the thirteenth-century manuscript of Mesarites in Milan (Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS Graecus 352 [F 96 sup.], f. 4r), this passage is accompanied by a much-faded marginal note, which August Heisenberg deciphered a century ago as τὸν Εὐλάλιόν φησι ("He means Eulalios").¹⁹ Since no comparable self-portraits survive from medieval Byzantium, the identification of the "watchful guard" with the artist has been considered apocryphal. Otto Demus has argued that what Mesarites identified as the artist's self-portrait was in fact a figure of the king and prophet David.²⁰ Recently, Beatrice Daskas has proposed that the enigmatic passage is to be read less literally, as a self-referential comment on the power of verbal discourse to match and surpass visual representation. According to Daskas, the painter purportedly included in the scene is Mesarites himself, whose vivid speech, the *ekphrasis* of the Holy Apostles, produced a veritable self-portrait in words.²¹

15 *Kniga Palomnik*, 17.

16 Nikephorus Gregoras, *History*, 1: 304–05.

17 Eulalios has been the subject of considerable scholarly attention, much of it devoted to the question of his date. See Heisenberg 1908: 2, esp. 166–71; Heisenberg 1912; Bees 1916–17; Heisenberg 1921, cols. 1024–32; Malickij 1926; see also Baseu-Barabas 1992: 228–31; Daskas 2016, who casts doubt on the existence of Eulalios as a historical figure. The relevant texts on the artist have been collected and transl. by Mango, *Art*, 229–33.

18 Bees 1916–17, esp. 97–117 was the first to correctly date the artist.

19 Heisenberg 1908: 2: 63, 170–71, pl. II.

20 Demus 1979; yet, as Patterson Ševčenko (1993–94: 164 n. 24) has pointed out, "Eulalios would scarcely have been wearing the royal robes in which David is traditionally depicted"; cf. also Baseu-Barabas 1992: 208–09.

For self-portraits in Byzantium see Kalopissi-Verti 1993–94, which should be read with caution.

21 Daskas 2016.

The fact that Mesarites served as *skeuophylax* of the Pharos church in the Great Palace, the chief repository of the relics of Christ's Passion, may explain why he chose to verbally portray himself in the guise of a custodian of the Sepulcher.²² However one interprets the reference to the painter in Mesarites' account, it is notable that the marginal note in the Milan manuscript – if one accepts Heisenberg's reading of it – identifies the self-portrait as that of Eulalios. Apparently, the author of the note considered it perfectly acceptable for a painter of Eulalios' reputation to insert his own likeness in a biblical scene.

The exceptional quality of Eulalios' art received accolades from two epigrammatists. One of them was Manganeios Prodromos, a contemporary of the artist, who composed four epigrams on a depiction of the Annunciation by Eulalios, which stood in a church tentatively identified with that of the monastery of Christ *Euergetes* in Constantinople (Texts E1–4). To extol the artist's rendition of the encounter between Gabriel and Mary, the poet deploys several conceits commonly featured in Byzantine epigrammatic poetry: the image is a wonder that the viewer cannot fully comprehend; the depicted figure is mute, yet it also speaks in a mysterious fashion; the image embodies a paradox insofar as it renders that which is immaterial through material means; the image is not simply lifelike but truly alive.²³ Particularly noteworthy among the poet's devices is the use of punning and wordplay. The final epigram, devoted to the Virgin Annunciate (Text E4), is built around an extended pun on the artist's name, which etymologically derives from the words εὖ (“well”) and λαλέω (“to speak”). The colors mixed by Eulalios are here said to be λαλοῦντα, or “speaking”; Mary, the artist's Muse, is described as περιλάλητος, literally, “much talked of”; and the color with which the artist paints, as a result of her guidance, is praised as εὐλαλον, meaning “sweetly-speaking,” “talkative,” or “eloquent.” The same kind of punning is encountered in other epigrams from the series. Thus, in the longer of the two epigrams on the archangel (Text E1), the poet observes that the depicted spirit “seems to be somehow addressing (λαλεῖν) Gabriel's words to the Maiden.” In the shorter epigram, an apostrophe to the painter (Text E2), the poet exclaims, “How eloquent (εὐλαλον) is your coloring, painter!” He clarifies this enthusiastic assessment by declaring, “you make the spirit you have painted speak (λαλεῖν).” The language and conceits deployed by Manganeios Prodromos find a close parallel in two epigrams in praise of Eulalios composed by the early Palaiologan scholar Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos. In one, devoted to an image of the archangel Michael (Text F2), the author dwells upon the paradox of representing an immaterial being in a material picture. The subject of the second epigram is the mosaic of Christ in the central dome of the Holy Apostles (Text F1). Celebrating the high degree of pictorial verisimilitude achieved in the mosaic, Xanthopoulos declares that this image is a result of a direct visual encounter between the artist and Christ: either Christ came down to earth to reveal himself to the one who has such “eloquent (εὐλόλους) hands,” or the artist ascended into heaven to depict Christ.

Eloquent hands, speaking colors – the prominence of etymological wordplay in the epigrams on the works of Eulalios makes one wonder, with Henry Maguire, whether the

22 See I.6.6.

23 See Braounou-Pietsch 2007; Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*.

artist's name "may have been preserved for posterity not so much because of the quality of his painting as because it enabled Byzantine writers to contrive puns between Eulalios and *eulalos* (eloquent)."²⁴ To be sure, puns on proper names are a common device in all kinds of writing in Byzantium, and one need not go further than Jesus' play on Πέτρος ("Peter") and πέτρα ("rock") in Matthew 16:18 to illustrate the importance attached to the hidden significance of names.²⁵ Yet in the case of Manganeios Prodromos' and Xanthopoulos' epigrams, *paronomasia* was not simply a playful figure of speech. Rather, it served to articulate, however obliquely, an aesthetic ideal. It bears emphasizing that the puns on Eulalios' name foreground eloquence as the principal virtue of his painting. The two epigrammatists praise Eulalios' art for a quality that brings it closest to their own literary craft – the sublime art of *logoi*. Underlying this alignment of the visual with the verbal is the assumption that the art of *logoi* is not only a point of comparison for the art of painting but, more importantly, the standard by which its relative value is to be measured. To deserve praise, a picture must be articulate, elegant, and persuasive – akin to a skillfully crafted literary discourse. With this implicit affirmation of the "proper" hierarchical relationship between the two arts, the epigrams in Eulalios' honor draw attention to their own status as eloquent verbal artifacts. This is especially true of the poem on the dome mosaic in the Holy Apostles. It is beyond doubt that Xanthopoulos' verses were never intended to be inscribed in the church, but rather to circulate as a purely literary epigram. Their literariness is further underscored by the fact that they imitate – quite self-consciously, one could argue – an epigram from the *Greek Anthology* (16.81) on the celebrated chryselephantine statue of Zeus at Olympia made by Phidias:²⁶

Ἦ θεὸς ἦλθ' ἐπὶ γῆν ἔξ οὐρανοῦ εἰκόνα δεῖξω,
Φειδία, ἢ σύ γ' ἔβης τὸν θεὸν ὀψόμενος.

Either the god descended to earth from heaven to show his likeness <to you>,
O Phidias, or else it was you who ascended to see the god.

In a culture that put a premium on the artful imitation of the classics, Xanthopoulos' reworking of such a venerable source would have been perceived as a commendable display of erudition and a sign of his mastery of the epigrammatic genre.²⁷

²⁴ Maguire, *Art and Eloquence*, 11.

²⁵ "Pun," *ODB* 3:1758; see also Hunger 1985.

²⁶ Cf. Mango 1963: 66–67. The statue of Zeus is known to have been transported to Constantinople. In the early fifth century it was exhibited in the palace of the *praepositus sacri cubiculi* Lausus along with other masterpieces of ancient Greek sculpture. It perished in a fire that destroyed the palace in 475; see Mango *et al.* 1992; Guberti Bassett 2000.

²⁷ It is worth noting that the epigram on Phidias' masterpiece is to be found in the so-called *Appendix Planudea*, a collection of some 388 epigrams that form Book XVI in modern editions of the *Greek Anthology*. The epigrams from this collection are not included in the *Anthologia Palatina*, but appear in the anthology compiled by the early Palaiologan scholar Maximos Planoudes. Incidentally, we know that Xanthopoulos' brother Theodore owned a volume of ancient epigrams, which Planoudes asked to borrow, undoubtedly in the course of his work on the anthology; see Maximos Planoudes, *Letters*, no. 28, ed. Leone, 55–58. The epigram on the statue of Zeus was also reworked by the contemporary poet Manuel Philes; see Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 102 (no. 40). For the reception of the Planoudean anthology in Philes' poetry see Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 49–52; Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 217–30.

It is not impossible that, in choosing this particular couplet as his model, Xanthopoulos wished to extol Eulalios as a New Christian Phidias. It should be pointed out in this connection that in a treatise on education, written around 1305 by Xanthopoulos' contemporary, Theodore Metochites, Eulalios appears in the company of exemplary artists from antiquity (Text G). Arguing against the commonly held view that immortality on earth can be achieved only through intellectual accomplishments, Metochites evokes the fame of Phidias, Polygnotus, Zeuxis, and Lysippus, adding "our Eulalios" to the list. To be sure, Byzantine authors routinely refer to classical painters and sculptors, who were hardly known to them as anything more than names, simply to exhibit their learning.²⁸ What sets Metochites apart, however, is that he inserted a Christian artist from the recent past into his litany of ancient pagan luminaries.²⁹ Taken together, Xanthopoulos' epigram and Metochites' treatise suggest that, by the early Palaiologan period, Eulalios had acquired a canonical status on par with that of the great classical artists. That his fame probably rested less on the quality of his works than on his distinctive semantically charged name is a testament to a strong self-referential strain that colors much of Byzantine writing about art. Eulalios, Byzantium's paradigmatic "eloquent" artist, made his way into the canon of artistic excellence not so much as a historical figure, but rather as a personification of an aesthetic ideal promoted by the literati.³⁰ At this juncture, it is worth recalling the comparable example of the Sikyonian painter Eupompus, an artist from Greek Antiquity whose mythical status seems to have been built in no small part around his name. Pliny the Elder, basing himself on Douris, reports that, when the young Lysippus approached Eupompus with the question, which of the old masters he should take as his model, the painter responded by pointing to a crowd of people and saying that it was Nature herself, not an artist, that one ought to follow (*Natural History*, 34.61–62). It was only appropriate that the future champion of naturalism should take his lead from a man whose name meant "trustworthy guide."³¹

In a sense, Eulalios' transformation from a person into a personification is an aspect of a broader tendency in Byzantine epigrammatic poetry to substitute abstract types – a "generic" painter, sculptor, mason, and the like – for individual creators. As noted above, the hands that fashion, imitate, adorn, and breathe life into inert matter normally have no name attached to them. There was one way, however, open to an artist to break out of this kind of anonymity, namely to appear in a double role, as a manufacturer of a work and as its donor. This was precisely the case with the otherwise unattested painter Makarios³² at whose behest the early Palaiologan poet Manuel Philes wrote an epigram on an image of Christ (Text H). Philes' poem is structured as a personal prayer, a format

²⁸ See p. 132, cf. p. 107–08.

²⁹ For a brief yet insightful comment on this passage from Metochites' treatise see Ševčenko 1975: 50–51.

³⁰ Cf. Daskas 2016: 158–60 who sees Eulalios as a metaphorical rather than a historical figure. For the argument that the name of Manuel Panselinos, another Byzantine painter of legendary stature, is to be understood in a metaphorical sense see Milliner 2012.

³¹ See Kris and Kurz 1979: 19–20.

³² *PLP* no. 16249.

increasingly adopted for dedicatory epigrams from the twelfth century onward.³³ Quite fittingly, the painter's petition is built around an extended metaphor of art-making. Like every descendant of Adam, Makarios is an exquisite human artifact fashioned by God in his own image, according to Genesis 1:26–27, to which Philes alludes in line 2. Yet this artifact's beauty, harmony, and orderliness – the word εὐκοσμία in line 3 covers all these meanings – have been transformed into their opposite, the ἀκοσμία of passions, as a result of Makarios' moral corruption. To expiate his sins and have the artifact restored, Makarios paints a portrait of Christ, hoping that, in return, his own portrait will be hung in the heavenly gallery of the elect. Written at the behest of an artist to be inscribed upon one of his works, these verses are very different from those composed in honor of Eulalios and Paul of Otranto. Their purpose is not to praise an artistic accomplishment, but to commemorate a dedication. In fact, the true protagonist of Philes' poem is not Makarios the painter, but Makarios the donor, a sinful yet pious petitioner who offered the fruit of his labor to Christ as an oblation and was sophisticated enough to have this act recorded in an epigram.

33 See Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 67–117.

Text A | Anonymous (1314/5)

Dedicatory Epigram in the Church of Christ the Savior, Veria

Ed.: *BEIÜ* 1, no. 8, 157–60

Monument/Artefact: Veria, *Church of Christ the Saviour*, see fig. I.2.1

Other Translations: S. Kalopissi-Verti, “Painters in Late Byzantine Society: The Evidence of Church Inscriptions,” *CahArch* 42 (1994), 146 (English); S. E. J. Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries: Programs of the Byzantine Sanctuary* (Seattle, Wash., 1999), 105 (English); *BEIÜ* 1, no. 81, 158 (German)

Significance

This is a rare example of a dedicatory epigram that not only records the name of the artist employed, but also assigns him the role of a speaker. The inscription provides an important piece of evidence regarding the prestige and fame that a painter could enjoy in Byzantium. It further shows how a dedicatory text can highlight an artist's reputation in order to indirectly praise the patron.



Fig. I.2.1 *Church of Christ the Saviour* (c.1314/15), Veria
© Ephorate of Antiquities, Hemathia

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

See Introduction, p. 113–14.

Text*Transcription*

† ξένος ψαλιδᾶς· ναὸν θεοῦ εγείρη· ἄφεσιν ζητῶν τῶν πολλῶ ημάτων· τῆς ἀναστάσε-
 ος χ(ριστο)ῦ ὄνομα θέμενο(ς)·/.... φροσύνη σύνεβνος τοῦτον ἐκπληρεῖ· ἱστοριογράφος ὄνο-
 μα τοὺς καλοὺς καὶ κοσμίους αὐταδέλφους μου/ὄλης θεαλίας ἄριστο(ς) ζωγράφος·
 πατριαρχικῆ χεῖρ καθιστᾶ τὸν ναὸν...του μεγάλου βασιλέως ἀνδρονίκου/κομνηνοῦ τοῦ
 παλεολόγου· εν ε ωκγ :

Edition

Ξένος Ψαλιδᾶς ναὸν Θεοῦ ἐγείρει
 ἄφεσιν ζητῶν τῶν πολλῶ[ν ἐγκλ]ημάτων
 τῆς Ἀναστάσεως Χριστοῦ ὄνομα θέμενος·
 [Εὐ]φροσύνη σύνευνος τοῦτον ἐκπληρεῖ·
 5 ἱστοριογράφος ὄνομα [Καλιέργης]
 τοὺς καλοὺς καὶ κοσμίους αὐταδέλφους μου
 ὄλης Θετ<τ>αλίας ἄριστος ζωγράφος·
 πατριαρχικῆ χεῖρ καθιστᾶ τὸν ναὸν
 [ἐπί] τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως Ἀνδρονίκου
 10 Κομνηνοῦ τοῦ Παλαιολόγου ἐν ἔ[τει,ς]ωκγ’.

Translation

Xenos Psalidas erects <this> church of God,
 seeking the remission of his many sins,
 and gives it the name of the Resurrection of Christ.
 His wife, Euphrosyne, brings it to completion.¹
 5 The painter’s name is Kalierges;
 among my good and decent brothers,
 <I am> the best painter of all Thessaly.²
 A patriarch’s hand³ consecrates the church
 in the reign of the great emperor Andronikos
 10 Komnenos Palaiologos, in the year 6823 (= 1314/15 CE).

Commentary

1. Xenos and Euphrosyne Psalidas are not attested in other sources. The couple’s foundation is known to have served a monastic community. It was the main church of a *stauropolegion*, that is, a monastery placed under the patriarch’s jurisdiction.³⁴ A chrysobull issued by Andronikos II Palaiologos in February 1314 confirmed the

³⁴ See “Stauropolegion,” *ODB* 3: 1946–47.

transfer of ownership of this monastery to the hieromonk Ignatios Kalothetos (*PLP* no. 10610).³⁵ The nature of Kalothetos' relationship with the Psalidas couple is not known, nor is it clear whether, and to what extent, he may have been involved in the decoration of the church. Kalothetos is most likely the kneeling monk portrayed on the south wall of the church, among the standing figures of holy ascetics, where he addresses Saint Arsenios in prayer. A damaged poetic inscription painted next to the supplicant identifies him as κτήτωρ ("founder" or "possessor").³⁶

2. The geographic designation "Thessaly" here refers to the city of Thessaloniki and its hinterland.³⁷
3. Judging by the date at the end of the inscription, the church was probably consecrated by Patriarch John XIII Glykys (*PLP* no. 4271) rather than by his predecessor, Niphon I (*PLP* no. 20679), since the latter had already been deposed in April 1314.³⁸ However, the possibility that Niphon may have performed the consecration ceremony should not be excluded. Niphon – who, significantly, hailed from Veria – does not appear to have been stripped of his priesthood on the occasion of his deposition.³⁹

³⁵ *Actes de Lavra*, 2:159–61 (no. 103).

³⁶ See Papazotos 1979: 426–29; Papazotos 1994: 102–03; *BEIÛ* 1, no. 82.

³⁷ See Stauridou-Zaphrada 1991.

³⁸ See *BEIÛ* 1, 159.

³⁹ See Pitsakis 2014: 676–77.

Text B | Nicholas-Nektarios of Otranto (c.1155/60–1235)

Epigram in Honor of the Painter Paul of Otranto

Ed.: M. Gigante, *Poeti bizantini di Terra d'Otranto nel secolo XIII* (Galatina, 1985), 77 (no. X), 2nd rev. ed.

MSS.:⁴⁰ Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 1276, f. 35r (s. XIV)
 Florence, BML, Plutei 5.10, ff. 219v–220r (s. XIV)

Other Translations: P. Magdalino and L. Rodley, "The Evergetis Fountain in the Early Thirteenth Century: An Ekphrasis of the Paintings in the Cupola," in *Work and Worship at the Theotokos Evergetis, 1050–1200*, eds. M. Mullett and A. Kirby (Belfast, 1997), 445–47 (English); Gigante 1985, as above, 87 (Italian)

Significance

The epigram is a unique example of a poetic text subsequently attached to a work of art with the explicit purpose of celebrating the artist. By comparing the painter Paul with his apostolic namesake, the author highlights the analogy between images and words, a notion commonly invoked in Byzantine writings on art.

⁴⁰ Not consulted.

The Author

Nicholas of Otranto – Nektarios was his monastic name – was a writer, cleric, and diplomat, one of the leading Greek intellectuals in Southern Italy in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century. His works, aside from poetry, include theological treatises and letters, as well as translations of liturgical texts from Greek into Latin.

Text and Context

See Introduction, p. 114–16.

Text

Παῦλος μὲν εἷς ἦν τῶν ἀποστόλων μόνος
 καὶ Παῦλος εἷς πέφυκεν ἐν τοῖς ζωγράφοις.
 λαλεῖ δ' ἐκεῖνος μέχρι τοῦ νῦν ἐν λόγοις,
 λαλεῖ πίναξιν οὗτος ἐν ζωγραφίᾳ.
 5 λαμπτήρ ἐκεῖνος ἀπάσης οἰκουμένης,
 οὗτος δὲ κόσμος ἀπάσαις ἐκκλησίαις.
 εἰ καὶ θέλεις, γίνωσκε τούτων πατρίδας·
 Ταρσεὺς ἐκεῖνος, οὗτος ἐξ Ὑδρουνητίων.

Translation

Paul was unique among the apostles
 and only one Paul exists among painters.
 The former speaks up to now in words,
 while the latter speaks in pictures, through painting.
 5 The former was an illuminator of the entire world,
 while the latter is an ornament¹ for all churches.
 And if you wish, know their homelands:
 the former is a Tarsan,² the latter from the Otrantans.

Commentary

1. The word κόσμος, here translated as “ornament,” covers a vast semantic territory; it can denote “order,” “beauty,” and “elegance,” but also “the ordered world” or “universe.”⁴¹ The poet playfully activates the latter meaning, as κόσμος clearly echoes οἰκουμένη (“world,” especially “inhabited world”) in the preceding line.
2. The apostle Paul was born in Tarsus in Cilicia.

⁴¹ For the meanings of the term see, e.g., Chantraine 2009, s.v.; for the use of κόσμος in Byzantine writings on art see Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 118–85.

Text C | Author Unknown (Twelfth century)

“The Foremost among the Painters”: Excerpt from the *Supplicatory Verses* Addressed to Manuel I Komnenos

Ed.: A. Maiuri, “Una nuova poesia di Teodoro Prodromo in greco volgare,” *BZ* 23 (1914–19), 397–407, at 398–400

MS.:⁴² Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 1823, ff. 195r–196v (s. XIV)

Other Translations: Mango, *Art*, 230; B. Daskas, “A Literary Self-Portrait of Nikolaos Mesarites,” *BMGS* 40.1 (2016), 158 (English); N. Maiickij, “Remarques sur la date des mosaïques de l’église des Saints-Apôtres à Constantinople décrites par Mésarités,” *Byzantion* 3 (1926), 127, vv. 42–48 (French); A. Heisenberg, “Die alten Mosaiken der Apostelkirche und der Hagia Sophia,” in *Ἐξέλιξις. Hommage international à l’Université nationale de Grèce, à l’occasion du soixante-quinzième anniversaire de sa fondation* (1837–1912), (Athens, 1912), 124, vv. 42–48 (German)

Significance

The excerpt is significant insofar as it places Eulalios in the twelfth century. The artist was evidently a contemporary of the poet and, moreover, a figure well known in the circles of the Constantinopolitan courtly and intellectual elite.

The Author

The *Supplicatory Verses* are commonly ascribed to the poet, teacher, and scholar Theodore Prodromos, a key figure in the Constantinopolitan culture of the twelfth century, but without conclusive evidence, the question of the authorship of the poem must remain open.⁴³

Text and Context

See Introduction, p. 116.

⁴² Not consulted.

⁴³ For arguments against the poem’s attribution to Theodore Prodromos see esp. Eideneier 1991: 34–37; Eideneier 2012: 102–12; on Theodore Prodromos, see E. Jeffreys, I.7.6 in this volume.

Text

Τοῦ φιλοσόφου τοῦ Προδρόμου στίχοι δεητήριοι

... Ἄν ἀποθάνῃ ὁ Πρόδρομος ἀπὸ στενοχωρίας,
καὶ τότε ἐπὶ τοῦ κράτους σου καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἡμερῶν σου,
ποῦ νὰ εὔρησ ἄλλον Πρόδρομον τοιοῦτον, τὴν κεφαλὴν σου;
40 ἄν τύχη ἂν εἴπησ τὸν ζουγλὸν νὰ ποίση ἀντίσηκόν μου,
νὰ ποίση καὶ ἑταῖριν μου καὶ αὐτόχρημα ὡς ἐμένα,
οὐκ ἐγνωρίζεις, δέσποτα, τὸν Πρόδρομον τὸν ἔχεις·
αὐτὸς ὁ Εὐλάλιος καὶ ἂν ἔλθῃ καὶ ὁ Χήναρος ἐκεῖνος
καὶ ὁ Χαρτουλάρης ὁ ἀκουστός, οἱ πρῶτοι τῶν ζωγράφων,
45 τοιοῦτον οὐκ ἐξορθώνουσι, κανεὶς μὴ σὲ κομπῶνῃ,
λογιούτζικον, σοφούτζικον ἐκ τούς ἐπιλεγμένους,
πατέρα τῶν γραμματικῶν, πατέρα τῶν ῥητόρων,
πατέρα τῆς στιχουργικῆς καὶ τῆς λογογραφίας.

Translation⁴⁴

Supplicatory verses by Prodromos the philosopher¹

... If Prodromos were to die of distress,
and this in your reign and days,
where would you find – by your head! – another Prodromos like me?
40 If perchance you told the *zouglos*² to replace me,
to take my role and be exactly as I am,
you would not know well, my Lord, the Prodromos whom you have.
Even if Eulalios himself were to come, and that famous Chenaros
and the well-known Chartoularis, the foremost among the painters,³
45 they could not do justice – let no one deceive you! – to a man like me,⁴
a man of such choice learning and wisdom,
the greatest teacher,⁵ the greatest rhetor,
the greatest poet and prose-writer.

Commentary

1. The poem is addressed to Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80). The verses, largely composed in the vernacular, present a playful petition for employment. In the quoted excerpt, the poet reminds the emperor of his outstanding competencies and accomplishments that make him effectively irreplaceable.
2. The exact meaning of ζουγλός is not clear. Two interpretations have been proposed. According to one, the word is related to the French *jongleur* and thus can be translated as “jester” or “buffoon”;⁴⁵ according to the other, the word means “cripple.”⁴⁶

⁴⁴ The translation is based on Mango, *Art*, 230.

⁴⁵ Maiuri 1914–19: 404.

⁴⁶ Eideneier 1991: 36; Eideneier 2012: 108–09.

3. Chartoularis is not recorded in other sources. As for Chenaros, his name turns up in *The Tale of the Gooseherd*, a hagiographical narrative preserved in Russian, with the earliest manuscript witnesses dating from the fourteenth century, but certainly based on a Greek original. In this legendary account, Chenaros is a renowned painter working for the emperor in Constantinople, who takes on as an apprentice a young gooseherd recommended to him by no less an authority than Saint John the Evangelist. Jealous of the boy, however, Chenaros is reluctant to share his expertise. This prompts the saint to intervene and initiate the boy into the art of painting himself. As a result, the lowly gooseherd quickly surpasses the celebrated master.⁴⁷ The legendary Chenaros must have been based on the historical Chenaros. While *The Tale of the Gooseherd* undoubtedly reflects the fame of the twelfth-century painter, it should be stressed that this figure's name was uniquely appropriate for the story since Chenaros comes from χήν, which means "goose." Interestingly, the meaning of names seems equally important to the author of the *Supplicatory Verses*. As Daskas has observed, the three painters singled out in the poem all have etymologically charged names that lend themselves to playful interpretations, reflecting the overall ludic character of the poem.⁴⁸ Daskas accordingly renders Eulalios as "Goodblarney," Chenaros as "Quacker," and Chartoularis as "Man-in-White-Paper." For puns on Eulalios' name see p. 117–18.
4. That is, they could not make a proper portrait of Prodromos.
5. The term γραμματικός, here translated as "teacher," can also be used in reference to a secretary or scribe.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ See Preobrazhenskii 2014: 69–71.

⁴⁸ Daskas 2016: 158–59.

⁴⁹ See "Grammatikos," *ODB* 2: 866.

Text D | Nicholas Mesarites (c.1163/4–after 1214)

Excerpt from the *Ekphrasis* of the Church of the Holy Apostles

Ed.: G. Downey, "Nikolaos Mesarites: Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople," *TAPS* n.s. 47.6 (1957), 855–924, at 910 (par. XXVIII.23)

MS.:⁵⁰ Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Graecus 352 (F 96 sup.) (s. XIII), f. 4r.

Other Translations: Daskas, as above, 153; Mango, *Art*, 233; Downey, as above, 884 (English); A. Heisenberg, *Grabeskirche und Apostelkirche, zwei Basiliken Konstantins* (Leipzig, 1908), 2: 63–64 (German); Malickij, as above, 130 (French)

Significance

This much-discussed passage contains a reference to what appears to have been an artist's self-portrait embedded in the scene of the Women at the Sepulcher. While scholars

⁵⁰ Not consulted.

have advanced different interpretations of this reference (see p. 116–17), it is significant that the marginal note appended to the passage in the Milan manuscript, as deciphered by Heisenberg, identifies the depicted figure as Eulalios. The note tellingly reflects the painter’s posthumous fame: an artist such as Eulalios *could* break the norms of religious iconography and portray himself in a scene from sacred history.

The Author

Nicholas Mesarites was a cleric and writer. At the time he composed his lengthy *ekphrasis* of the Holy Apostles, between 1198 and 1203, Mesarites served as *skeuophylax* of the Pharos church in the Great Palace.⁵¹

Text and Context

See Introduction, p. 116–17.

Text

ὁ δ’ ἡμέτερος λόγος περιεργότερον ὧδε κάκεισε περισκοπῶν καὶ περιβλεπόμενος καὶ αὐτὸν ὡς ἔστιν ἰδεῖν τὸν ταῦτα χειρὶ τῆ ἑαυτοῦ ζωγραφήσαντα, περὶ τὸν δεσποτικὸν ὄρθιον παριστάμενον τάφον ὡς ἄγρυπνὸν τινα φύλακα κατενόησε, στολὴν ἐκείνην καὶ τὴν πᾶσαν ἄλλην ἡμφιεσμένον ἀναβολὴν, ἣν καὶ ζῶν καὶ ταῦτα γράφων καὶ μετὰ πάντων καὶ ἑαυτοῦ καταστοχαζόμενος ἄριστα περιέκειτό τε καὶ τὸν ἐκτὸς κατεσεμνύνετο ἄνθρωπον.

Translation⁵²

So our discourse, while looking and gazing around rather curiously hither and thither, has also recognized the man who with his own hand painted these things,¹ as he may be seen, standing upright by the Lord’s tomb like a watchful guard, dressed in that robe and all the other garments, which he wore and with which he adorned his outer appearance² when he was living and painting these things, and achieving greatest success <in the depiction> of himself, too, along with everything else.

Commentary

1. The marginal note probably adds, τὸν Εὐλάλιόν φησι (“He means Eulalios”).
2. Literally, “the outer man.”

⁵¹ See also M.J. Featherstone, I.6.6 in this volume.

⁵² The translation modifies Mango, *Art*, 233.

Text E | Manganeios Prodromos (fl. mid twelfth century)**Epigrams on a Depiction of the Annunciation by Eulalios**

Ed.: Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems* nos. 85–88⁵³

MS.:⁵⁴ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus XI.22 (s. XIII), f. 81v

Other Translations: Maguire, *Art and Eloquence*, 231; Daskas, as above, 157 (E.4);

Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems*, forthcoming (English); Malickij 1926: 125–26 (E.3, French)

Significance

Byzantine epigrams only exceptionally feature named artists. This series of epigrams represents a notable exception. Eulalios here receives high praise from a contemporary poet. The epigrams are remarkable for their use of wordplay and puns: in accordance with the name *Eulalios*, the artist's figures and colors are said to be speaking. Implicit in this emphasis on the eloquence of painting is a self-referential affirmation of the power of verbal discourse.

The Author

An anonymous poet conventionally known as Manganeios Prodromos was active in the 1140s and 1150s. In addition to panegyrics and petitions addressed to Manuel I Komnenos, he wrote occasional poems and epigrams of works of art for members of the aristocracy, most notably the *sebastokratorissa* Irene, his main patron.⁵⁵

Text and Context

See Introduction p. 117–18.

⁵³ I would like to thank Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys for generously sharing with me their unpublished edition and translation of the epigrams under discussion.

⁵⁴ Not consulted.

⁵⁵ See also E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, I.3.15 in this volume.

Text

1. Οὗτοι οἱ στίχοι ἐγένοντο εἰς τὸν χαιρετισμὸν, τὸν ἐν τῷ ναῷ τοῦ πανσεβάστου ἐκείνου πρωτοσεβαστοῦ, τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ σεβαστοκράτορος Ἰσαακίου

Ἦ νοῦς ἐτράπη πρὸς τὸ πάχος ἐνθάδε,
 ἢ καὶ τὸ χρῶμα πρὸς τὸ γραφὲν ἠλλάγη,
 ἢ σχηματίζει καὶ γραφὴς αὐλίαν,
 οἶόν τι λεπτόν οὐσίας εἶδος φέρει,
 5 καὶ πῶς λαλεῖν ἔοικεν ὁ γραφεὶς νόος
 τὸ τοῦ Γαβριὴλ ῥήματος πρὸς τὴν κόρη
 μετ' εὐλαβείας οἶονεὶ πῶς ἠρέμα –
 μυστήριον γάρ – οὐ διαστέλλει στόμα.

2. Εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν

Ἦς εὐλαλὸν σοὶ καὶ τὸ χρῶμα, ζωγράφε!
 ποιεῖς λαλεῖν γάρ καὶ γεγραμμένον νόα
 βάψας τὸ γραφίδιον εἰς αὐλίαν.

3. Εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν

Ἦμψυχος εἰκῶν, ἀλλὰ πῶς ἔμπρους γράφῃ,
 ἢ συμπαρῆς γράφοντι τῷ γράψαντί σε
 καὶ τι πνοῆς ἔσταξας εἰς τὴν γραφίδα,
 καὶ ζῶσα γραφή, ζῆς γὰρ ὄντως, παρθένε.

4. Εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν

Σάρκινος ὁ χροῦς ἀλλὰ καὶ ζώσης κόρης,
 ἢ που τοσοῦτος Εὐλάλιος τὴν τέχνην,
 ὡς ἱστορεῖν πῶς τὰς γραφὰς φερωνύμως,
 λαλοῦντά τε χρώματα συγκεραννύειν.
 5 οὐ τῆς γραφικῆς ἐστὶ τὸ χρῆμα, ξένε·
 ἀλλ' ἢ περιλάλητος ἀνθρώποις κόρη
 τὴν Εὐλαλικὴν ἰθύνασα γραφίδα,
 εὐλαλον οὕτω καὶ τὸ χρῶμα δεικνύει.

Translation⁵⁶

1. These verses were written on the Annunciation in the church of the late *pansebastos protosebastos*, the son of the *sebastokrator* Isaac¹

Either spirit has here been turned to matter,
 or the coloring has been altered in relation to the subject,
 or the brush delineates the incorporeal
 as if it were made of some fine substance;²
 5 the painted spirit³ seems to be somehow addressing
 Gabriel's words to the Maiden,
 with reverence, as it were, and gently – for it is a mystery – yet he does not part
 his lips.

2. On the same <subject>

How eloquent is your coloring, painter!
 For you make the spirit you have painted speak,
 having dipped your brush in immateriality.

3. On the same <subject>

The image is animate, for indeed you are somehow being painted alive,
 or else you were present alongside the painter who painted you
 and dropped upon his brush some breath;
 it is a living painting, for you are truly alive, O Virgin.

4. On the same <subject>

The hue may be that of flesh, but it is also of a live Maiden;
 or else so great is the art of Eulalios
 as to somehow make paintings worthy of his name
 and to mix colors endowed with speech.
 5 Yet, O stranger, this is not a matter of the art of painting;
 rather, the Maiden who is much-talked-of among men,
 by directing the brush of Eulalios,⁴
 has made his color so eloquent.

⁵⁶ The translation modifies Mango, *Art*, 231.

Commentary

1. The identity of the “late *pansebastos protosebastos*, the son of the *sebastokrator* Isaac” cannot be established with certainty. Three *sebastokratores* by the name of Isaac are known from the Komnenian era.⁵⁷ The available information about their male offspring suggests that the *sebastokrator* Isaac of the title is probably to be identified with Isaac Komnenos, the elder brother of the emperor Alexios I.⁵⁸ Isaac’s eldest son John⁵⁹ may well be the founder of the church that housed Eulalios’ depiction of the Annunciation. It is likely, though by no means certain, that this John is the same person as the *protosebastos* and *meγas doux* John Komnenos, the son of a *sebastokrator*, about whom we learn from two epigrams in the *Anthologia Marciana* (nos. B12 and B13). These poems inform us that the latter John restored the monastery of Christ *Euergetes* in Constantinople.⁶⁰ Assuming that the two Johns are the same person, Bees has argued that the Annunciation by Eulalios must have been located in the church of this monastery. Bees’ proposition is attractive, but without additional evidence, it must remain a hypothesis.⁶¹

Manganeios Prodromos’ verses provide no information regarding the format and medium of Eulalios’ work. It may have been a monumental scene, perhaps executed in fresco technique rather than in mosaic, as suggested by repeated references to the painter’s brush (E1, v. 3; E2, v. 3; E3, v. 3; E4, v. 7). Of the four epigrams, two (E1–2) are devoted to the representation of the archangel Gabriel and two (E3–4) to the representation of the Virgin Annunciate. The poems were likely composed as purely literary pieces, although one cannot exclude the possibility that some of them – e.g. E1 and E4 or E2 and E3 – may have actually been inscribed.

2. The tension between the materiality of the picture and the spiritual nature of the figure it shows is commonly thematized in epigrams on images of angels.⁶² The phrase οἶόν τι λεπτόν οὐσίας εἶδος φέρει seems to allude to the notion that angels are not entirely incorporeal, but rather have a body that is λεπτόν (“fine” or “subtle”).⁶³
3. I.e. the archangel Gabriel.
4. Alternatively, the phrase τὴν Εὐλαλικὴν γραφίδα can be translated as “the eloquent brush.”

57 Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, nos. 12, 36, 78.

58 *Ibid.*, no. 12.

59 *Ibid.*, no. 23.

60 On this monastery see Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 508–10; Aran 1979; Asutay 2001.

61 Bees 1916–17: 103–17.

62 On the issues of depicting angels in material form, with references to epigrams see, esp. Peers 2001.

63 See, e.g., John of Thessaloniki, Mansi XIII, col. 165A–B, transl. Mango, *Art*, 140.

Text F | Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos (c.1270/80–after 1326/7)

Epigrams on Two Works by Eulalios

Ed: A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, “Νικηφόρος Κάλλιστος Ξανθόπουλος,” *BZ* 11 (1902), 38–49, at 46–47 nos. 14 and 16

MSS.:⁶⁴ Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auctarium E.5.14 (Misc. 79) (c.1303–1309), f. 282v⁶⁵
Monastery of Mar Saba, Sabbaiticus Graecus 150 (a. 1354), ff. 405r–v

Other Translations: Mango, *Art*, 231–32; Daskas, as above, 155 (F.1) (English); Malickij, as above, 128 (F.1, French)

Significance

The two epigrams presented here offer an important testimony concerning the reception of Eulalios in the early Palaiologan period. The first epigram, dedicated to the image of Christ in the central dome of the Holy Apostles, is particularly noteworthy. This poem, combined with the evidence of the marginal note in the Milan manuscript of Mesarites, as read by Heisenberg, supports the view that Eulalios worked or was believed to have worked on the mosaics of the great Justinianic church. The poem is also significant for its creative reworking of the ancient epigram on the chryselephantine statue of Zeus by Phidias (*Greek Anthology* 16.81). Xanthopoulos’ mimetic appropriation of this venerable source may have been designed specifically to celebrate Eulalios as a Christian equivalent to the celebrated pagan artist.

The Author

Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos was a scholar and cleric, perhaps best known for his monumental *Ecclesiastical History* dedicated to Andronikos II Palaiologos. Xanthopoulos penned over forty epigrams on works of art.⁶⁶

Text and Context

See Introduction, p. 118.

⁶⁴ Not consulted.

⁶⁵ The Oxford manuscript contains only Text F1.

⁶⁶ See also A.-M. Talbot, I.2.3 and A. Alexakis and A.-M. Talbot, I.2.4 in this volume.

Text

1. "Ἐτεροὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν δεσπότην Χριστόν, τὸν ἐν τῷ μέσῳ τρούλλῳ τῶν Ἁγίων Ἀποστόλων, ὃν Εὐλάλιος ἄριστα καθιστόρησεν

"Ἡ Χριστὸς αὐτὸς καταβάς οὐρανόθεν
μορφῆς τύπον ἔδειξεν ἠκριβωμένον
τῷ τὰς χεῖρας ἔχοντι μάλλον εὐλάλους,
ἢ γοῦν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀνιῶν τὸν αἰθέρα
5 ὁ κλεινὸς Εὐλάλιος χειρὶ πανσόφῳ
Χριστοῦ θέαν ἔγραψεν ἠκριβωμένως.

2. Εἰς τὸν ἀρχιστράτηγον Μιχαήλ· ἔντεχνον τοῦ κλεινοῦ ἐπὶ τέχνης ἱστορικῆς κυροῦ Εὐλάλους

"Ἡ ζωγράφος σκάρυφον εἰς ἀϋλίαν
ἔβαψεν, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐγγράψας νόα,
ἢ νοῦς λαθῶν ἔστηκεν ἐγγεγραμμένος,
χρώμασι τὴν ἄϋλον ἐγκρύπτων φύσιν.
5 ὦ πῶς καθέλκει καὶ τὸν νοῦν ὕλη κάτω
καὶ συνέχει χρώμασι τὴν ἀϋλίαν!
ζέοντος, ὡς ἔοικε, ταῦτα τοῦ πόθου
καὶ καρδίας ἀναψις ἐκ τῶν πραγμάτων.

Translation⁶⁷

1. Other <verses> by the same [i.e. Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos] on the Lord Christ whom Eulalios has masterfully depicted in the central dome of the Holy Apostles

5 Either Christ Himself, having descended from heaven,
 showed the exact form of his features
 to him who has such eloquent hands,
 or else the famous Eulalios, having ascended
 to the very heaven, with his all-skilled hand
 accurately depicted Christ's appearance.

2. On the archangel Michael, a work of art by the master Eulalios, famous in the art of painting¹

5 It seems that either the painter dipped his brush
 in immateriality to depict a spirit,
 or else the spirit inhabits his depiction unobserved,
 hiding in colors his immaterial nature.
 Oh, how matter drags even the spirit down
 and encompasses the immaterial by means of colors!²
 This, as it seems, is <a work> of ardent desire,
 and in fact, it ignites the heart.³

⁶⁷ The translation modifies Mango, *Art*, 231–32.

Commentary

1. Although *ιστορία* is a common term for a visual representation, the use of *τέχνη ιστορική* in the sense of “the art of painting” is rather exceptional.
2. Cf. Text E1.
3. The exact meaning of the concluding two lines is difficult to comprehend. Someone’s “ardent desire” here appears to be credited with effecting the paradoxical coexistence of the material and the immaterial in the image. But is it the desire of the painter or perhaps of his patron? The latter possibility seems more likely, since in Byzantine epigrammatic poetry *pothos* is a standard attribute of the commissioner or donor of a religious work, who typically engages in the act of patronage out of a deeply felt emotional attachment to a holy figure.⁶⁸ If this interpretation is correct, then Xanthopoulos seems to suggest that Eulalios and his patron collaborated on the creation of the wondrous image, the former contributing his unrivaled skill, the latter his *pothos* for the archangel Michael. The poet, however, does not record the patron’s name, nor does he give any indication as to the format, medium, and location of the image.

⁶⁸ See Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 296–331.

Text G | Theodore Metochites (1257–1332)

Eulalios Among Celebrated Ancient Artists: Excerpt from the *Ethikos*

Ed.: I. D. Polemis, *Θεόδωρος Μετοχίτης. Ἠθικός ἢ περὶ παιδείας* (Athens, 2002), §34, 148–50, 2nd rev. ed.

MS.:⁶⁹ Vienna, ÖNB, Philologicus Graecus 95 (s. XIV), f. 211v

Other Translations: *Ἠθικός*, ed. Polemis, as above, 149–51 (Modern Greek)

Significance

Aside from arguing that intellectual and manual labor are equal in dignity and value, a notion seldom expressed in Byzantium, the excerpt is notable for the fact that it places a Christian artist from the recent past on an equal footing with famed painters and sculptors from pagan antiquity. The excerpt indicates that, by the early Palaiologan period, Eulalios came to be viewed as a paradigmatic, canonical artist.

The Author

A polymath, statesman, and art patron, Theodore Metochites was one of the most prominent figures in the political and intellectual life of Byzantium in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Not consulted.

⁷⁰ See also I. Polemis, I.8.1 in this volume.

Text and Context

See Introduction, p. 119–20.

Text

Εἰσὶ μὲν αὖ οἱ φασιν ἀθάνατον μόνον ὑπὸ παιδείας γίνεσθαι τὸν σπουδαῖον. λείπεται γὰρ τάνδρι, φασί, μνήμη πολυμήκης ἔξης καὶ κλέος ἀείζων, ὕφ' ὧν ἔλιπε λόγων. τοῦτό γε μὴν οὐ τοῦ σοφοῦ μόνον ἔοικεν εἶναι, ἀλλ' ἀμέλει καὶ ἄλλων ἐπ' ἄλλοις καὶ μικροῖς τε καὶ μείζοσι, καὶ Φειδίου καὶ Πολυγνώτου καὶ καθ' ἡμᾶς Εὐλαλίου, Ζευξίππου τε καὶ Λυσίππου, εἴθ' οὔτινος βούλει, οἱ δόκιμοι γεγόνασιν ἐν τέχναις αἴστισιν ἄρα καὶ ὧν ἔργα χειρῶν παραμένειν ἔχει, καὶ τὸν μὲν οἱ λόγοι, τοὺς δὲ γραφαὶ καὶ ἀγάλματα, τοὺς δ' ἄλλα μηχανήματα, τοὺς δὲ οἰκοδομαὶ τινες καὶ νεώρια, τοὺς ἄλλο τίποτ' ἄλλους παραπέμπουσι καὶ διδάσκουσι, τὸν ὅμοιον τρόπον, ὡς φασιν, οὐ θνήσκοντας.

Translation

There are some who claim that only a scholar can attain immortality through intellectual endeavors. For, they say, the memory of this man is preserved for a very long time and his fame lives forever thanks to the writings he left behind. This does not seem to be the privilege of a man of letters alone, but of many other people, both small and great, for instance, of Phidias, Polygnotus, our Eulalios, Zeuxippus [i.e. Zeuxis], Lysippus, and of whomever else you please. These men excelled in various arts, and hence the works of their hands have not perished. And as they say, just as <a scholar> achieves distinction and is proven immortal through his writings, in the same fashion some <achieve distinction and are proven immortal> through paintings and statues, some through other devices, some through various buildings and dockyards, while others through other things.

Text H | Manuel Philes (c.1270–after 1330)**Epigram on an Image of Christ by the Painter Makarios**

Ed.: Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Scor. 259, ed. Miller 1, 131

MSS.:⁷¹ Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, Plutei 32.19, f. 129r (s. XIV)

Escorial, Escur. X.IV.20 (s. XVI), f. 80v

Other Translations: None

Significance

The poem is a rare example of a dedicatory epigram in which the patron and the artist are the same person. Although the verses employ the imagery of art-making, as befits the occasion, their primary goal is to record a pious gift, not to celebrate a work of art.

The Author

Manuel Philes was by far the most popular and prolific poet of the early Palaiologan period. His poetic oeuvre is highly diverse and includes panegyrics, monodies, didactic and satirical poems, occasional pieces for religious and ceremonial gatherings, *ekphraseis*, as well as numerous personal petitions, examples of the so-called *Betteldichtung* (“begging poetry”). Philes also wrote over five hundred epigrams,⁷² a few of which can still be seen *in situ*.⁷³

Text and Context

See Introduction.

⁷¹ Not consulted.

⁷² This figure must remain provisional, since we still lack a full critical edition of Philes’ works.

⁷³ See also A. Rhoby with additions by M. Bazzani, I.4.2 in this volume.

Text

Εἰς τὸν Χριστὸν ἐκ προσώπου Μακαρίου τοῦ ζωγράφου

Σὺ μὲν διέπρασάς με χερσὶν ἰδίαις
 τῇ κατὰ σαυτὸν ὠραΐσας εἰκόνι·
 ἐγὼ δ' ὄλην ἤμειψα τὴν εὐκοσμίαν,
 Θεοῦ Λόγε ζῶν, εἰς παθῶν ἀκοσμίαν.
 5 πλὴν δεῦρο χειρὶ ζωγραφῶ σου τὸν τύπον,
 ὅπως ἀναπλάττοις με καὶ κρείττω γράφοις
 ἐν τοῖς ἄνω πίναξι τῆς ἀφθαρσίας.
 σὸς λάτρις οἰκτρὸς ταῦτ' ἔφη Μακάριος.

Translation

On <an image of> Christ on behalf of Makarios the painter¹

You formed me with your very hands,
 making me beautiful in your own image.²
 But I have turned all this beauty,
 O living *Logos* of God, into the ugliness of passions.
 5 Here I paint your image with <my> hand,
 so that you may restore me and depict a better version of me
 in the pictures of incorruption above.
 Your pitiable servant Makarios said these <words>.

Commentary

1. The phrase ἐκ προσώπου (“on behalf of”) is commonly used in titles attached to epigrams.⁷⁴ The phrase indicates that the poem is essentially an *ethopoiia* in which the poet puts words into the patron’s mouth.⁷⁵ The title reproduced here, following Emmanuel Miller’s edition of Philes, comes from the manuscript Scorialiensis X.IV.20. The Florence manuscript, BML, Plut. 32.19, gives a different title: Εἰς εἰκόνα τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ (“On an icon of our Savior Christ”).
2. Cf. Gen. 1:26–27.

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⁷⁴ See Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 87.

⁷⁵ See E. Jeffreys, Introduction, to II.3.

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I.2.2 John Apokaukos (c.1155–1233)

The Metropolitan of Nafpaktos and Painter Nicholas from Euripos

THEOCHARIS TSAMPOURAS AND FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: Text I. Bee-Seferli, “Unedierte Schriftstücke aus der Kanzlei des Johannes Apokaukos des Metropoliten von Naupaktos (in Aetolien),” *BNJ* 21 (1971–74) no. 58, 114–15;¹ repr. in I. Delimaris, *Πατέρες τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικοὶ συγγραφεῖς τῆς δυτικῆς Ἑλλάδος 1: Ἀπαντὰ Ἰωάννου Ἀποκαύκου* (Nafpaktos, 2000) no. 24, 96–98
Text II. Bee-Seferli, as above, no. 103, 153;² Delimaris, as above, no. 31, 112–13
MS.:³ Text I. St. Petersburg, RNB, Φ no.906, gr. 250 (= Granstrem 454) (s. XIII), ff. 35v–36r
Text II. St. Petersburg, RNB, Φ no.906, gr. 250 (= Granstrem 454) (s. XIII), f. 74r

Other Translations: None

Significance

The two letters demonstrate the process of hiring painters and stone-masons for the decoration of churches in the Greek mainland.

The Author

John Apokaukos was born around the year 1155.⁴ After receiving a robust education in Constantinople, he moved to Nafpaktos to serve as a deacon and secretary under the jurisdiction of his uncle and prominent twelfth-century author Constantine Manasses, the current metropolitan of Nafpaktos.⁵ Apokaukos returned to Constantinople in the year 1186, where he became a patriarchal notary. In 1199 or 1200, Apokaukos succeeded his uncle as the metropolitan of Nafpaktos, a see which he retained in the aftermath of 1204, when Nafpaktos became part of the Despotate of Epirus.⁶

Apokaukos, the most senior bishop of the Despotate and a leading prelate, was a fervent supporter of the ecclesiastical and political independence of the Despotate from the Empire of Nicaea, where the patriarch of Constantinople in exile resided.⁷ Despite the in-

1 = Lampropoulos, *Ἀπόκαυκος* no. 24, p. 185–86; cf. Bee-Seferli 1971–74: 206–07.

2 = Lampropoulos, *Ἀπόκαυκος* no. 31, p. 190; cf. Bee-Seferli 1971–74: 235.

3 Consulted.

4 On the life of John Apokaukos see Angold, *Church and Society*, 213–33; Lampropoulos, *Ἀπόκαυκος*, 39–89.

5 On Constantine Manasses see I. Nilsson and C. Messis, II.2.2 in this volume; for arguments against the identification of Apokaukos’ uncle with Constantine Manasses see Lampsidis 1988: 97–111.

6 On the Despotate of Epirus see Prinzing 2011: 81–99, where the earlier bibliography is cited.

7 For a summary of the relevant events and the earlier bibliography see Stavridou-Zafrada 2009: 12–17.

itial alliance of the metropolitan and the local secular authorities (particularly the Despot of Epirus, Theodore Doukas Komnenos [r.1215–30]), relations between the ecclesiastical and local political authorities became strained around the year 1222 over the subject of taxation.⁸ This controversy led the local ruler, Constantine Doukas Komnenos, to expel John Apokaukos from the episcopal palace, which was thereafter turned into Constantine's household.⁹ Reconciliation between Constantine and Apokaukos came around the year 1226/7, following the occupation of Thessaloniki by the Byzantines of Epirus and Theodore's coronation as "Emperor" by Apokaukos' close friend Demetrios Chomatenos, the archbishop of Ohrid. The disastrous defeat of Theodore Doukas by the Bulgarian Ivan Asen II (r.1221–48) at Klokotnitsa in 1230 and the reconciliation of the new ruler of Epirus, Manuel, with the patriarchate of Constantinople in exile, led to Apokaukos' resignation. Apokaukos had left the metropolitan see by August 1232, when he retired at the monastery of Kozyle, near Arta, the Capital of the Depostate, where he died either in 1233 or 1234.¹⁰ It is uncertain whether his wish to be buried at the tenth-century monastery of Hosios Loukas in Boetia was ever fulfilled.¹¹

John Apokaukos is mostly known for his vivid letters, striking for their humor, informative content, and the simple yet erudite style that allows him to incorporate numerous references to Classical and Late Antique authors.¹² The greatest part of the corpus of his epistles and epigrams survive in a single manuscript, dating from the middle of the thirteenth century, which was removed from the library of St. Catherine's monastery in Sinai in the nineteenth century and is kept today in St. Petersburg.¹³ The text in the manuscript (RNB Gr. 250) most probably derives from Apokaukos' personal collection, as some of the texts appear to be drafts.¹⁴ The datable letters belong between 1212 and 1230, and they provide the main source of information for Apokaukos' character and career, his intellectual endeavors, and his literary friendship with some of the most eminent educated men of his time.¹⁵ Apokaukos has also penned sixteen epigrams, dating from his time in Constantinople, as well as a number of decisions for his diocese. Regrettably, his oeuvre remains understudied and even partly unpublished.¹⁶

8 Angold, *Church and Society*, 219–20.

9 Angold, *Church and Society*, 219–30.

10 For the last years of Apokaukos' life, i.e. after his resignation, see Katsaros 2001:123–49.

11 See Lampropoulos, *Απόκωνος*, 88–89.

12 Lampropoulos, *Απόκωνος*, 42–48 suggests tentatively that Apokaukos might have studied at the School of Peter and Paul in the Orphanage that was founded by Alexios I, and Lampropoulos considers as the most dynamic part of the "Patriarchal School." On the so-called "Patriarchal School" see p. liii–liv, above.

13 For a list of manuscripts with works of Apokaukos see Lampropoulos, *Απόκωνος*, 114–17; the following manuscripts should be added to the list: Moscow, GIM, Sinod. gr. 368 (Vlad. 240), Vienna, ÖNB, Phil. gr. 110 (s. XV) and Florence, BML, S. Marco 303 (s. XIII).

14 For bibliography on the manuscript see Papaioannou, *Psellos*, 260–62.

15 Apokaukos corresponded with, among others, the historiographer Niketas Choniates, and his brother the metropolitan of Athens Michael Choniates, the archbishop of Bulgaria Demetrios Chomatenos, and the famous author Euthymios Tornikes. On the significance of Apokaukos' letters see Magdalino 1987; Angold, *Church and Society*, 213–14.

16 See, e.g., the works highlighted by Lampropoulos, *Απόκωνος*, 117.

Text and Context

In the following letters, John Apokaukos is concerned with the renovation of the episcopal church in Nafpaktos, which was dedicated to the Theotokos.¹⁷ He vividly expresses his preference for a specific painter, Nicholas from Euripus, since the painter he had initially chosen, Epifanios, seems was unavailable at the time, and so Apokaukos asks his peers to persuade Nicholas to decorate the episcopal church in Nafpaktos.

The first letter is addressed to Euthymios Tornikes,¹⁸ who is famous for his rhetorical skills. Before 1204, Tornikes was a member of the patriarchal clergy in the Hagia Sophia, but in the aftermath of the fourth crusade he resided in Latin Euboea, where the financial interests of his family lay.¹⁹ In this letter, Apokaukos complains about his advanced age, and his fruitless efforts to complete the renovation of the metropolitan church, the Theotokos Panhymnetos (transl., “Most Praised”). He asks Tornikes to contact a certain painter Nicholas (who also resides in Euboea) and to find a skilled craftsman for the marble for the pillars and the floor.

The second letter addresses Nicholas, bishop of Vonditsa (modern Vonitsa, in north-west Greece), a frequent correspondent and close friend of Apokaukos.²⁰ In this letter, the metropolitan of Nafpaktos refers to his undertaking the renovation of the Theotokos Church and the obstacles that he has met. Apokaukos once more expresses his preference for the same painter from the flourishing port of Euripus (also named Negroponte, modern Chalcis) in Euboea.²¹

Both letters have been dated to 1218, on account of the reference to Tornikes’ visit to Nafpaktos.²² Thanks to these two letters, we gain rare insights into the process of patronage and the production of monumental art in the thirteenth-century provinces.

The local elites of mainland Greece, at this time of crisis and instability, prioritized the maintenance of their landholdings over sponsorship of monumental art.²³ The

¹⁷ There has been considerable debate among scholars about the exact location of the of Theotokos Panhymnetos, otherwise known as Nafpaktiotissa. Recent excavations in the central area of the upper enceinte of the castle of Nafpaktos have revealed a large three-aisled middle-Byzantine basilica next to a building that could be interpreted as an *episkopeion*. This hypothesis, proposed in 2004 (Androudis and Athanasoulis 2004: 520–23), is shared by many scholars, although older views, which placed the episcopal church outside the city’s castle and closer to its seafront (Athanasiadis-Novas 1953: 77–78; Katsaros 1985: 1524–25), cannot be excluded. For a more extensive literature on the debate about the location of the Theotokos Panhymnetos church see Kaponis 2006: 244–46; Veikou, *Epirus*, 473–74 (site no. 81); Mamaloukos and Papavarnavas 2014: 121–39; Katsaros 2014: 59, 62.

¹⁸ On Euthymios Tornikes see Shawcross 2011: 23–24; Darrouzès 1970: 35–36. On Apokaukos’ letters to Tornikes see Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, 153–54.

¹⁹ Often the Latin lords incorporated the old Byzantine landowners into the new landowning system; for a general introduction on the subject see Gasparis 2014: 73–81.

²⁰ Nothing is known about him other than the scant information in Apokaukos’ letter; see Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, 149–50.

²¹ The city was under Venetian control at the time the letter was written; see Jacoby 2014: 211–15.

²² Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, 185–86, 190; cf. Bee-Seferli (1971–74: 185–86, 190), who suggests a slightly later date for the second letter (1218/19).

²³ Maltezou 2000: 12; this makes a striking contrast to the economy norms of the Byzantine countryside of the eleventh and twelfth centuries; see Laiou and Morrison 2007: 132–33, 164.

consequent rarity of newly painted monuments – especially during the first half of the thirteenth century – may be a partial reason for the art of these regions having developed a distinct character.²⁴ Skilled craftsmen were few, and those who were able to incorporate and demonstrate the sophisticated taste of their patrons into their work were rarer still.²⁵ Seen in this light, Apokaukos' vigorous pursuit of a particular artist may speak as much to this scarcity as to this artist's skills.

From his letter to Euthymios Tornikes we learn details of Apokaukos' commission. He mentions that the side aisles and the narthexes of the church were in need of wall paintings. Thus, it should be assumed that the wall paintings in the central part of the church were finished by 1218 (the date of the letter) and that Apokaukos' undertaking was the completion of a renovation project in the metropolitan church. It can be postulated that he had earlier commissioned other wall paintings in the church from Epifanios of Thebes. Indeed, the letter to Tornikes provides the impression that the painter Epifanios had worked at the metropolitan church of Nafpaktos and that he had been Apokaukos' first choice for continuing the painting program.²⁶

He also asks in the same letter for an *έρμογλύφον* (*hermoglyphos*), a term which in this context could be interpreted as a reference to a skilled stone-mason rather than a sculptor. That artisan would be responsible only for the marble floors, the decoration of the pillars in the vestibules, and the new parts of the church. The church has not survived, but its remains²⁷ suffice to reconstruct part of its marble decoration, which would have been comparable to the wealth of the nearby episcopal palace.²⁸ Apokaukos' goal was not to add luxury to the church, but to finish the decoration of the building. Apokaukos stresses repeatedly the religious nature of his commission. He does not hesitate to admit his bitter emotions when a part of his project was destroyed due to neglect.²⁹ Given his evident personal involvement in the project, Apokaukos may be considered responsible for the painted and sculptural decoration of the building.

Apokaukos' letters also underline the special relationship between him and the painter. From the early thirteenth century, private patrons, even whole communities, became responsible for public buildings.³⁰ Artists in the regions had to search for patrons within a small circle of social elites, whether lay or ecclesiastical. Becoming affiliated with a certain episcopate was one of the most efficient ways for the artists in these areas to

24 Kalopissi-Verti 2007b: 83; Bouras 1979: 71. On the “dominance of the metropolitan core” and the centralization of the Byzantine economy and culture during the middle Byzantine period see Wharton 1988: 7–12, 161–64; Kazhdan and Wharton 1985: 39–46.

25 Cormack 2000: 55–66.

26 On Thebes in the thirteenth century and its cultural production see Kalopissi-Verti 2014: 371–74.

27 Androudis 2014: 39–42; Mamaloukos and Papavarnavas 2014: 133.

28 Katsaros 1989: 644–45, καὶ τὸ ἐπισκοπεῖον δὲ τὸ ἔμὸν οὐ καταμάρμαρον ὄλον; Bee-Seferli 1971–74: 122.67.

29 It is interesting to compare the pride in which Apokaukos mentions his renovating efforts and the “many tears he sheds” when the roof of the same church is destroyed see Bee-Seferli 1971–74: 27, 3841.

30 Kalopissi-Verti 2005: 102; Kalopissi-Verti 2007a: 334–37; on communal patronage see Panayotidi 2005: 193–212.

become known to possible commissioners. This perhaps explains why both Tornikes and Nicholas Vonitsis seem to have heard of the painter Nicholas. A personal connection between the patron and the artist and a good reference were crucial for the latter's success. Yet, as is shown by the example of the painter Epifanios, this affiliation was not binding and artists could refuse to undertake a commission.³¹

We cannot be certain of Apokaukos' relationship with either Epifanios from Thebes or Nicholas from Euripus. It is quite apparent that he knows details about Epifanios' personal life and that he is probably familiar with Nicholas' work. Although Apokaukos had a certain level of respect for Nicholas' craftsmanship, Nicholas remains his second choice. Apokaukos would prefer to ensure consistency in style and quality and so he would have liked Epifanios to complete the painted decoration of the church. By comparison, he is anything but specific when it comes to the stone-mason he seeks. He only mentions that he will be needed for the marble floors and the decoration of the pilasters and no remarks are made regarding the quality of his work.

In sum, Apokaukos' letters provide us with valuable information about painters in the early thirteenth century. First, a painter was not a simple craftsman or artisan; he was an important or rare figure, who needed to be persuaded to undertake a project. The same could not be said about the marble worker, who remains anonymous in Apokaukos' text. Secondly, regional painters were evidently known by their first names. Unusually, neither Epifanios nor Nicholas is identified by their family names, as would have been expected in the thirteenth century. Even so, Nicholas' profession (ἱστοριογράφος) and his origin (ἐξ Εὐρίππου) are specified in the second text below (the letter to the bishop of Vonitsa). It is worth noticing that there is no mention of an artistic workshop, but only of the individual painters.

The lack of large commissions and economic instability probably increased the mobility of artists in the thirteenth century.³² Generally speaking, there were two kinds of traveling painters: (a) those who come from Constantinople and undertake projects as far away as Italy, Georgia, and Russia, and (b) painters from provincial territories, whose mobility is confined within smaller geographical zones, usually within a given episcopal or metropolitan see.³³ Apokaukos' artist may have fallen into this second category. This increased mobility of artists, a quite common phenomenon in Medieval Europe,³⁴ will become the norm in the last phases of Byzantine art.³⁵

³¹ The reason or excuse of painter Epifanios for refusing the commission in Nafpaktos remains unclear in Apokaukos' letter.

³² For regional examples of itinerant artists see Kalopissi-Verti 2014: 381, 400–01, 413.

³³ Panayotidi 2005: 193–212.

³⁴ Gudiol Ricart 1958: 191–94.

³⁵ Cf. the activity of the local painting workshops of Thessaloniki in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century; see Antonaras 2016: 78–79.

Text

I. Πρὸς τὸν Τορνίκην κῦρ Εὐθύμιον

Ἡμέρα Κυρίου ὡς παγίς ἐλεύσεται ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς μαθημένους ἐπὶ πᾶν τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γῆς, τὰ ἱερά φασιν εὐαγγέλια, ἡμέραν δὲ Κυρίου νοοῦμεν τὸν αἰῶνα τὸν ὄγδοον καθ' ὃν παραστησόμεθα τῷ κριτῇ λόγον τῶν ἐνταῦθα ὑφέζοντες, διαπορθμευόμεθα δὲ πρὸς ἐκεῖνον θανάτῳ πάντως καὶ διαλύσει τῆς τετρακτύος, ἐξ ὧν συνιστάμεθα. γῆρας δὲ θανάτου ἐχέγγυον καὶ χώρα λευκὴ πρὸς θερισμὸν εὐτρεπῆς, καὶ ἡ ἐκεῖθεν διάβασις παρὰ πόδας γηράσαντί μοι ἐς ἔσχατον· ἀλλ' οὕτω μου ἔχοντος ἡλικίαν γήρους, ἀπὸ караδοκίας ἀποβιώσεως, ἔτι ἀτελής ὁ τῆς Πανυμνήτου ναός. καὶ προσυπαντᾷ μοι κατὰ στόμα παραίνεσις Ἡσιόδου, μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων ὑποτιθεῖσα καὶ ταῦτα τῷ ἀναγνώστῃ *μηδὲ δόμον ποιῶν ἀνεπίξεστον καταλίπειν, μὴ τοι ἐφεζομένη κρώζῃ κορώνῃ λαμέρυζα*, τοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων, οἶμαι, σκώπτας καὶ κρωκτικούς ὑποδηλοῦσα τῷ τῆς κορώνης ὄνόματι, οἱ ἐπειδὴν ἔργον ἴδωσιν ἀτελής, ἐπικαθήμενοι ὡσπερ τοῦ ποιητοῦ κατακράζουσιν. ἀλλ' ἐρέσθω Ἡσιόδου· τὰ θειογραφούμενα δὲ μέψιν ἐπάγει τοῖς μὴ τελειωταῖς τῶν πρακτῶν, λέγοντά που ἐν μέρει· ἰδοὺ ἄνθρωπος, ὃς ἤρξατο ποιῆσαι καὶ οὐκ ἐτέλεσεν. ἀλλὰ χρημάτων μὲν εὐπορῶ, δώσει δὲ χρυσίον ὁ λέγων· ἐμόν ἐστι τὸ χρυσίον καὶ ἐμόν ἐστι τὸ ἀργύριον, καὶ ᾧ θέλω δίδωμι τοῦτο· τεχνίτου δὲ πέρι, σύ μοι γενοῦ συνεργός καὶ πᾶσα ἡ πανοικία τοῦ ἐμοῦ σεβαστοῦ καὶ ἀξιοσεβάστου γαμβροῦ σου καὶ ὄσαι ψυχαὶ φιλόθεοι καὶ φιλόκαλοι. καὶ πείσατε τὸν αὐτόθι ζωγράφον κῦρ Νικόλαον, ἰδεῖν καὶ τοὺς ἐρημοπολίτας ἡμᾶς καὶ δουλεῦσαι τῇ Πανυμνήτῳ ἐμίσθως, θεραπευτῶς, αὐτοφιλοτίμως· ὁ γὰρ κατὰ Θήβας πρότερος Ἐπιφάνιος γυναικοκρατεῖται, ὡς πείθεται, καὶ οὐκ ἀπαντᾷ πρὸς ἡμᾶς, καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἡμετέρων προστάτιδα καλὴν κιβωτὸν οὐκ ἀναστρέφει τὸ βρωῶμα τοῦτο σιτούμενος. εἷς μὲν δὲ παρακλητικός οὗτος λόγος· δεύτερος δὲ ὁ περὶ ἐρμογλύφου· χρῆζουσι γὰρ οἱ πρόναοι τοῦ ναοῦ καὶ ὄσα ἐκ καινῆς ποιηθήσονται λίθων ξεστῶν εἰς παραστάδας, εἰς ἔδαφος. καὶ συγκόμισαί μοι, αἰδέσιμος κεφαλῆ, μετὰ σοῦ καὶ τοὺς ἀνδρας· καὶ ὁ φησι περὶ τῶν διψώντων ἢ θεία γραφή, ἐπιτρέπουσα ἄνευ ἀργυρίου βαδίζειν τούτους καὶ ἀγοράζειν ἀπὸ ζωτικῆς πηγῆς τῆς τοῦ πνεύματος. οὕτω δὲ καὶ ἡμεῖς· συνεπτυγμένων τῶν βαλαντίων ἡμῶν καὶ τὸ πάντῃ ἀνάργυρον, συγκοινωνησάτω μοι καὶ τοῦ μισθοῦ καὶ τῆς πρὸς θεὸν ἀντιχάριτος· ἔρρωσό μοι καὶ σῶζοίό μοι πρὸς εὐθυμίαν καὶ πρὸς παράκλησιν.

Translation

I. To kyr Euthymios Tornikes

The Holy Gospels say that the day of the Lord “shall come” as “a snare on all those that dwell on the face of the whole earth.”¹ We understand the day of the Lord as the eighth age² in which we will be presented to the Judge and receive penalties for our earthly doings; but we cross over³ to Him in death, and indeed [death] may dissolve the four parts of which we consist.⁴ Aging is the guarantee for death and a ripe land is ready for harvest,⁵ indeed that passage nears for me who has become old. But even though my old age is as such, with the expectation of my departure, the church of the Panhymnetos still remains unfinished. So, the following admonition by Hesiod comes to my mind, which suggests the following to the reader:

“When you are building a house, do not leave it in a rough-hewn state or a cawing crow may settle on it and croak.”⁶

I think that the name of the crow indicates the scoffers who keep on cawing, who upon seeing an unfinished work, sit on it and croak – as the poet says. But let Hesiod say! “The divine words⁷ heap blame upon those who have not completed their tasks” and it is said in private: “Here is the man who started making something, but did not finish it.” I have enough money, I, who am speaking, will even offer gold. The gold is mine, the silver is also mine, and I will give this to whomever I please.

As regards the artist, please become my helper together with your entire household, my dear reverend, and your deservedly revered in-law, together with every soul fond of God and beauty. Do persuade the painter *kyr* Nicholas who is there [i.e. at Euboea] to consider us, the citizens of the desert,⁸ and to work at the church of the Panhymnetos for a wage, carefully, and with nothing but zeal. Because Epiphanius, who was here before, is under a petticoat government at Thebes, or so I have heard, and he does not respond to me, and he isn’t coming back to our protector, the good ark,⁹ because he is fed with that food [of the woman of Thebes].¹⁰ This is my first plea [to you].

Secondly, I would like to ask for a stone-mason. For the vestibules of the church and everything that will be made from scratch need hewn stones for the doorposts and the floors. And so bring these men with you too, my respectable friend.¹¹ So that what is written in the Holy Scriptures about those thirsty men who were permitted to go and buy without money <water> from the life-giving source of the Spirit.¹² May this also happen to us. Since, we also have a small wallet and are in any case without money, confer upon me too a compensation and some sure return in the name of God.

I wish you farewell and God bless you, in happiness and with exhortation.¹³

II. Τῷ αὐτῷ Βονδίτζης

Πανιερώτατε Βονδίτζης καὶ ἐν Κυρίῳ συναδελφέ· ἐλπὶς μοι ἐστὶν εἰς Θεὸν ὑγιαίνειν τὴν σὴν ἀγιότητα καὶ μεμνησθαι καὶ τῆς ἡμῶν εὐτελείας καὶ ἀθλιότητος. ζῶμεν καὶ αὐτοί, εὐθυμοῦντες μὲν οὐδέποτε, δυσθυμοῦντες δὲ καὶ ζωὴν ἐπίλυτον διανύοντες· τὰ γὰρ κατὰ Ναύπακτον λυπηρὰ καὶ τὰ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἐπαχθῆ ὀδυνῶσι μου τὴν ζωὴν καὶ τὸ εὐθυμον ὑποτέμνουσι. τέως καὶ οὕτως ἐχόντων ἡμῶν, ἢ θεόθεν ἢ οἴκοθεν ἐπέπεσέ μοι μέγα μερίμνημα· ἢ τῆς ἐκκλησίας δηλονότι καὶ τῶν ὑπ' αὐτὴν ἀναποιήσις· καὶ πονοῦμεθα περὶ ταῦτα, καὶ καινοτομοῦμεθα περὶ ταῦτα, καὶ δεόμεθα τῶν εὐχῶν σου εἰς τὸ πληρῶσαι πάντα, καὶ οὕτω τῶν ἐν μέσῳ ἀπαλλαγῆναι. ὁ καὶ νῦν ἐποίησα ἄν, εἰ μὴ ὄνειδος ἔμελλον ἀφῆναι τοῖς μεθ' ἡμᾶς, ὡς πολυωρήσας ἐπισκοπικῶς ἐν Ναυπάκτῳ καὶ μὴ τῶν ἔσω ὡς καὶ τῶν ἐκτὸς ἐπιμελησάμενος. ὅθεν, τοῖς μετ' ἐμὲ ἐρχομένοις μὴ φθονῶν, πᾶσι χεῖρα ἐπιμελείας ἐπέβαλον· θεοῦ δὲ ἐστὶ καὶ τῆς ὑπεράγνου τούτου μητρὸς τελειῶσαι τὰ πάντα· εἰ γὰρ παντὶ προαιρουμένῳ τὸ ἀγαθὸν συνεργεῖ ὁ θεός, θαρρῶ, ὡς καὶ ἡμῖν ἀρωγὸς ἔσται ἀσχολουμένοις περὶ τὴν τοῦ ναοῦ αὐτοῦ περιποίησιν. εἰ δὲ καὶ τὸν ἐξ Εὐρίπου ἱστοριογράφον Νικόλαον ἴσχυσα ἐνταῦθα καταγαγεῖν, αὐτίκα ἔθυσα τῷ θεῷ *θυσίαν αἰνέσεως*· δέονται γὰρ ἱστορίας τὰ πτερύγια τοῦ ναοῦ καὶ οἱ νάρθηκες. σὺ δὲ διατί ριγᾶς, ὡς ἀκούω; εἰ μὲν ἀρεταίνεις, καὶ ρίγα καὶ πείνα καὶ δίψα, ἵνα τὸν βίον σου κοσμήσῃς ἐξ ἀρετῆς· εἰ δ' ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ἔχειν, οὐκ ἦν ἀρνειακὴ γοῦνα καὶ λινοῦν ἔνδυμα, ὥστε μὴ τὸν ἐμὸν ριγᾶν Νικόλαον; ἐμὲ δὲ πότε ἐνδύσης, ἐὰν σὺ γυμνητεύης; ζῆθι δὲ ὁμως καὶ ἐνδύση καὶ ζήση καὶ περισσὸν ἔξεις. χαρίζου μοι τὴν ἐκ προσευχῶν περιποίησιν.

II. To the same <bishop> of Vonitsa.¹⁴

My most holy [one] and brother in the Lord, I hope in God that your holiness is in good health and that you remember my poverty and wretchedness. I am also alive, yet never happy, rather, I am in despair and I continue to pass a sorrowful life. For the news from Nafpaktos is sad and the grievous affairs of our regions hurts my life and intercepts my joy. Lately, my situation is such that a great anxiety has arisen, either because of God's will or of my own accord. More specifically this <anxiety> concerns the church and the restoration of those [buildings] related to it. I work hard for this: I make new constructions around them and I beseech your prayers for the completion of the entire work and to be relieved from everything that is now left in the middle [= incomplete]. I would not have undertaken this, if I was not about to be reproached by our supporters, since I have spent a considerable amount of time as the metropolitan of Nafpaktos having been occupied less with internal affairs than with external ones. For this reason, and not so that I might be envied by my successors, I have undertaken this [task] with every possible diligence. However, in the end the entire work is God's and his most pure Mother's. For since God assists anyone who prefers the good, I am encouraged; may he also be my advocate when procuring what is needed for this church.

If I had managed to bring the painter Nicholas from Euripos here, I would have immediately offered God a sacrifice of praise,¹⁵ because the wings¹⁶ of the church and the narthexes are in need of paintings.

Why are you shivering, as I have heard? If it is because you wish to lead a virtuous life, then keep on shivering and be hungry and thirsty, so that you will adorn your life with virtue. If it is out of poverty, don't you have a sheepskin¹⁷ and a linen garment, so that my dear Nicholas does not shiver? How will you dress me, if you yourself are naked? But live, and you will be dressed and alive and you will have abundant [gifts]. Grant me the procuring of your prayers.

Commentary

1. Lk. 21:35.
2. That is when the final destruction of the Earth will occur according to the book of the Apocalypse.
3. The nautical vocabulary alludes to the trip by boat to the underworld.
4. That is fire, earth, water, and earth. The body is made of these four elements and detains the soul.³⁶
5. Literally: “a white land is ready for harvest.” The phrase comes from Jn. 4:35. This is a reference to the author’s own white hair due to aging.
6. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 746–47.
7. 2Esdr. 16:3.
8. See I.8.5 in this volume.
9. That is the Virgin Mary.
10. Reference to Circe.³⁷ Apokaukos allegorically refers to the Odyssey: as Odysseus’ companions did not wish to return to Argo after they had been deceived by Circe upon feasting with poisoned food, similarly the painter Epiphanius does not wish to return to the “good ark,” the Theotokos, after he has been being hosted by that wicked woman at Thebes.
11. Apokaukos had invited Tornikes to visit Nafpaktos many times, but Tornikes never made his way to his friend’s bishopric.³⁸
12. Is. 55:1. Cf. Jn. 7:37–39.
13. Indirect reference to ad Rom. 12:8. Paul in this passage says that the gifts of God are according to one’s special grace. So, “the one who exhorts” will receive special gifts on “exhortation” and the one who “sheweth mercy” may be doing that with happiness.
14. Vonitsa was among the suffragan bishoprics of the metropolis of Nafpaktos.³⁹ The city of Vonitsa was one of the important commercial ports in the region.⁴⁰
15. Cf. Ps. 49 (50):14; Ps. 106 (107):22; Ps. 115 (116):8.
16. Apokaukos promises to send Nicholas a leather overcoat.⁴¹
17. Note the use of the word “περιποίησις” in this instance and above, when referring to Apokaukos’ occupation with the renovation of the church. As Apokaukos “takes care of” (practices “περιποίησις”) the church, so likewise may Nicholas “take care of” Apokaukos with his prayers.

³⁶ Plato, *Timaeus*, 42e–43a.

³⁷ Homer, *Odyssey*, 10.210ff.

³⁸ See Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, 153–54; van Tricht 2011: 333–34 on the possible reasons for declining the invitation.

³⁹ Angold, *Church and Society*, 214–15.

⁴⁰ Veikou, *Epirus*, 41.

⁴¹ Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, no. 102, p. 236; Bee-Seferli 1971–74 no. 73a, p. 133–34; also discussed by Karpozelos 1984: 29.

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I.2.3 Author Unknown (eleventh/twelfth century)

Excerpt from a Text on *the Miracles of St. Photeine*

ALICE-MARY TALBOT

Ed.: F. Halkin, *Hagiographica inedita decem* (Turnhout, 1989), 111–25 at 119–122

MS.:¹ Florence, Biblioteca nazionale centrale, Conventi Soppressi B.I.1214 (Olivieri 50) (s. XIV), ff. 242v–249r

Other Translations: The translation below reprints with very slight modifications from A.-M. Talbot, “The Posthumous Miracles of St. Photeine,” *AB* 112 (1994), 85–104, with additional notes by Robert Ousterhout

Significance

In addition to the healing miracles, the text provides valuable evidence for the otherwise unknown church of St. Photeine in Blachernai,¹ and details regarding the work of stonemasons and painters, construction accidents, and the maintenance of large glass lamps.

The Author

The anonymous author has been assigned to the eleventh or twelfth century on the basis of the internal evidence of the text.²

Text and Context

Photeine was identified in the Byzantine tradition with the Samaritan woman in the Gospels (Jn. 4:8–26). Various accounts of her life focus on her preaching activity in Carthage, her summons to Rome by the Emperor Nero in the mid first century, and the torments she suffered for refusing to renounce her Christian faith. Most accounts state that she died in Rome, but one later version reports that she was freed from imprisonment and went to Constantinople, where she died and was buried in obscurity. Her cult was established by the tenth century.

The anonymous text describes the development of the cult of St. Photeine in Constantinople, the discovery of her relics, their power to heal eye disease, and the construction of a church which became a pilgrimage site. The translation below describes a healing miracle at the church, and some details of construction activity when the church was rebuilt by Theognostos.

¹ Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 499, was unaware of this source, unedited at the time of his compilation.

² For discussion of the evidence see Talbot and Kazhdan, “The Byzantine Cult of St. Photeine.”

Text

Ἡ εὐρεσις τῶν λειψάνων τῆς ἀγίας μεγαλομάρτυρος Φωτεινῆς καὶ μερική ταύτης θαυμάτων διήγησις.

[p. 119] 7. Τίς γὰρ οὐκ οἶδε τὸν κόμητα Ἀδριανόν, τὸ περὶ αὐτὸν γενόμενον θαῦμα τοῖς πᾶσιν ἀνακηρύτ [p. 120] τοντα; καὶ τὸν λιθοζόον αὐθις Κατακαλὸν τὸ εἰς αὐτὸν γεγονὸς ἐξηγούμενον; ὃς ἐπειδὴ ποτε κίονας ἐν ὑπερώῳ τοῦ πλησίον οἴκου ἴστατο, μόλυβδον καταχέων ἐφ' ὑγρὰν ὀπήν, τοῦ μολύβδου αὐθωρὸν τῇ παρατυχούσῃ νοτίδι ὀπίσω ἐκτιναχθέντος, τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς δεινῶς ἐπλήγη καὶ ἐκτετύφλωτο· τὰ γὰρ βλέφαρα αὐτοῦ ὥσπερ ἐξωπτημένα ἀνέστραπτο· καὶ παχυνθέντα ἀπηώρητο ἕξω καὶ σάρκες ἦσαν ἐν αἵματι περικαλύπτουσαι τὸν ταλαίπωρον· ὅθεν ἐπὶ τὰ μαρτυρικά καταφυγῶν λείψανα τῆς ἀοιδίμου καὶ μακαρίας ὡς ἀληθῶς Φωτεινῆς καὶ πρὸς ὄρθρον τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ περιθεις ἔκειτο ἐπὶ σκίμποδος, τῆς ἱερᾶς ὑπαναγινωσκομένης τῷ λαῷ βίβλου· καὶ πρὸς ὕπνον τραπείς ἔδοξεν ἰδεῖν ἐν σχήματι γυναικείῳ τινὰ σεβασμίαν ἐπιλαβομένην αὐτοῦ τῆς χειρὸς ἄγειν πρὸς ἄλλα καὶ ἄλλα τῆς πόλεως μέρη, τελευταῖον δὲ πάλιν εἰς τὸν τοιοῦνδε ναὸν εἰσαγαγοῦσαν κατ' εὐθὺ τῆς ἱστορουμένης ἀγίας εἰκόνας τῆς μεγαλομάρτυρος ἀπορρῖψαι τοῦτον· καὶ παραυτὰ τὸν ὕπνον ἀποτινάξασθαι καὶ ῥᾶον μὲν αὐτὸν γενέσθαι τὸν πόνον, ἰλαρὰν δὲ καὶ τὴν ὄρασιν, τοῦ ἐπιπορθοῦντος νέφους ἀπαλλαγεῖσιν. ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν τὸν λιθοζόον ἦκον, ὃς δὴ καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἔργον τῶν μαρμάρων καὶ τῶν ψηφίδων τούτου τοῦ νεῶ ὑπηρέτησεν, ὅπερ εἰς κάλλος νῦν παρὰ Θεογνώστου θεοφιλοῦς ἀνδρὸς μετεσκεύαστο, φέρε προσθῶμεν καὶ ἄλλο τι μικρὸν ἀφήγημα, κατ' αὐτὸν τὸν καιρὸν τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦδε δόμου ἀνοικοδομῆς γεγενημένον, παρ' ἡμῶν τε βεβαίως ἱστορηθέν, καὶ πιστωσάμενον εἰς ἀποδοχὴν μεγίστην τῆς μάρτυρος τὸν ναὸν ἀνηγέσθαι. ὅτι μὲν γὰρ τὸν περιφανῆ τοῦτον καὶ πανευλαβῆ ἄνθρωπον, τὸν Θεογνώστὸν φημι, τῶν βασιλικῶν χρημάτων ταμίαν<ν> γενόμενον ὕστερον, αὐταῖς τοῦ ἔξου τοῦ πύλαις προσεγγίσαντα καὶ παρὰ τῶν ἱατρῶν ὅλως ἀπογνωσθέντα, ἢ ἀθληφόρος ἰάσατο καὶ τούτῳ τὴν χάριν ὁ θεραπευθεὶς ἡμίψευε καὶ πάντα καταβαλὼν εὐθέως τὰ περικυκλοῦντα τὸν ναὸν πολύτιμα δώματα, πρὸς κάλλος οὕτω καὶ μέγεθος μετερρῦθμισεν αὐτόν, δηλοῖ δὲ καὶ τὸ ἔργον αὐτὸ οὕτως φιλοτίμως ἀνακαινισθέν, δηλοῦσι δὲ καὶ πολλοὶ διὰ θείων ἀποκαλύψεων μνηθέντες τοῦτο καὶ ἐξειπόντες τῷ ἰαθέντι μετὰ τὴν [p. 121] ἴασιν, ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ αὐτὸς ὁμολογεῖ διὰ ταύτης ὥσπερ Ἰεζεκίας εἰληφέναι τὴν προσθήκην τῶν ἡμερῶν δάκρυσι πολλοῖς ἐξιλοούμενος· ὃ δὴ καὶ ἐτελείωσε καλῶς καὶ μετὰ δαφιλείας τὸ χρέος ἀπέτισε.

[p. 121]

8. Φανερώτερον δὲ καὶ τελεώτερον ἐδείχθη τοῦτο, ἀφ' ὧν καὶ πρὸς αὐτῶ τῷ ἔργῳ τῆς ἀνοικοδομῆς ἐθαυματουργήσεν ἡ περιδοξος μεγάλη τε καὶ ἐξαισία· ἄρτι μὲν γὰρ εἰς ὕψος ἐφ' ὅπερ νῦν διαμένουσι, τῶν τοῦ ναοῦ τοίχων φθασάντων, ἔφηβος σκάφην ἐπιφερόμενος πεπληρωμένην τιτάνου πρὸς ἐκεῖνο τὸ μέρος ἤγετο ἄνωθεν, πρὸς ὅπερ ἡ τῆς μεγαλομάρτυρος θεία εἰκὼν ἴδρυται· προσκόψας δὲ οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως ἐπιτρέχων τὸν ποῦν ἢ δειλιάσας ὡς φησι τὸ πολλοστὸν ὕψος ἐκεῖνο καὶ ἀχανές, σὺν αὐτῇ τῇ σκάφῃ ἀθρόον ἄνωθεν κατηνέχθη πρὸς τοῦδαφος· τὸ δὲ οὐ γῆ ἦν, ὅπως αὐτὸν διαπεφωνηκότα καὶ δέξαιτο, ἀλλ' ὅλον μαρμάρους ὑπέστρωτο ὄρθιον ἰσταμένοις, μεληδὸν τοῦτον δίκην μαχαίρας ὀφείλουσι κατασπαθίσαι· ὁ δὲ – ὦ τοῦ θαύματος – ὥσπερ ἐπὶ μαλακοῖς ἄνθεσιν καταπεσῶν, ζῶν ὠρᾶτο καὶ ἔμπνους καὶ περιπατῶν καὶ ἀλλόμενος καὶ μηδὲν βλαβεῖς ὅλως, αὐτῆς εἰς μικρὰ καὶ λεπτὰ

Translation

The Discovery of the Relics of the Holy Great Martyr Photeine and a Partial Account of Her Miracles

[p. 119] 7. For who does not know the *komes* Adrian who declared to all the miracle which happened [p. 120] to him? And what about the stone-mason Katakalos, who told what happened to him? Once when he was setting up columns on the upper floor of the nearby building, and was pouring lead into a wet hole, the lead was suddenly splashed backwards by the presence of moisture, and he suffered terrible damage to his eyes and was blinded. For his eyeballs, as if they had been thoroughly baked, rolled back and, swelling up, hung out <of their sockets> and pieces of flesh covered the man with blood. Wherefore he had recourse to the martyrial relics of the celebrated and blessed Photeine, who is truly <named the giver of light>, and after placing them on his eyes at the matins service, he lay on a pallet, while the holy Bible was being read to the people. And after falling asleep, he seemed to see a venerable figure in female form who took his hand to lead him to different parts of the city, and finally brought him back to this church and left him directly opposite the painted holy icon of the great martyr.¹ And straightaway he was aroused from sleep, and his suffering was eased and his eyesight became clear as it was freed from the destructive cloudiness.

But since I have mentioned this stone-mason, who was responsible for setting the marble and mosaic in this church, which has now been embellished by Theognostos who is beloved of God, let me add another short story, which took place at the very time of the construction of this holy building, which I have recorded with certainty, and which confirms that the church was erected as a great repository for <the relics of> the martyr. For when this distinguished and extremely pious man, I mean Theognostos, who later became treasurer of the imperial monies, was approaching the very gates of Hades and the doctors totally despaired <of his life>, he was healed by the victorious <martyr>. And in gratitude for his cure <Theognostos> immediately tore down all the costly buildings surrounding the church, and rebuilt them in a more beautiful and larger form. And the proof of <this miracle> is the munificent work of restoration itself, as well as the numerous individuals who learned about this through divine revelation and declared it to the healed man after his cure; moreover he himself confesses that through her, just like Hezekiah, he received an additional number of days <of his life>, after beseeching <the Lord> with many tears. And indeed he completed the <work> in fine fashion, and lavishly repaid his debt.

[p. 121]

8. And this was revealed even more clearly and perfectly by the great and extraordinary miracles which the illustrious <martyr> performed during this very work of construction. For just as the walls of the church reached the height which they retain today, a young man carrying a trough full of lime was bringing it down to <the place> where the holy image of the great martyr is located.² And somehow he stumbled, either missing his step or taking fright, as one says, at the immense and vast height, and he suddenly fell down to the floor with his trough. And the <floor> was not of earth, such as might have

διαθραυσθείσης τῆς σκάφης. τὸ δ' αὐτὸ καὶ περὶ τοὺς ζωγράφους μικρὸν ὕστερον συμβέβηκεν· εἶχε μὲν γὰρ αὐτοὺς ἄνω τὸ στέγος τῆ τέχνη τοῦτο καθωραΐζοντας· εἶτα περιθραυσθέντος τοῦ ξύλου ἐφ' ᾧ τὸ βάρος τῆς κλίμακος ὅλης ὑπεστηρίζετο – ἐκ πολλῶν δὲ ἡ κλίμαξ αὕτη συνέκειτο εὐφυῶς ξύλων – πάντα αἰφνιδίως ἤγετο καταφερῆ σὺν αὐτοῖς τεχνίταις· καὶ μικροῦ δεῖν ἐξεκεντήθησαν τούτοις καὶ συνετρίβησαν, εἰ μὴ παρῆν ὁ βοηθὸς εὐθύς, ἥτις καὶ πρὶν τὸν νέον ἔσωσεν, καὶ θάπτον ἢ λόγος πρὸς ἓνα σμικρότατον ἦλον ἐπερείασα πάντα, ὅλην ἀνεχαίτισε τὴν ὀρμὴν καὶ διασεσώκει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους.

Μετ' ὀλίγον καὶ ἄλλον ἐπράχθη λόγου καὶ μνήμης ἄξιον, δεικνυούσης τῆς χάριτος, ὅτι δεκτὰ παρὰ κυρίῳ πάνθ' ὅσα κατὰ δύναμιν αὐτῷ τὴν ἡμετέραν εἰσενέγκωμεν, καὶ οὐ παρατραπήσεται οὔτε μὴ ἐκκενωθήσεται ἢ ἐπὶ τούτοις ἀποκειμένη μισθαποδοσία τοῖς [p. 122] εἰσενέγκασιν· ὡς γὰρ ἀνθρώπους ὁ κύριος ἐκ θανάτων ἐρρύσατο καὶ διὰ τούτων ἔδειξε τὸ ἔργον ἀποδεξάμενος, οὕτως δὴ καὶ τῷ μέλλοντι σημείῳ ῥηθήσεσθαι τὴν τοῦ ἐλέους αὐτοῦ διαμονὴν καθυπέδειξεν· ἔχει δὲ οὕτως. κρατῆρ ὑφήπτετο μέγιστος κατέναντι τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου ἐν τῇ ἐπὶ τοῦ τέμβ<λ>ου ἱστορουμένη τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν οἰκονομία τοῦ κατὰ σταυρὸν πάθους, ὅπερ εἰς λύτρον ἡμῶν τῶν αἰχμαλώτων ὑπέστη ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλὸς ὁ τιθεὶς τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων. τοῦτον οὖν τὸν κρατῆρὰ ποτε διὰ τῆς σχοίνου ἀνεῖλκεν ὁ ἱερεὺς· οὕτω δὲ συμβάν, ἐκ τῶ<ν> χειρῶν αὐτοῦ διεκδραμόντος τοῦ καλωδίου, ὁ κρατῆρ ἀνατιναχθεὶς μετὰ τοῦ βάσταγος πρὸς τὴν γῆν ἔρριπτο. καὶ ἦν ἰδεῖν πρᾶγμα ξένον οἰκονομούμενον· ὁ μὲν γὰρ ὑέλινος ὦν οὐ διέθραυστο καὶ τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ ἔλαιον ὅλον ἦν ἐν αὐτῷ, μηδὲ μικρᾶς ῥανίδος ἀποχυθείσης ἕξω· τὸ τε φῶς οὐ κατέσβεστο καὶ ὁ βάσταξ εὐθέως καὶ ὁμαλῶς τῶν ὠτίων ἐκπεπηδηκῶς ἄνωθεν, ὥσπερ ἐπικάλυμα περιέσκεπε τὸν κρατῆρα.

received him <gently?> after he perished, but it was completely strewn with marble slabs which were standing on edge and were likely to tear him limb from limb like a knife. But he – oh, what a miracle! – falling as if on soft flowers, could be seen alive and breathing and walking and leaping around and in no way injured, although the trough was smashed into tiny pieces.

The same thing happened a short while later to the painters. For they were embellishing the ceiling with their art, when the plank of wood on which the weight of the entire ladder was supported broke – and this ladder was skilfully made of many pieces of wood – and suddenly collapsed, bringing the artisans down with it.³ And surely they would have been stabbed by these <pieces of wood> and crushed to death, if help had not immediately arrived, <in the form of> the woman who had previously saved the young man, and, more quickly than words can tell, she caught everything on a tiny nail, checked the collapse and saved the men.

Shortly thereafter she performed another <miracle>, worthy of description and commemoration, as grace reveals that “the Lord receives”⁴ everything that we offer to Him in accordance with our ability, and that the reward that lies in store for those who make their offering is neither turned aside nor emptied out. For just as the Lord saved men from death and thus showed that He accepted their work, so did He show by the following miracle that His continuing mercy will be proclaimed.

The story is as follows: An enormous lamp was burning opposite the altar before the Crucifixion of our Savior which was painted on the *templon*/sanctuary barrier,⁵ <the image> of the passion on the Cross which “the good shepherd who gives his life for the sheep”⁶ endured for the redemption of us who are imprisoned <by the devil>. On one occasion, it so happened that when the priest was lifting this lamp up by the rope, the cord slipped from his hands, and the lamp swung back and forth and fell to the ground together with its rope. And then one could observe a curious manifestation <of divine providence>; for although the vessel was of glass, it was not broken and all the oil remained in it, with not even a drop being spilled. Nor was the flame extinguished, and the rope, which sped quickly and smoothly through the handles <of the lamp>, <drifted down> from above and covered the lamp like a veil.

Commentary

1. The location of this icon is unclear. It may have been hung on the lateral walls of the church or perhaps on one of the piers of the *templon*.
 2. It is unclear here whether the hagiographer is referring to the same icon of Photeine as in Chapter 7 or to an image on the wall. The latter seems more likely, since it would be logical for the young workman to be carrying lime plaster to prepare a surface for fresco or mosaic decoration rather than to be carrying it to the *templon* area. Also since he fell from a great height, he must have been on a scaffolding near a wall or ceiling, from which he was descending.
 3. The reference may be to temporary wooden scaffolding rather than a simple ladder.
 4. Cf. Prov. 15:28a.
 5. The *templon* was a barrier separating the sanctuary of the church from the nave.
 6. Jn. 10:11.
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I.2.4 Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos (before 1256?–c.1335?)

A Miracle about Mosaicists

ALEXANDER ALEXAKIS (INTRODUCTION, TEXT, TRANSLATION,
AND COMMENTARY) AND ALICE-MARY TALBOT (TRANSLATION)

Ed.: Alexander Alexakis. Under preparation based on the manuscripts listed below.

Previous edition: A. Pamperis, *Λόγος διαλαμβάνων τὰ περὶ τῆς συστάσεως τοῦ σεβασμίου οἴκου τῆς ὑπεραγίας Δεσποίνης ἡμῶν Θεοτόκου τῆς ἀειζώου πηγῆς· ἔτι δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ τελεσθέντων ὑπερφυῶς θαυμάτων κατὰ μέρος διήγησιν, ἀφ' οὗ συνέστη μέχρι τῆς σήμερον, συγγραφεῖς παρὰ Νικηφόρου Καλλιῆστου τοῦ Ξανθοπούλου* (Leipzig, 1802). It is based either on a so far unknown manuscript or on a tacit combination of readings from both B and W. On account of its numerous misprints and misreadings it will be ignored.

MSS.:¹ A Athens, EBE, Graecus 2123 (s. XVIII), ff. 165r–228v

B Bucharest, Bibliothecae Academiae Romanae, 0181 (Litzica 632, a. 1707), ff. 102r–162v

V Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 698 (olim 630) (s. XIV/XV), ff. 156r–200v

W Vienna, ÖNB, Historicus gr. 103 (s. XIV), ff. 17r–144v

W₁ Vienna, ÖNB, Historicus gr. 8 (a. 1320), ff. 426r–428r

Other Translations: None

Significance

The passage comes from a reworked version of the tenth-century account of miracles of the healing shrine of the Lifegiving Source (*Zoodochos Pege*). It offers a few pieces of information concerning some technical aspects of Byzantine mosaic decoration and is also a testimony to the presence of an image of the Pentecost in the Church of the Theotokos of Pege.

The Author

On Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, see A. Alexakis, I.8.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos was intensely devoted to the healing shrine of the Lifegiving Source (*Zoodochos Pege*), and compiled a lengthy collection of the miraculous cures performed there. The account of the *Miracles* is discussed in detail by Alexander

¹ Consulted.

Alexakis later in this volume.² In brief, the majority of this account is an expanded re-writing of the tenth-century anonymous miracle collection, providing much additional information (made up out of whole cloth) on the patients who were cured, and the method of their healing. The final section of his account describes the miracles that occurred during the reign of Andronikos II (r.1282–1328), after the revival of the shrine following the recovery of Constantinople by the Byzantines in 1261. This provides fascinating information on pilgrims to the shrine in the Palaiologan period, and illustrates Xanthopoulos' intense interest in medicine and the aetiology of disease.

The passage below recounts a miracle from the tenth-century collection that Xanthopoulos reworked for his *Logos*.³ It seems that the mosaic decoration had been partially destroyed by the earthquake of 869, which also contributed to the collapse of the dome of the church of the Theotokos of Pege. Basil I the Macedonian (r.867–886) originally thought of rebuilding the whole church from its foundations but was eventually persuaded to simply restore the damaged parts. The miracle recounts the intervention of the Virgin Mary, who supported the collapsing scaffolding that allowed access to the upper parts of the inner walls. The accident occurred while the painters/mosaicists were composing the image of the Pentecost and, miraculously, no one was injured. The miracle was reported by one of the painters, who had the gift of clairvoyance.

2 For a detailed analysis of Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos' work see A. Alexakis, I.8.2 in this volume.

3 For the narrative on which Xanthopoulos based this miracle see *Anonymous Miracles of the Pege*, ed. and transl. A.-M. Talbot, p. 236–39.

Text

Θαῦμα ια΄

Τὸν δὲ δὴ νεῶν οὕτω κατασεισθέντα καὶ διερρηκόμενα, τῷ ἐκ Μακεδόνων Βασιλείῳ πρὸς βουλῆς γίνεται, (οὗτος γὰρ τηνικάδε τὰ τῆς βασιλείας σκῆπτρα διεχειρίζετο), ἐξ αὐτῶν κρηπίδων ἀνατρέψαι καὶ παραλύσαι τὸ τέμενος πρὸς τὸ μείζον τε καὶ ἀσφαλέστατον μετασκευασαμένῳ ἐς φιλοτιμίαν βασιλεῖ πρέπουσαν ἀνεγεῖραι αὐτῆς. πρὸς τινῶν δὲ τῆς ὁρμῆς ἀναχαιτισθεῖς, καινίζει μὲν ἅπαν τὸ κατεσπαραγμένον καὶ ἀνορθοῖ, τὸ δὲ ἡμισφαίριον, τέχνη λιθοδόμων ἐναρμοσάμενος, ἐς τὸν νῦν ὀρώμενον μετήνεγκε κόσμον τὸ ἀσφαλές αὐτῷ πρυτανεύσας. ἐπεὶ δὲ τὰ τῆς οἰκοδομῆς αὐτοῖς εἰς πέρας ἐγένετο, καὶ βραχὺ τοῦ χρόνου διαλιπόντος, ὡς ἐκτακῆναι μὲν τὸ ὑγρὸν καὶ ἀπολωφῆσαι ἐν ἐπιτηδείῳ δὲ γενέσθαι καὶ τὸν ἔσωθεν διὰ λεπτῶν ψηφίδων κόσμον εἰσδέξασθαι, κλίμακας ἐξ ἐδάφους μέχρις ἐς τὴν ὑπερβολὴν σανίσιν ἄλλαις ἀναλόγως ἐνθέμενοι, ὡς ἂν τοῖς ἱστορεῖν εἰθισμένοις εὐέφοδον εἴη ἐντεῦθεν χρώμασι καὶ χρυσῷ κατακεχυμένῳ τὸ ἐνδόν ἀναπληροῦν καὶ οὕτως ἐναβρύνειν τὸ τέμενος, ὕλη παντοῖα καὶ τέχνη ὠραίζόμενον. τῆς ἐορτῆς ἤδη ἐκτυπώτερον διασκευαζομένης τῆς καθόδου τοῦ Πνεύματος καὶ ταῖς ποικίλαις ἐξαλλαγαῖς τῶν ἐν ταῖς ψηφίσι χρωμάτων σεμνυνομένης, τηνικαῦτα τὰ βάθρα τῶν στύλων, ἀπαγορεύσαντα πρὸς τῶν ὑπερκειμένων τὸ μέγεθος, χαλῶντα τὸ ἔντονον, διελύοντο, ἢ δ' ἐπισκευὴ ἐκείνη πανταχόθι διαρραγεῖσα πρὸς τὰ κάτω ἠπείγετο. οἱ γὰρ μὴ εἰκονιστὰ καὶ ζωγράφοι καὶ ὄση περὶ ταῦτα διεπετόνητο χεῖρ ἀθρόον ὀρῶντες ἐπιστάντα τὸν ἄφυκτον κίνδυνον, πάντα θέμενοι ἐν δευτέρῳ, πρὸς τὴν μόνην ὑπολελειμμένην ἐλπίδα, τὴν Θεομήτορα, γίνονται καὶ ἐπεὶ τὸ «Πάναγνε Θεοτόκε βοήθησον» οὕτως ἰμῶ γλώττη πάντες ἐφώνησαν, θερμὰ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν καὶ δάκρυα προϊέμενοι, εἷς τῶν τοιούτων, ᾧ θέμις ἦν τὰ τοιαῦτα ὀρᾶν, ὑπερκύψας τοῖς κάτω, αὐτὴν, ὡς εἶχε σχήματος, ἔώρα τὴν Θεομήτορα ἀναρριχωμένην τοῦ ἄμβωνος καί, ἐς τὴν ὑπερβολὴν αὐτοῦ διαβάσαν, χερσὶν ἐς μῆκος ἐκτεταμέναις τὸ καταφερόμενον ἐκεῖνο σύμπαν τῶν κλιμάκων διαβαστάζειν ἀνέχουσαν καὶ ἡρέμα ἐνδιδοῦσαν τῷ βάρει, μὴ αἴφνης ἔωσαν καταρραγεῖν καὶ συγκαταρράξει τὸ ἐποχούμενον. καὶ τοῦτο ἦν ὀρᾶν οὐκ ἀνιδρωτὶ διενεργουμένην, ἕως οὗ, ὡς ἐφ' ὀμαλοῦ καὶ λείου καὶ οἰονεῖ τινος μαλακῆς πῶας κατακλιθέντας τῷ ἐδάφει τοὺς ἀνδρας παρέπεμψε, μηδενὸς καθ' οἰονδήποτε τῶν μελῶν πείραν ἐγνωκότος τοῦ θλίβοντος, καὶ ταῦτα τηλικούτου γεγονότος συμπτώματος. ἔτι γὰρ ἐκεῖνοις τὴν ἐπικουρίαν ἐκκαλουμένοις παρῆν καὶ τὸ κατάρροπον ἀνεκούφιζε, νοῦ ταχύτερον ἐπιφθάνουσα. οὕτως αἰεὶ καὶ πᾶσι μὲν δεομένοις ἐπιφθάνει τὴν αἴτησιν πανταχόθι μάλιστα δὲ τῷ οἴκῳ ταύτης ἐπιφοιτᾷ, ὥσπερ ἐπαγαλλομένη τῷ χώρῳ, ὅθεν καὶ ἡ τῶν θαυμάτων διαρρέει πλημμύρα ἐκάστοτε.

Translation

Miracle 11

When the church was thus damaged and shaken,¹ Basil the Macedonian (for he held the imperial scepter at that time)² wanted to tear it [the church] down to its foundations, and raze the precinct, and rebuild the church as a larger and more stable structure with a lavishness appropriate for an emperor. But he was checked in his zeal by certain individuals, and so he renewed and restored all the damaged portions. He also rebuilt the dome; fixing it with the skill of masons, he transformed it to the ornate beauty seen today, also assuring the stability of the structure. And when this construction work was completed, after a short interval had passed, so that the moisture <in the mortar> had evaporated and dried, and it was in proper condition to receive its interior decoration with fine mosaics,³ they set up scaffolding with wooden planks as was appropriate from the floor to the ceiling,⁴ to provide access for the painters to fill the blank spaces with colors and molten gold, and thus beautify the church, embellished with every sort of material and art. When the rough sketches for <the image of> the Descent of the Holy Spirit⁵ were already done, and it was being prepared with manifold varieties of colored mosaic tesserae, the supports of the uprights <of the scaffolding> gave way under the weight of the load, as their strength failed and collapsed, and the scaffolding shattered in all directions and tumbled down. And the artists and painters and everyone who was working on these <mosaics> suddenly saw the unavoidable impending danger and, setting all else aside, turned to the Mother of God, their sole remaining hope. And when they all cried out with one voice, “All-pure Mother of God, help us,” and shed hot tears from their eyes, one of them, to whom it was allowed to see such things, while bending over to look down, saw the Mother of God herself in her usual appearance, scrambling up on to the ambo;⁶ and climbing to its very top, with her hands stretched out, she managed to support all the collapsing scaffolding and gradually let it down, so as not to let go of it suddenly, so that it would crash in pieces and bring down with it the men standing there. And he could see her doing this not without effort, until she conveyed the men to the floor, as if they were lying on a level and smooth place, as if it were on soft grass, with none of them suffering any injury to his limbs, even though they fell from such a height. For while they were still calling for help, [the Virgin] arrived and supported the collapsing scaffolding, coming more quickly than thought. And thus she always comes everywhere to all who call upon her, but she makes her residence especially in this church, as if taking pleasure in the place, wherefore her miracles always flow abundantly.

Commentary

1. As a result of the earthquake that occurred on Sunday January 9, 869.⁴
2. Basil I (r.867–886) founder of the Macedonian dynasty. See *PmbZ* 2 no. 20837.
3. There are few references in written sources for the process of laying mosaic. Much more has been gleaned from archaeological inspection and analysis of extant mosaics.⁵
4. Cf. Prokopios, *On Buildings*, I.x.13.
5. The scene of the Pentecost (based on Act. 2:13) is a rather complex one including the twelve Apostles (usually seated) and the Holy Spirit in the form of tongues of flame descending upon them from the heavens. Its place varies from church to church and from period to period. For example, in the eleventh-century Nea Moni on Chios, it covers the largest part of the barrel vault in the south section of the inner narthex.⁶ In the *Katholikon* of Hosios Loukas in mainland Greece (also from the eleventh century), the mosaic of the Pentecost occupies the entire shallow dome above the sanctuary.⁷
6. For the ambo in general see *ODB*, s.v. The fact that the Virgin Mary was said to be standing on top of the ambo lends some support to the possibility that the painters were working on the surface of the vault above the sanctuary.

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4 See Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 224, 226–27; The Continuator of Theophanes, *Life of Basil I*, 80.5–8.

5 For all pertinent issues see Mouriki 1985: 94–108.

6 Mouriki 1985: 89.

7 Chatzidakis 1997: 19; Mouriki 1985: 89–90, 189–91.

I.2.5

St. Neophytos the Recluse on Visual Art

ANNEMARIE WEYL CARR

Significance

Even when he was not addressing particular artifacts, the Cypriot holy man Neophytos the Recluse (1134–1219?) referred often to both art and images in his copious writings. Such passages bring out aspects of his attitude to icons, painters, and art patronage that the well-known frescoes in his hermitage do not.

Introduction

Art historians encounter Neophytos the Recluse largely through the frescoes of his cave-hermitage or Enkleistra near Tala in the Paphos District.¹ Two major fresco campaigns were completed there during Neophytos' life. Though radically different in style, they are both notable for including portraits of Neophytos himself, and for doing so in iconographic contexts that "canonize" him remarkably overtly. They raise vivid questions about the degree and nature of the holy man's own participation in their conception, design, and installation. These matters can only be addressed by speculation. Neophytos' own copious writings, however, offer another avenue of insight into his interest in and level of engagement with art. Neophytos wrote extensively for his monastic community, and icons do run as a theme through his thoughts. One learns from his words that he understood the procedures by which panel-painted icons were produced, respected painters for both their technical skill and their power of persuasion, found the icon painter's craft to be richly suggestive metaphorically for varied aspects of the monastic endeavor, and regarded icons as integral to religious practice.

Though Neophytos' Enkleistra is famous above all for its frescoes, it is primarily the painter on panels who figures in his texts. This is intriguing both because it is precisely in the last decades of his life that panel-painted icons begin to survive in appreciable numbers in either Cyprus itself or the larger Byzantine world, and because the greatest of the frescoists who worked in the Enkleistra seems likely to have been also – and perhaps primarily – a master panel painter. This is Theodore Apeudes, who signed the murals in Neophytos' cell and the bema of his church in 1183, and to whom two superb icons owned by Neophytos are attributed.²

¹ See A. W. Carr, I.3.5 in this volume.

² Papageorghiou 1992, pll. 8, 9.

Though it casts no light on Neophytos' own modes of engagement with the frescoes in the Enkleistra, or on the radical contrast in taste between the two campaigns, his monastic *typikon* does make clear his pride in the Enkleistra's church and in the trove of *ars sacra* that he had assembled for it. Nonetheless, the *typikon* is also emphatic about the moral, financial, and administrative threats posed by the upkeep and expansion of this collection, and Neophytos explicitly forbids the community to do any fund-raising for construction or art acquisition. He could, in fact, be scathing about the economics of art, decrying the way that funds devoted to art emerged from deep and exploitative social inequalities, and that the artifacts themselves were so often self-aggrandizing gestures by patrons lacking either vision or the will to address social injustice. Neophytos' monastic life had begun at the splendidly appointed monastery of St. John Chrysostom near Koutsovendis, where the arrogant portrait of a notoriously cruel and authoritarian patron was relentlessly prominent.³ One wonders whether this lent particular vitriol to his critiques.

The excerpts from Neophytos' writings that follow supplement the texts already included later in this volume. Two are preserved in manuscripts produced for the Enkleistra by the same scribe, the *taboullarios* Basil, who produced the fair copy of Neophytos' *typikon*, now Edinburgh, University Library, ms. 224, in 1214;⁴ Paris, BnF, Suppl. Gr. 1317, and Paris, BnF, Coislin Gr. 287. The third survives in cod. 2 in the Leimonos Monastery on the island of Lesbos.

Text A | First Book of Catecheseis, Prologue

Ed.: Neophytos the Recluse, St., “Βίβλος τῶν Κατηχήσεων,” ed. V. K. Katsaros, in *Αγίου Νεοφύτου του εγκλείστου Συγγράμματα*, eds. N. Gr. Zacharopoulos, I. D. Karavidopoulos, C. K. Oikonomou, nd D. G. Tsames, vol. 2 (Paphos, 1999), 196, section 4

MS.:⁵ Paris, BnF, suppl. gr. 1317 (s. XIII), f. 9v⁶

Other Translations: None

Significance

Here Neophytos draws on icon painting, in which progression toward the perfection of a model is at the same time a regression to an original that lies behind it. He sees the work of the icon painter as a metaphor for the work of the ascetic monk, who takes as his model the person of his hegumen, and by moving forward along the path of perfecting his replica of the hegumen in fact moves backward toward the divine prototype, on which the

³ See II.4.10.

⁴ Papageorghiou 1992: 115–19, cat. 18.

⁵ Not consulted.

⁶ See Constantinides and Browning 1993: 96–98, cat. 13.

hegumen draws. For another way in which Neophytos takes the work of the painter as a metaphor for monastic endeavor, see section 23 of the *Typikon*.⁷

The Author

See Introduction.

Text and Context

Preserved in this manuscript only, the *Book of Catecheseis* was written at the request of Neophytos' brother John, hegumen of the monastery of St. John Chrysostom near Koutsovendis. John's accession to the heguminate in 1198 provides a *terminus post quem* for the book, placing it among Neophytos' late works; the reference to it in his *typikon* of 1214 furnishes a *terminus ante*. It contains sermons of religious instruction for the monks of his and John's communities, compiled from Neophytos' own weekly sermons at the Enkleistra.⁸ There are 55 sermons in all, gathered in two books, following the Sundays and major feasts of the religious calendar for the full year. Though titled with the name of the Sunday in the church calendar, they take as their subject the themes of monastic life: about thanksgiving, about repentance, about monastic life, about fasting, and about spiritual work.⁹ The quotation below comes from the preface to the book, addressed personally to John himself. The *Catecheseis* are composed for him, but pass through him for the monks, who take him as their model. This monastic emulation invites analogy with icon painting. With characteristic sharpness, though, Neophytos notes that diligence is elusive,¹⁰ and in closing the volume he urges John that instruction must be relentless.

7 St. Neophytos the Recluse, "Τυπική Διαθήκη," 2: 55, transl. Galatariotou, p. 45; Coureas 2003: 156.

8 Galatariotou, 1991: 119–20 cites a number of cases in the catecheseis in which Neophytos speaks of addressing the monks on Sunday or of continuing a theme on the next Sunday. On the processes involved in the compilation of spoken sermons, and their implications for dating the texts see V. K. Katsaros, "Prologue," in *Neophytos the Recluse, St.*, "Βίβλος τῶν Κατηχήσεων," 82–84.

9 The themes are listed along with the titles in *ibid.*, 88–89.

10 Galatariotou, 1991: 163–64 cites passages throughout the text showing Neophytos' concern that no one will pay attention to or benefit from his words.

Text

Βλέπουσι γὰρ οἱ ἀρχόμενοι τὰς πράξεις τοῦ ἀρχηγοῦ, ὡς ὁ ζωγράφος εἰκόνος ἀρχέτυπον πρόσωπον, καὶ ὅτε ἰθύνει καὶ διεξάγει κατὰ Θεὸν τὸν ἅπαντα βίον αὐτοῦ, μόλις τοῦτον μιμοῦνται ὀλίγοι τινές, ἄλλοι δὲ τυχὸν καὶ βδελύσσονται τὴν αὐτοῦ ἀρετὴν, κατὰ τὸ “βδέλυγμα ἀμαρτωλῶν θεοσέβεια”¹ τινὲς δὲ πάλιν λογίζονται αὐτὸν φύσει, οὐ βίᾳ τὴν ἀρετὴν κατορθοῦντα. ἔαν δὲ τοῦ καλοῦ μικρὸν τι διαμάρτη ὁ ἀρχηγός, τότε λοιπὸν, προφάσεως εὐλόγου δραξάμενοι ἀφορμὴν, καθόλου μιμοῦνται αὐτὸν πάντη ἐπιμελῶς.

Translation

For the novices look at the deeds of the leader, the way the painter of an icon looks at the archetypal figure, and since he corrects and develops his whole life according to God, just a few of the novices imitate him; others abhor the leader’s virtue, since “godliness is an abomination to a sinner,”¹ while some think that he corrects virtue not by force, but by nature. But if the leader misses the good in some little way, then indeed, seizing the occasion, they imitate him completely and persistently.

Commentary

1. From Eccl. 1:25: ἐν θησαυροῖς σοφίας παραβολὴ ἐπιστήμης, βδέλυγμα δὲ ἀμαρτωλῶν θεοσέβεια: the parables of knowledge are in the treasures of wisdom: but godliness is an abomination to a sinner.
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Text B | Ten Sermons on the Commandments of Christ: Fifth Sermon, on the Five Senses

Ed.: Neophytos the Recluse, St., “Δέκα Λόγοι περὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐντολῶν,” ed.

I. E. Stephanes, in *Αγίου Νεοφύτου του εγκλειστού Συγγράμματα*, eds. N. Gr. Zacharopoulos, I. D. Karavidopoulos, C. K. Oikonomou, nd D. G. Tsames, vol. 1 (Paphos, 1996), 83–84

MS.:¹¹ Paris, BnF, Coislin gr. 287 (s. XIII), ff. 62r–v¹²

Other Translations: C. Galatariotou, *The Making of a Saint: The Life, Times, and Sanctification of Neophytos the Recluse* (Cambridge, 1991), 190–91.

Significance

It is valuable to see how utterly unsentimental Neophytos is about the patronage and dedication of works of art. He is under no illusion about the sanctity of the process, and confers respect upon holy originals – relics, or painters’ archetypes – or upon manual skill, but not upon sensuously appealing things.

The Author

See Introduction.

Text and Context

Neophytos’ *Ten Sermons on the Commandments of Christ*, composed in 1175–76, are his earliest preserved writings, and seem to have been among the more tormented, for he says that he started them and then broke off in anxiety, resuming only when urged to, most probably by his brother, John.¹³ His initial aim of gathering the commandments of Christ in a small book shifted, and the purpose of the finished sermons was to be read in gatherings of the monks. Inspired by Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, they take up themes from Christ’s preaching, in this case the five senses of the body. The dominant message is set early. Neophytos quotes Mt. 5: 28 that “whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” and then summons his audience to see the words: he does not say that the one who looks at a woman has committed fornication, but the one who has looked with lust. Good in themselves, then, the senses are nonetheless portals through which lust can enter and corrupt us. In the passage below, the commandment of choice is Mt. 5:20, and the senses become avenues of social injustice.

¹¹ Not consulted.

¹² Constantinides and Browning 1993: 99–103, cat. 14.

¹³ Tsiknopoullos’ suggestion (1967: 346), that it was his brother John who asked him, is generally accepted.

Text

‘Ο γὰρ Χριστὸς “οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθῃτε” φησὶν “εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν, ἐὰν μὴ περισσεύσῃ ἡ δικαιοσύνη ὑμῶν”;¹ σὺ δὲ μᾶλλον περισσεύεις ἀδικίαν κλέπτων καὶ ἀρπάζων καὶ πλεονεκτῶν. καὶ ἴσως ἐκ τούτων διανέμοις μικροὺς ὀβολοὺς ἢ κοσμίξεις εἰκόνα ἢ ναὸν ἀνεγείρεις τοῦ ἁγίου τοῦ δεῖνος καὶ φαντάζεσαι ὡς μέγα τι κατορθώσας, καὶ τὴν ἁγίαν εἰκόνα, ἣν ἐκόσμησας ἐκ πλεονεξίας, ἐρρύπωσας μᾶλλον καὶ οὐκ ἐκόσμησας περιθεὶς αὐτῇ τὰ ἐκ πλεονεξίας ἀρπάγματα. καὶ λέγει πρὸς σέ ὃν δῆθεν ἐκόσμησας ἅγιος· ἵνατί “ὑπέλαβες ἀνομίαν, ὅτι ἔσομαί σοι ὅμοιος;”² προσαγωγαί γὰρ κλεπτῶν καὶ πλεονεκτῶν “βδέλυγμα Κυρίῳ· καὶ γὰρ παρανόμως προσφέρουσιν αὐτάς”³ “τίμα δὲ τὸν Κύριον ἀπὸ σῶν δικαίων πόνων καὶ ἀπάρχου αὐτῶ ἀπὸ σῶν καρπῶν δικαιοσύνης”⁴ ἐγὼ γὰρ τῆ τῶν οὐρανῶν οἰκῶ βασιλεία, οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχω τῶν σῶν...

Translation

For Christ says “you will not enter into the kingdom if you do not serve justice,”¹ for you serve rather the injustice of thieves and plunderers and the greedy. And perhaps, out of all this, you might give away a few obols, or adorn an icon, or build a church for this or that saint, and imagine that you’ve done something wonderful. But the holy icon that you’ve embellished out of your greed – you’ve sullied rather than beautified it by tarding it up in your greedy loot. And the saint you gave supposed enhancements to will say to you: “Why ‘sin by thinking that I am like you?’² The offerings of thieves and the greedy are ‘an abomination of the Lord: for they are unlawfully made.’³ ‘Honor the Lord from your just efforts and offer as first-fruits to him the fruits of justice.’⁴ I, living as I do in the kingdom of heaven, have no need of your things.”

Commentary

1. Mt. 5:20: λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι ἐὰν μὴ περισσεύσῃ ὑμῶν ἡ δικαιοσύνη πλεῖον τῶν γραμματέων καὶ Φαρισαίων, οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθῃτε εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν: “For I say unto you, That except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”
 2. Ps. 49 (50): 21: ταῦτα ἐποίησας, καὶ ἐσίγησα· ὑπέλαβες ἀνομίαν, ὅτι ἔσομαί σοι ὅμοιος· ἐλέγξω σε καὶ παραστήσω κατὰ πρόσωπόν σου τὰς ἀμαρτίας σου: “These *things* hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether *such an one* as thyself: *but* I will reprove thee, and set *them* in order before thine eyes.”
 3. Prov. 21: 27: θυσία ἀσεβῶν βδέλυγμα Κυρίῳ, καὶ γὰρ παρανόμως προσφέρουσιν αὐτάς: “The sacrifices of the ungodly are abomination to the Lord, for they offer them wickedly.”
 4. Prov. 3: 9 τίμα τὸν Κύριον ἀπὸ σῶν δικαίων πόνων καὶ ἀπάρχου αὐτῶ ἀπὸ σῶν καρπῶν δικαιοσύνης: “Honour the Lord with thy just labors, and give him the first of thy fruits of righteousness.”
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Text C | Excerpt from the Sermon on the Holy of Holies

Ed.: E. Toniolo, “Omilie e catechesis mariane inedite di Neofito il Recluso (1134–1220c.),” in *Marianum: Ephemerides mariologiae* 36 (1974), 211–37; excerpt on 226–29

MS.:¹⁴ Lesbos (Mytilene), Leimonos Monastery, cod. 2, ff. 255 r–v

Other Translations: Toniolo, as above (Italian)

Significance

As the one who gave material visibility to God in the Incarnation, the Mother of God is closely associated with icons and their veneration, and nowhere more explicitly so than in Cyprus, where the Synodikon of the Church of Cyprus includes a pair of Theotokaria that present the Orthodox veneration of icons precisely in terms of a veneration of Mary.¹⁵ Neophytos’ sermon does not explicate or interpret the bond of Mary and icons; rather, it demonstrates the sheer consistency with which discourse on Mary could flow into discourse on icons. Implying no need for connective explanation, Neophytos’ train of thought flows from the theme of Mary to that of her icon, and accordingly from the theme of honoring Mary herself to that of honoring her icon.

The Author

See Introduction.

Text and Context

The fifteenth-century manuscript, Leimonos, cod. 2, contains nine sermons of Neophytos that are found in no other collection, and the group has not been linked persuasively with any of the titles named in the list of his authored works in the Typikon of 1214. The sermons are very variously dated, but the first, on the Presentation of the Virgin in the Holy of Holies, was probably written late in his life, since it questions how much longer he will live (p. 236, l. 453). He writes with urgent, hortatory intensity for his audience to hear, see, watch, and imagine the events he evokes, and to appreciate the radiant luminosity of the little Virgin. The words he uses for his listeners are generally open – ἡμεῖς, φίλοι, φιλέορτοι – but on p. 230, l. 355 he is plainly addressing males, asking “who of us would dare to open our mouths” and claim purity equal to this woman’s, and on p. 232, l. 376, it becomes clear that he is speaking to his monastic brethren, urging that “we who have chosen the monastic life and do not observe it” embrace Mary’s immaculate chastity and temperance. Thus, the sermon is addressed like so many others to his community at the Enkleistra.

¹⁴ Not consulted.

¹⁵ See Cappuyns 1935: 492–93; these are not included in synodica elsewhere. One of the two, “All pure Theotokos, pride of the Orthodox and curse of heretics, you shame the faces of those who do not honor you and venerate you,” would be repeated in post-Byzantine icons of the island’s greatest Marian icon, the Panagia tou Kykkou at the Kykkos Monastery.

Text

Καὶ θυγάτηρ Τύρου δῶρα προσοίσει σοι διὰ τὸν σὸν Κύριον τὸν τοῦ σοῦ κάλλους ἐρώμενον· “τὸ πρόσωπόν σου λιτανεύσουσιν οἱ πλούσιοι τοῦ λαοῦ,”¹ ὀπηνίκα τῶν ἀσεβῶν πέσῃ τὸ φρύαγμα καὶ ἀμαστῆ φιλοχρίστων πληθὺς ἡμερώτατος καὶ κρατήσῃ πιστῶς τῆς εὐσεβείας τοὺς οἴακας· τότε “τὸ πρόσωπόν σου λιτανεύσουσιν οἱ πλούσιοι τοῦ λαοῦ.” ἀλλ’ ἰδοὺ νῦν εἰς ἔργον ἀπέβη τοῦ προφήτου τὰ ρήματα· πᾶσα γὰρ χώρα πιστῶν καὶ πόλις καὶ κώμη τῆς ἀκηράτου Κόρης λιτανεύει τὸ πρόσωπον, καὶ οὐχὶ πλούσιοι τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ μόνοι, ἀλλ’ ἀπαξαπλῶς καὶ πάντα τῶν πιστῶν τὰ συστήματα λιτανεύσουσιν εὐσεβῶς διὰ τῆς ἁγίας εἰκόνης τῆς Πανάγνου τὸ πρόσωπον, καταμεμφόμενα ἡμᾶς τὰ φύλα τῶν ἀπίστων ἔθνων, μᾶλλον δὲ τὰ σκοτεινότατα τοῦ διαβόλου φύλα. πῶς – φησὶ – λιτανεύουσιν χριστιανοὶ ἀπατῶμενοι τῆς Μαρίας τὸ πρόσωπον, μὴ ἀκούοντες τοῦ προφήτου τρανῶν διηγουμένου, ὅτι “τὰ εἰδῶλα τῶν ἔθνων, ἀργύριον καὶ χρυσίον, ἔργα χειρῶν ἀνθρώπων· στόμα ἔχουσι καὶ οὐ λαλήσουσιν· ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχουσι καὶ οὐκ ὄψονται· πόδας ἔχουσι καὶ οὐ περιπατήσουσι;” τούτων τὴν ἄπιστον καὶ ἐσκοτισμένην καρδίαν καὶ τὰ ἀπύλωτα στόματα ὁ αὐτὸς ἀποφράττων προφήτης φησὶ· “πᾶσα ἡ δόξα τῆς θυγατρὸς τοῦ Βασιλέως ἔσωθεν, ἐν κροσσωτοῖς περιβεβλημένη πεποικιλμένη.” ὡσανεὶ λέγων· “τί ἐνατενίζετε τῇ ὀρωμένη εἰκόνι, καίπερ ξένη οὖση καὶ θαυμαστῆ, ὅτι δι’ αὐτῆς τιμᾶται καὶ τὸ ἀρχέτυπον; τί σκανδαλίζεσθε, ὅτι οὐ λαλεῖ προφανῶς, ὅτι οὐ κρατεῖ φανερώς, ὅτι οὐ περιπαντεῖ αἰσθητῶς; Εἰ γὰρ ταῦτα ἐποίει, οὐκ ἂν ἐλέγετο εἰκόν, ἀλλ’ ἦν πάντως ἄν φανερώς τὸ πρόσωπον. *Πᾶσα γὰρ ἡ δόξα τῆς θυγατρὸς τοῦ Βασιλέως ἔσωθεν*”· τὰ δὲ ἔσωθεν, τοῖς ἔξωθεν ὀφθαλμοῖς καθορᾶσθαι ἀδύνατος. οἱ προσκυνοῦντες γὰρ καὶ τιμῶντες καὶ λιτανεύοντες τὴν σκιάν καὶ τὸ εἰκόνισμα, πόσον ἄρα λοιπὸν ἐτίμησαν ἂν καὶ ἐλιτάνευσαν, εἰ ἔβλεπον τοῦ προσώπου τὸ πρόσωπον; ὅσοι δὲ τὰς σεβασμίους βλασφημοῦσιν εἰκόνας, τάχα εἰ καὶ τὸ πρωτότυπον ἔβλεπον, ἐβλασφήμησαν ἂν. καὶ γὰρ καὶ ἔβλεπον αἰσθητῶς τὰ γένη τῶν Ἑβραίων τότε τὸν Κύριον, ἀλλ’ ἐβλασφήμουν αὐτόν.

Translation

And the daughter of Tyre will furnish gifts to you from your Lord, who is in love with your beauty: “the rich among the people will supplicate your countenance,”¹ when the arrogance of the impious will fall, and the peaceable multitude of the lovers of Christ will rise and with faith take the tiller of piety. Then “the rich among the people will supplicate your face.”¹ But behold, now the words of the prophet have come true: for every land of the faithful – every city and town – supplicates the face of the undefiled Virgin, not just the rich among the people, but the whole totality of the faithful supplicate her with piety through the face of the holy icon of the All-Pure, even if the tribe of the unfaithful complains about us, or really the benighted tribe of the devil. How – they say – can the misguided Christians supplicate the face of Mary, and not heed the prophet’s words that “the idols of the Gentiles are of silver and gold, the work of human hands: they have mouths, but do not speak, eyes but do not see, feet but do not walk”?² The very same prophet, cutting off the faithless heart and benighted mouths of these people, says: “all the glory of the daughter of the King is within her, in cloth of gold, richly woven.”³ Which is to say: Why do you deny that the archetype is honored through the visible icon, even though it is wondrous and strange? Why are you shocked that it does not speak aloud, that it does not act perceptibly, that it does not move in the flesh? For if it did these things, it would not be called an icon, but clearly would be the actual person. “All the glory of the daughter of the King is within”:⁴ it is within – impossible for the outward eyes to see. For the pilgrims and venerator and supplicants of the shadow and image: how much more would they venerate and supplicate the person, if they saw it face to face? Those, however, who slander the venerated icons, they would surely also slander the prototype if they saw it. For the race of the Jews saw the Lord with their senses in the flesh, but they slandered him.

Commentary

1. Ps. 44 (45): 13 (12): καὶ θυγάτηρ Τύρου ἐν δώροις· τὸ πρόσωπόν σου λιτανεύσουσιν οἱ πλούσιοι τοῦ λαοῦ: “And the daughter of Tyre will be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favor.”
 2. Ps. 113 (115): τὰ εἶδωλα τῶν ἐθνῶν, ἀργύριον καὶ χρυσίον, ἔργα χειρῶν ἀνθρώπων· στόμα ἔχουσι, καὶ οὐ λαλήσουσιν, ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχουσι, καὶ οὐκ ὄψονται, ὅσα ἔχουσι, καὶ οὐκ ἀκούσονται, ῥῖνας ἔχουσι, καὶ οὐκ ὀσφρανθήσονται, χεῖρας ἔχουσι, καὶ οὐ ψηλαφήσουσι, πόδας ἔχουσι καὶ οὐ περιπατήσουσιν, οὐ φωνήσουσιν ἐν τῷ λάρυγγι αὐτῶν: “The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the works of men’s hands. They have a mouth, but they cannot speak; they have eyes, but they cannot see: they have ears, but they cannot hear; they have noses, but they cannot smell; they have hands, but they cannot handle; they have feet, but they cannot walk: they cannot speak through their throat.”
 3. Ps. 44 (45): 14 (13–14): πᾶσα ἡ δόξα τῆς θυγατρὸς τοῦ βασιλέως ἔσωθεν, ἐν κροσσωτοῖς χρυσοῖς περιβεβλημένη, πεποικιλμένη: “The king’s daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. she shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework . . .”
 4. Ps. 44 (45): 14a (13a): πᾶσα ἡ δόξα τῆς θυγατρὸς τοῦ βασιλέως ἔσωθεν: “The king’s daughter is all glorious within.”
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I.2.6

Asinou, *Panagia Phorbiotissa*

ANNEMARIE WEYL CARR

Significance

The frescoes in the Panagia Phorbiotissa, Asinou, retain a particularly large number of inscriptions, many poetic. Though the murals span many centuries, the impulse to include inscriptions persisted, and together they offer a broad overview of the varied functions that inscriptions served.

Introduction

The church of the Panagia Phorbiotissa stands in tranquil isolation overlooking a mountain valley.¹ Customarily known after the name of the nearby, now-vanished village of Asinou, it is among the most beloved sites in Cyprus. The church was built at the behest of the *magistros* Nikephoros Ischyrios, who had it frescoed by an outstanding painter in 1105/6 CE, very shortly after Eumathios Philokales adorned his chapel of the Holy Trinity near Koutsovendis. Nikephoros may have built his church as a family chapel, but by 1115 it had become the *katholikon* of a monastery, a status it retained until around 1800. Over this long life, the little building saw several additions to its fabric and frescoes: a narthex was added at some point in the twelfth century, the apse conch was rebuilt and structural reinforcements were added to the naos in the late thirteenth century, and these additions received fresco adornment at varied dates in the late twelfth, late thirteenth, fourteenth, sixteenth, and early seventeenth centuries. We will record inscriptions from the initial program of 1105/6, from the late twelfth century, and from 1332/3 when the narthex was fully frescoed with a program of the Last Judgment. Since 1985, Asinou has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

¹ *Asinou Across Time*; Hadjichristodoulou and Myrianthefts 2009; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 114–40.

Text A | Unknown (1105/6)**The Early Twelfth-Century Inscriptions**

Ed.: The transcriptions and translations below are adopted from N. P. Ševčenko, “The Metrical Inscriptions in the Murals of the Panagia Phorbiotissa,” in *Asinou Across Time*, 69–91, by her gracious permission. The edition of the inscriptions comes from *BEIÜ* 1, with previous citations and German translations, and by Papageorghiou, “Βυζαντινή ἐπιγραφική,” as follows:

I.a. Donor’s Inscription over South Door: *BEIÜ* 1 no. 236 (348–50); Papageorghiou, as above, 107–08

I.b. Donor’s Inscription in Apse: *BEIÜ* 1 no. 239 (352) and no. 260 (376–80); Papageorghiou, as above, 108–09

II.a. On the Scene of the Virgin’s Birth: *BEIÜ* 1 no. 238 (352)

II.b. On the martyrdom of the 40 Martyrs of Sebaste: *BEIÜ* 1 no. 237 (350–52); Papageorghiou, as above, 108

Monument/Artefact: Twelfth-century inscriptions in the church of the Panagia Phorbiotissa, Asinou:

I. a. The Donor Portrait, see fig. I.2.6a

II. a. The Forty Martyrs, see fig. I.2.6b

Other Translations: I.a. C. Hadjichristodoulou and D. Myrianthefs, *The Church of Our Lady of Asinou*, Guides to the Byzantine Monuments of Cyprus (Nicosia, 2002), 21; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 114; D. Winfield, *Asinou: A Guide*



Fig. I.2.6a The Donor Portrait. Asinou, Panagia Phorbiotissa
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Fig. I.2.6b The Forty Martyrs. Asinou, Panagia Phorbiotissa

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(Nicosia, 1969), 18; Stylianou and Stylianou, “Donors Dedicatory Inscriptions,” 98; Buxton, *et al.*, “The Church of Asinou, Cyprus, and Its Frescoes,” *Archaeologia* 83 (1933), 342–43 (English); M. Sacopoulou, *Asinou en 1106 et sa contribution à l'iconographie* (Brussels, 1966), 11 (French); E. Hein, A. Jakovljević, and B. Kleidt, *Zypern – byzantinische Kirchen und Klöster, Mosaiken und Fresken* (Ratingen, 1996), 57 (German); N. Lavermicocca, “Sull’ iscrizione della chiesa di S. Nicola di ‘Kasnitza’ a Kastorià (Macedonia),” *Nicolaus: Rivista di teologia ecumenico-patristica* 4 (1976), 216 (Italian); G. Subotić, and I. Toth, “Natpisi istorijske sadržine na fraskama XI I XII veka,” *ZRVI* 36 (1997), 105 (Serbian); C. Hadjichristodoulou and D. Myrianthefs, *Ο ναός της Φορνωτίτισσας στην Ασίνου, Οδηγοί βυζαντινών μνημείων της Κύπρου* (Nicosia, 2009), 19, 2nd ed. (Modern Greek)

I.b. See Trikomo no. II.6.8

II.a. Carr, forthcoming (English)

II.b. Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 149; H. Maguire, “The Depiction of Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art,” *DOP* 31 (1977), 152 n. 156; Maguire, *Image and Imagination*, 12 n. 21 (English)

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

The Panagia Phorbiotissa was built as a single-aisle, barrel-vaulted church of three bays at the behest of the *magistros* Nikephoros Ischyrios, perhaps several years before he had it frescoed in 1105/6.² *Magistros* was an imperial dignity, and Nikephoros invokes the ruling emperor in the inscription dating the church’s completion: ... συνδρομῆς κ(αὶ) πολῦ πόθου Νικηφόρου Μαγίστρου τοῦ Ὑσχιρίου · βασιλευῶν[το]ς Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ· ἔτους ,σχιδ´ · ιν(δικτιῶνος) ιδ´: “... support and great effort of Nikephoros Ischyrios the *magistros*, in the reign of Alexios Komnenos, the year 6614, indiction 14 (1105/6 CE).” Nonetheless, the title no longer carried specific duties at court, and Nikephoros was probably a Cypriot rather than a Constantinopolitan lord. Whether Nikephoros himself had seen Eumathios Philokales’ chapel of the Holy Trinity, the painter he retained, known as the Asinou Master, surely had,³ and the conventions adopted at Asinou reflect the metropolitan tastes exemplified at Koutsovendis, including those for poetic inscriptions. Of the five churches still preserving frescoes associated with the workshop at Koutsovendis, three – Asinou itself, the Panagia church at Trikomo, and St. Nicholas *tis Stegis* near Kakopetria – will appear here for their metrical inscriptions.

2 Beside Nikephoros in his donor portrait over the south door is a small female figure accompanied by an inscription recording her death on December 17 of a year variously interpreted as 1099 and 1106: see Grivaud 2012: 22; Papageorghiou 2012: 53–54. The church could have been built at her death.

3 Winfield 1972: 285–91 argues cogently that the Asinou Master was among the painters at Holy Trinity. Certainly, his distribution of large and small icons on the church walls echoes the interplay of large and small images at Holy Trinity.

Whether either Nikephoros or the Asinou Master can be credited with composing the poems is dubious; certainly one was widely anthologized. But they give voice to both men. They appear in two contexts. One, already familiar, is that of the donor's self-presentation. Here at Asinou, two metrical inscriptions join the non-metrical one with the date to ring the church interior with Nikephoros' name and ardent invocations. The other, more exceptional, speaks from the painter's narrative scenes. In the words of one poem, the inscriptions invite the viewer to "hear" what he sees. These were originally exceptionally numerous: in addition to the two poems reproduced below, the badly abraded residues of metrical inscriptions remain in the scene of the Presentation of the Virgin on the south wall of the bema, on two panels on the north and south apse responds below the image of the Ascension, and below the Koimesis on the west wall of the naos.⁴ Thus, the church was originally rich in epigrams.

Of the two epigrams naming Nikephoros, that in the apse still appears on a twelfth-century surface, but the other is inscribed in a donor portrait overpainted in the 1340s, when the central bay of the naos was restored.⁵ The language with which the poem addresses the Mother of God, the persuasively Komnenian garb and hair-style of Nikephoros, and the early twelfth-century form of the church in his hands, without its narthex, show that the painting must be based on one of 1105/6.⁶ The full-length figure presenting a model of his church is rooted in imperial portraiture, and Nikephoros was precocious in adopting it. His image would prove a powerful template for future donors on Cyprus.

4 To the extent that they can be deciphered, often by consulting phrases familiar from troparia, see Ševčenko 2012: 75–77, 80–81.

5 Well reproduced in Carr 2012: 292, fig. 6.50; Hadjichristodoulou and Myrianthefs 2009: 20; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 116, fig. 57.

6 On the portrait see Carr 2012: 291–98; on the inscription see Ševčenko 2012: 77–80.

Text***I. Donor's inscriptions*****I.a. The Donor Portrait**

Πολλοῖς τεθελῶς ἀγαθοῖς ἐν τῷ βίῳ
 ὧνπερ χορηγὸς ὠράθης σύ, παρθένε,
 Νικηφόρος μάγιστρος οἰκτρὸς ἰκέτης
 ἤγειρα τόνδε τὸν ναὸν μετὰ πόθου·
 ἀνθ' οὔπερ αἰτῶ προστάτιν εὐρηκέναι
 ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σε τῇ φρικῶδει τῆς δίκης

I.b. The Apse Inscription

ᾠ παντάνασσα καὶ [πάντων ὑπερέτρα,
 Δέσποινα ἀγνή καὶ μητέρα τοῦ Κυρίου,
 ἶδε τὸν πόθον τῆς ταλαίνης]ς ψυχῆς μου
 καὶ γενοῦ μοι μεσίτης ἐν ὥρᾳ δίκης,
 ὅπως ἐκφύγω μ[έρος τῶν...]
 Νικηφόρο]ς μάγιστρος ὁ Ὑσχυρίων.'

II. The Inscriptions in the Narrative Scenes**II.a. The Birth of the Virgin**

Ἡ παρθένου γέννησις, ἡ σωτηρία·
 χάρηθι, κόσμε, σὴν ἀνάστασιν βλέπων.

II.b. The Forty Martyrs

Χειμῶν τὸ λυποῦν, σὰρξ τὸ πάσχον ἐνθάδε
 [προσ]σχῶν ἀκούσεις καὶ στεναγμὸν μαρτύρων·
 εἰ δ' οὐκ ἀκούσεις, καρτεροῦσι τὴν βίαν,
 πρὸς τὰ στέφη βλέποντες, οὐ πρὸς τοὺς πόνους.

Translation

I. Donor's Inscription

I.a. The Donor Portrait²

Having been blessed in life with many good things
of which thou, O Virgin, was seen to be the provider,
I, Nikephoros magistros, a pitiable supplicant,
erected this church with devotion.
In return for which I will find thee my protectress
on the terrible day of judgment.

I.b. The Apse Inscription³

O Pantanassa. And all-[surpassing
chaste Lady and mother of the Lord,
see the desire of my miserable] soul
and become my intercessor in the hour of judgment
that I may be spared the lot of [...
Nikephoros] magistros, of the (family of the) Ischyrioi.

II. The Inscriptions in the Narrative Scenes

II.a. The Birth of the Virgin⁴

The birth of the Virgin (means) salvation.
Rejoice, O world, seeing your resurrection.

II.b. The Forty Martyrs⁵

Winter (brings) the pain, flesh the suffering here.
If you pay attention, you will hear the groans of the martyrs;
but if you do not listen, they will (still) endure the violence (of the cold),
look to the crowns, not to the toils.

Commentary

1. This is completed on the basis of Trikomo's well-preserved apse inscription.
2. Composed in the first person, the poem makes it clear that the painting it accompanied was not just a picture, but a documented interchange, performed between two people, in a perennial present tense. Like that of Eumathios Philokales, it expresses the concern for salvation that served as the pretext for so much art patronage. Nikephoros' plea for intercession is more modestly spoken, but has the same I-you immediacy, bespeaking a man accustomed to authority.
3. This inscription ran along the base of the apse conch beneath an image of the Mother of God.⁷ Only portions survive, but the missing words can be supplied by a very similar inscription in the apse of the Panagia church, Trikomo. The frescoes at Trikomo are consistently attributed to the Asinou Master or his shop.⁸ Thus the inscription may have come with them, suggesting that painters' workshops traveled with their own repertoire of texts. No donor's name accompanies it in Trikomo. Most probably, it was a conventional formula, specially adapted in Asinou to name Nikephoros Ischyrios.
4. This brief verse adorns the scene of the Birth of the Virgin on the north bema wall.⁹ Though brief, it serves two purposes. Exceptional in its theological emphasis, it serves to link Mary's birth to the theme with which Nikephoros wreathed the church: that of redemption and renewal after death. On the other hand, it binds the imagery of the north bema wall to that of the north wall of the naos, adorned with images of the Anastasis on both inner and outer faces.¹⁰
5. Between the freezing figures of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste and the crowns that descend through the lapis-blue sky above them, an often-anthologized quatrain speaks softly to the viewer of the Asinou Master's greatest painting.¹¹ A version of a verse by the early tenth-century John Geometres, the poem seems perfectly tailored to accompany an icon of the martyrdom, coaxing viewers in gentle, second-person exhortations to hear as well as see the frigid scene before them. It seems a perfect instance of the synestheticism often claimed for Byzantine poetry and art.¹² Yet this is the only known case in which poem and image are joined. Must we assume there were others? Or were Nikephoros and his brilliant painter especially attuned to the possibilities offered by the rich metropolitan culture they were absorbing eagerly?

7 Ševčenko 2012: 78, figs. 3.6, 3.7; Carr 2012: 214, fig. 6.4.

8 Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 486; Carr and Morrocco 1991: 61 n. 63; Winfield 1972: 285–91; Papageorghiou, *Masterpieces*, 23.

9 Ševčenko 2012: 74, fig. 3.3; Hadjichristodoulou and Myrianthefs 2009 and 2002: 17 (unnumbered image); Carr forthcoming, fig. 5.

10 Carr 2012: 289, who argues that the lunette of the interior wall, now divided between images of Easter Morning and Anastasis, may originally have shown a single, large image of the Anastasis, balancing the large, single images of the Koimesis and the Donor Portrait on the west and north walls.

11 Ševčenko 2012: 68.

12 At Asinou itself, as in many Komnenian churches, voice and image were joined in the Annunciation, where the biblical words of Gabriel's salutation and Mary's answer were inscribed on the images.

Text B | Unknown (late twelfth century)

The Late Twelfth-Century Inscriptions

Ed.: Both text and translation are adopted from N. Ševčenko, “The Metrical Inscriptions,” 81–83, by her gracious permission; the edition is from *BEIÜ* 1, no. 232 (p. 342). The inscription has also been published in Sacopoulou, as above, 12; Buxton *et al.*, as above, 337

Monument/Artefact: Inscription on the mural icon of St. George in the south apse of the narthex at Asinou. See fig. I.2.6c

Other Translations: Hadjichristodoulou and Myrianthefs, as above, 30; A.W. Carr, “Correlative Spaces: Art, Identity and Appropriation in Lusignan Cyprus,” *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook* 14/15, 1998/99 (repr. in A. W. Carr, *Cyprus and the Devotional Arts of Byzantium in the Era of the Crusades* [Aldershot, 2005]), VI, 79 no. 36; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 138; Winfield, as above, 19; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 105; Buxton *et al.*, as above, 337–38 (English); *BEIÜ* 1, no. 232 (p. 342–44) (German); Hadjichristodoulou and Myrianthefs, as above, 29–30 (Modern Greek)

Significance

The inscriptions introduce a new class of rich but non-aristocratic patron, and with him an insight into the source of the wealth that underwrote the continuing well-being of the monastery. They also introduce us to the lay pilgrim who avails himself or herself of the signature holy figures located in the monastic narthex. Patron and pilgrim together suggest the openness of the space to lay devotions. Nikephoros the veterinarian claims to have produced the icon, but numerous medieval instances show that this is a claim to patronage, not painting.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

A large, superbly painted mural icon of the equestrian St. George occupies the wall of the south apse of the narthex at the Panagia Phorbiotissa, Asinou.¹³ Its dynamic, late Komnenian style both assures its date in the final third of the twelfth century, and proclaims the confident assurance with which Cypriot painters and patrons had adopted current Constantinopolitan cultural norms.¹⁴ The narthex which it adorns had been added to the initial little early twelfth-century church at some point in the intervening decades to serve its needs as a monastic *katholikon*. Its ample dimensions, good stone, and solid

¹³ Color images in Nicolaidès 2012: 90, 92; Hadjichristodoulou and Myrianthefs 2009: 29; Hein *et al.* 1996, fig. 26; Frigerio-Zeniou 1995, fig. 1.

¹⁴ Nicolaidès 2012: 101; Winfield 2012: 112.



Fig. I.2.6c St. George. Asinou, Panagia Phorbiotissa
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construction, no less than the excellence of the fresco, attest to the monastery's ongoing success. The fresco is accompanied by an eight-line metrical inscription of dedication; a ninth line below it, in slightly yellower paint, is not metrical.¹⁵ The two throw especially sharp light on the patronage of and access to the narthex.

The eight-line poem introduces one Nikephoros – not the Ischyrios of the early twelfth century, but an interestingly different figure, a veterinarian of horses.¹⁶ It has been suggested on the basis of the split riding habits of the monks later portrayed in the narthex that Asinou specialized in raising horses;¹⁷ if so, a man like Nikephoros would have been important to them. His fresco shows that he was wealthy. But he claims no noble lineage; he is a professional man, and his status is felt in his words. Unlike that of the titled Nikephoros Ischyrios, his inscription does not address his saint directly in I–you terms, or presume his willing support. It speaks only in hope, calling upon the help of the prayers of the monks.

The ninth, unmetrical line also uses the name Nikephoros, but this Nikephoros is not a physician; he is a farrier. This discrepancy, and the yellower tone of the paint, led Nancy Ševčenko to conclude that he was a different person, once again a man whose professional engagement with horses might well have made the equestrian George especially compelling.¹⁸ She proposes that he was a pilgrim, who had added his name in veneration. If so, he might illuminate the patches of uneven plaster in the frame of St. George, which David Winfield speculated might have held sconces. Few other images existed in the narthex at this point; the icon of St. George must have dominated it visually. Both the patron who provided that dashing image, and the pilgrim who left his votive inscription on it, suggest that already at this time, the narthex was a liminal space, accessible to the laity for their religious needs.

¹⁵ See Ševčenko 2012: 81–83; *BEIÜ* 1, 343–44.

¹⁶ See the Commentary, n. 1.

¹⁷ Frigerio-Zeniou 1995: 192–93, though see also Grivaud 2012: 27, who suspects that the kings controlled the supply of horses because of their military importance.

¹⁸ Ševčenko 2012: 83.

Text

Ἰππιῶν ἀκεστήρ εὐσεβῆς Νικηφόρος:
 θερμῶ κινηθεὶς ἐνδιαθέτω πόθῳ
 ἀνιστόρησεν ἐμπερῶς τὴν εἰκόνα
 τοῦ παμμεγίστου μάρτυρος Γεωργίου
 5 κὰν τῆδε σεπτῶς τῆ μονῆ τῶν Φορβίων
 ποθῶν ἐφευρεῖν ἀντίληψιν ἐν κρίσει·
 τῶν ὑπεραυγῆ μάρτυρα στεφανίτην
 καὶ τὰς προσευχὰς τῶν μεόντων ἐνθάδε.
 Δέησις Νικηφόρου τοῦ Καλληά

Translation

A healer¹ of horses, Nikephoros the pious,
 Moved by warm heartfelt desire
 With like feeling painted the image
 Of the very great martyr George;
 5 And reverently in this monastery of the Phorbia,
 Desirous of finding help at [the] Judgment
 From that most brilliant crowned martyr,
 And prayers of those dwelling here,

Prayer of Nikephoros the farrier.

Commentary

1. On the term, ἀκεστήρ see Ševčenko 2012: 83 n. 41; *BEIÜ* 1, 343–44. Stylianos and Stylianos, “Donors and Dedicatory Inscriptions,” 105 transl. it as “tamer (trainer)” of horses; the use of words of the same root in conjunction with veterinary medicine leads Rhoby and Ševčenko to choose the word “healer.”
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Text C | Unknown (fourteenth century)

Asinou, Panagia Phorbiotissa

Ed.: Both transcription and translation of the first three inscriptions are adopted from Ševčenko, as above, 83–87, by her gracious permission. They are also published in Rhoby, *BEIŮ* 1 with German translations and earlier citations as follows:

- I. The Dialogue of Mary and her Son in the Narthex: *BEIŮ* 1, no. 234 (p. 346–47); also Buxton *et al.*, as above, 336
- II. Metrical Inscription around the Panagia Phorbiotissa: *BEIŮ* 1, no. 233 (p. 344–46); also Sacopoulou, as above, 11; Buxton *et al.*, as above, 336
- III. The Dialogue of Mary and her Son in the Naos: *BEIŮ* 1, no. 240 = no. 236 (p. 336), referring to the text as transcribed on p. 334 from Moutoullas (German)
- IV. Non-metrical Dedicatory Inscription in the Narthex: Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 176; Stylianou and Stylianou, “Donors and Dedicatory Inscriptions,” 104–05; Buxton *et al.*, as above, 336

Monument/Artefact: Two poetic inscriptions in the narthex and one in the naos of Asinou; one non-metrical inscription in the narthex of Asinou: I. See Ševčenko, as above, fig. 3.12 (color photo); *BEIŮ* 1, fig. L

- II. See fig. I.2.6c
- III. Seen in color in Ševčenko, as above, fig. 13
- IV. See fig. I.2.6d

Other Translations:

- I. I. M. Djordjević and M. Marković, “On the Dialogue Relationship Between the Virgin and Christ in East Christian Art, A propos of the Discovery of the Figures of the Virgin Mediatrix and Christ in the Naos of Lesnovo,” *Zograf* 20 (2000–01), 24 (English); *BEIŮ* 1, no. 234 (p. 346–47) (German)
- II. Maguire, *Image and Imagination*, 13–14; Maguire, *Art and Eloquence*, 57, 58 (English); *BEIŮ* 1, no. 233 (p. 344–46) (German).
- III. *BEIŮ* 1, no. 240 = no. 236 (p. 336), referring to the text as transcribed on p. 334 from Moutoullas (German)
- IV. Stylianou and Stylianou, “Donors and Dedicatory Inscriptions,” 105; Buxton *et al.*, as above, 336 (English)

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

In the period of Latin rule on Cyprus, patronage at the Panagia Phorbiotissa, Asinou, was most vibrant in the narthex. The narthex had been only sparsely provided with imagery when the crises of Isaac Komnenos’ usurpation in 1184 and Richard the Lionheart’s conquest of Cyprus in 1191 shook the island. Not until a century later was its adornment



Fig. I.2.6d Asinou, Panagia Phorbiotissa

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resumed.¹⁹ In the interim, the local aristocracy to which Asinou's founder had belonged had largely disappeared into exile or assimilation into the rural gentry. Renewed adornment of the narthex began with independent votive frescoes featuring a holy figure accompanied not by a dedicatory inscription – as in the twelfth century – but by a full-length portrait of the donor. Then in 1332/3 a comprehensive mural program was introduced, fully sheathing vaults and walls. Devoted in the vaults to the Last Judgment, it ringed the walls with a veritable gallery of regionally venerated saints, some once again accompanied by donor portraits. Only after the narthex program was finished did attention turn to repairs in the naos, the heart of monastic activity. At some point in the thirteenth century, structural instabilities in the naos' central bay had defaced, possibly even effaced, portions of the Asinou Master's work. This bay was frescoed anew in the early 1340s.

No longer employed to identify donors, the metrical inscription appeared henceforth only with the figure of Mary at Asinou. There are two in the narthex. One, a couplet, surrounds the image of the Virgin above the eastern door leading to the naos.²⁰ This painting belonged to Asinou's original, early twelfth-century fresco campaign.²¹ Showing the Vir-

¹⁹ On the narthex paintings see Kalopissi-Verti 2012a.

²⁰ It is followed by a cryptogram as yet not fully understood: see Ševčenko 2012: 85.

²¹ Kakoulli 2012: 334–37.

gin half-length and orant with a medallion bust of Emmanuel on her breast, it filled the lunette over what had been the entrance door from the outside. The fourteenth-century painter had preserved it, but added – for the first known time – the epithet ἡ Φορβιώτισσα to Mary's name,²² thus making it a titular icon. The epigram seems to have been added at the same time.²³ Its text has not been found elsewhere,²⁴ though it mobilizes a familiar topos, playing upon the paradox of God's containment as a babe in a mother's arms. A babe in arms, however, does not describe the painted image, so the poem has puzzled scholars. Henry Maguire, pointing out that Byzantine painters often used inscriptions not to describe but to mesh their images into their larger context, proposed that the epigram had been chosen for its characterization of Christ as a judge, thus binding the old icon to the new program's Last Judgment.²⁵ Andreas Rhoby wondered if an epigram initially referring to Christ as συνεχῆς τῶν κτισμάτων might have been amended for this purpose to read τῶν κρισμάτων.²⁶ It is suggested below, however, that the epithet may indeed accord with the image, and have been chosen above all for its interrogatory character.

A second couplet, inscribed on the scroll of the Mother of God Eleousa who balances Christ Eleemon on either side of the same door, is a unique, summary abbreviation of the dialog between mother and Son customary in this composition.²⁷ The scroll-bearing Eleousa had flanked the bema entrance already at Lagoudera (1192), Kalliana (thirteenth century), Moutoullas (1280), and Kalopanagiotis (c.1300),²⁸ and was clearly well known. The use of an abbreviated summary may reflect that familiarity. But it may reflect the fact that the full inscription already existed at Asinou, in the naos: it has been proposed that the dialogue-bearing orant Virgin had occupied the south bema respond at Asinou already in 1105/6.²⁹ The respond retains traces of an orant Mary from 1105/6. It was over-painted in the 1340s with a figure of the Virgin bearing the dialogue. Since much of the sanctoral cycle of the 1340s repeats that of 1105/6, it is tempting to believe that the Virgin, too, repeated the Asinou Master's iconography, for a similar figure may have existed already around 1100 on Cyprus in the *katholikon* of the Apsinthiotissa Monastery.³⁰

The orant Virgin of the 1340s in the naos holds Asinou's final poetic inscription.³¹ It uses the five-line version of the dialogue that had become current in the thirteenth century; in this respect it cannot have replicated an early twelfth-century original. The figure had become so widely adopted by this time, though, that the current version of its inscription

22 Carr 2012: 363.

23 Ševčenko 2012: 83.

24 See Ševčenko 2012: 85 n. 47 for verses that are similar.

25 Maguire, *Image and Imagination*, 13–14; Maguire, *Art and Eloquence*, 56–57.

26 *BEIŪ* 1, no. 233 (p. 346–47).

27 Ševčenko 2012: 85–86, fig. 3.12; Kalopissi-Verti 2012a: 154–57, fig. 5.30; Kalopissi-Verti 2006, fig. 25.

28 See the entry on the Virgin Eleousa at Lagoudera, where a bibliography on each of these is cited; on the history of this widespread image see Djordjević and Marković 2000–01: 13–48.

29 Carr 2012: 236–38.

30 See I.2.7 in this volume.

31 Ševčenko 2012: 86–87 and fig. 3.13; Carr 2012, fig. 6.1; Kalopissi-Verti 2006, fig. 23.

is only to be expected. The text, close to those at Lagoudera and Moutoullas, is impressive for the dominance it gives to the Mother of God: her will dominates that of her Son.

By far the most significant inscription in the new program, however, is the dedicatory statement on the lintel of the east door, just under the Virgin Blachernitissa.³² Modest, non-metrical, and now sadly fragmentary, it reveals that the new program was sponsored jointly by the monks of the monastery and the common people. Indeed, the portraits of six monks and three lay people, two men and a woman, are incorporated into its imagery. Lay commoners' access to Asinou's narthex had been intimated already in the late twelfth century.³³ In the intervening decades, the monastery must have been drawn more fully into the life of its local community, finding new support in the regional gentry. These people focused their benefaction on the narthex, the portion of the institution that affected their own lives as a site of counsel, confessions, and funeral obsequies. Only later did attention turn to painting the monastic heart of the church, the naos, though it had long needed repair after structural instabilities had defaced, possibly even effaced, portions of the Asinou Master's work.

³² Kalopissi-Verti 2012a: 177, fig. 3.37.

³³ See text IV (below), of the late twelfth century.

Texts

I. The Dialogue of Mary and her Son in the Narthex

Λιτάς προσάγει μητρικὰς ἢ Παρθένος,
τὸν αὐτὸν κάμπτει πρὸς βροτῶν σωτηρίαν.¹

II. Metrical Inscription around the Panagia Phorbiotissa

ἽΩ πῶς ὁ πάντων συνεχῆς τῶν κριμάτων
βρεφοκρατεῖται παρθενικαῖς ὠλέναις;

III. The Dialogue of Mary and her Son in the Naos

Δέξαι δέησιν τῆς τεκούσης σε, Λόγε.
τί, μήτερ, αἰτεῖς; τῶν βροτῶν σωτηρίαν.
παρώργισάν με. συμπάθησον, υἱέ μου.
ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐπιστρέφουσιν. καὶ σῶσον χάριν.
ἔξουσι λύτρον. εὐχαριστῶ σοι, Λόγε.²

IV. Non-Metrical Dedicatory Inscription in the Narthex

Ἄνιστ[ορήθη ...] ἐν τῆς αὐτῆς μονῆς καὶ Θεοφίλου [...] καὶ κοινοῦ λαοῦ [...] στερ[...] καὶ τάχα ἱστοριογράφου ὑπὸ πόνου τρ[...] ἀμῆν, ἔτους ,ζωμα' ἰνδι- κτιῶνος α'.

Translation

I. The Dialogue of Mary and her Son in the Narthex

The Virgin offers her motherly entreaties,
She steers Him toward the salvation of mortals.

II. Metrical Inscription around the Panagia Phorbiotissa³

O how is He who holds together all judgments
Held as a babe in a Virgin's arms?⁴

III. The Dialogue of Mary and her Son in the Naos⁵

Receive the entreaty of the one who bore You, O Logos.
What is it that you seek, mother? The salvation of mortals.
They have angered Me. Have compassion, my Son.
But they do not repent. And save [them out of] Grace.
They shall be redeemed. I thank you, O Logos.

IV. Non-Metrical Dedicatory Inscription in the Narthex⁶

It was repainted ... in this same monastery and of Theophilos ... and of the common people ... and of the so-called painter through the effort ... amen. In the year 6841 [= 1332/3], first indiction.

Commentary

1. See Ševčenko 2012: 85.
2. *Ibid.*: 86.
3. The orant Mary with the medallion on her breast had been used in the apse at Trikomo by painters familiar with the Asinou Master, and they had given it a similarly interrogative inscription. Thus the iconographic type, for which modern scholars have proposed many sharply defined theological explications, may have meant to Byzantine viewers something far more mysterious: the unfathomable “how?” at the heart of their faith.
4. Ševčenko 2012: 84. The words are followed by what may be a cryptogram, discussed by Ševčenko.
5. The frequent recurrence of this figure shows how forcefully it spoke to viewers on Cyprus. In its wedding of text and image, it exemplifies the dialogic loquacity that had reached Cyprus with the influx of Komnenian taste in the twelfth century. But its long popularity, even as poetic epigrams dwindled over the ensuing centuries, speaks to something more fundamental: the growing dominance of the Mother of God in Byzantine devotional practice. The operative will in this dialog is Mary’s. She literally dominates her Son in demanding human creatures’ salvation.

Christ’s words, underlined here, are written in red; his mother’s are in black.

6. Encountered in Cyprus already in 1178,³⁴ the shared, community sponsorship of a church and/or its adornment became more frequent from the thirteenth century on.³⁵ Most cases involved village churches; its occurrence in a monastic church, as here at Asinou, is exceptional. In privileging the narthex, accessible to lay people, over the damaged naos, the shared patronage indicates the vitality of the “common people’s” engagement in the monastery, and their importance in sustaining what had initially been an aristocratic institution.

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³⁴ See I.2.8 in this volume.

³⁵ See Kalopissi-Verti 2012a: 177–78 and fig. 5.37; on community patronage see Kalopissi-Verti 2007: 333–40; Kalopissi-Verti 2012b: 125–40; and her fascinating analyses of the individual contributions in such shared enterprises in Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 65–82. Cf. p. 216.

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I.2.7

The Donors in *Panagia tou Arakos*, Lagoudera, Cyprus

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Significance

Both the program of 1192 that dominates the naos of the *Panagia tou Arakos*, and the murals preserved more fragmentarily in its ancillary spaces, were produced by refined painters of whom the latter were surely literate. Their imagery is visually and theologically eloquent, and deepened by the poetic inscriptions that accompany it. Especially powerful is the prayer of the patron, Lord Leon Authentēs, composed in intimate interchange with the icon of the Mother of God that it adorns.

Introduction

The church of the Mother of God *tou Arakos*, or Arakiotissa,¹ is a domed hall church capped by a huge, gabled timber roof. It stands a little way outside the village of Lagoudera, high on the north face of the Troodos mountains. It is famous for the exceptional visual and iconographic elegance of the frescoes that cloak its naos.² They were completed in December 1192, at the behest of one Lord Leon Authentēs, an epithet given to upper-class families in Byzantium (and later, as *effendi*, in the Ottoman world), but apparently adopted here as a patronymic.³ The frescoes were signed by a monk whose name is illegible, but who is widely believed to be the same painter who, as the layman Theodore Apseudes, had frescoed the cell and bema of the Enkleistra of St. Neophytos the Recluse in 1183.⁴ He took over the church's decoration after the apse conch and wall had been frescoed by a different hand; these paintings he left untouched, but replaced an enthroned Virgin and Child flanked by archangels that had occupied the south wall where his own imposing mural icon of the Mother of God Arakiotissa now is.⁵ Even if only marginally earlier, the apse paintings show that the church itself had been built independently of and somewhat

1 Named most probably after the *arax* or wild vetch; many churches dedicated to the Mother of God in Cyprus have nicknames drawn from plants.

2 Winfield and Winfield 2003; Sophocleous 1998; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 157–85; Nicolaïdēs 1996; Wharton 1988; Winfield 1969–70.

3 On the name see Winfield and Winfield 2003: 51; Nicolaïdēs 1996: 7.

4 Nicolaïdēs 1996: 8, reconstructs the signature as ἀνηστόρηθη τοῦ δούλου τοῦ Θεοῦ (Θεοδώρου) μοναχοῦ καὶ On Theodore's identity with Theodore Apseudes see Sophocleous 1998: 49–50; Panagiotidi 1993–94: 146–48; Wharton 1988: 87; Papageorghiou 1958: 54–55; both Nicolaïdēs himself (1996: 8–9) and Winfield and Winfield (2003: 321) remain cautious.

5 Winfield and Winfield 2003, fig. 41.

earlier than Lord Leon's fresco campaign. The date of the frescoes has stood out indelibly, for it is just months after Cyprus' conquest by Richard the Lionheart in 1191. The presence of this very refined program in a church high in a precipitous valley notorious for its cold and isolation suggests that Leon commissioned it after retreating from the conquest to the remote security of his mountain properties. The frescoes constitute the apex and also the closure of Cyprus' century-long Komnenian cultural development.

Whether the church was originally intended as a family chapel, a church for the peasants on Leon's estates, or the monastic *katholikon* that it eventually became is not known.⁶ The fact that its narthex was added only after the naos program had been completed suggests that the church was not initially intended as a monastery; it may have been converted to monastic use in the second quarter of the fourteenth century, when the narthex and outer face of the north door were frescoed. These paintings briefly recaptured the taste for poetic inscriptions that had characterized Leon's program. Thus, the entries from Lagoudera emerge from both periods: the late twelfth century, and the second quarter of the fourteenth.

6 Papacostas 1999, 1: 86–87.

Text A | The Twelfth-Century Frescoes

Ed.: a. Dedicatory Inscription over the North Door: D. C. Winfield and J. Winfield, 2003, *The Church of the Panaghia tou Arakos at Lagoudera, Cyprus: The Paintings and Their Painterly Significance*, DOS 37 (Washington, D.C.), 65; A. Papageorgiou, "Εικόν του Χριστού ἐν τῷ ναῶ τῆς Παναγίας τοῦ Ἀρακος," *Κυπρ.Σπ.* 32 (1958), 110; S. Sophocleous, *Panagia Arakiotissa, Lagoudera, Cyprus: A Complete Guide*. Museum Publications 3 (Nicosia, 1998), 11; A. Nicolaïdès, "L'Église de la Panagia Arakiotissa à Lagoudera, Chypre: étude iconographique des fresques de 1192," *DOP* 50 (1996), 4; Stylianos and Stylianos, *Painted Churches*, 101; Buckler and Buckler, "Dated Wall-Paintings," 48–49.

b. Dedicatory Inscription around the Mother of God Arakiotissa: *BEIÜ* 1, no. 224 (p. 323–24) with a German transl. and a list of earlier editions and transl., including Winfield and Winfield, as above, 67; Nicolaïdès, as above, 4–5; A. G. Tsopanakes, "Ἡ Παναγία τοῦ Ἀρακος ἢ τοῦ Ἀρακα ἢ ἡ Ἀρακιώτισσα," *Κυπρ.Σπ.* 50 (1986), 116; Stylianos and Stylianos, *Painted Churches*, 101; Buckler and Buckler, as above, 49–51.

c. Scroll of the Virgin Eleousa: *BEIÜ* 1, no. 230 (p. 329) with a German transl. and a list of earlier editions and transl.

d. Scroll of St. Kyriakos the Anchorite: *BEIÜ* 1, no. 225 (p. 325) with a German transl. and list of earlier editions and transl.

Monument/Artefact: Inscriptions of 1192 CE in the church of the *Panagia tou Arakos*, Lagoudera:

- a. Dedicatory Inscription over the north door: repr. in Winfield and Winfield, as above, fig. 188; Nicolaïdès, as above, fig. 2
- b. See fig. I.2.7a
- c. See fig. I.2.7b
- d. The Scroll of St. Kyriakos the Anchorite: Reproduced in Rhoby, *BEIÜ* 1, fig. 85; Nicolaïdès 1996: fig. 88

Other Translations: a. Winfield and Winfield, as above, 65; Sophocleous, as above, 10; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 158; Buckler and Buckler, as above, (English); Nicolaïdès 1996: 4 (French).

- b. R. S. Nelson, “Image and Inscription: Pleas for Salvation in Spaces of Devotion,” in *Art and Text in Byzantine Culture*, ed. L. James (Cambridge, 2007), 109; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power*, 102; Winfield and Winfield, as above, 67–68; Sophocleous, as above, 19–21; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 102, 159; M. Panagiotidi, “The Question of the Role of the Donor and the Painter: A Rudimentary Approach,” *ΔΧΑΕ* ser., 4, vol. 17 (1993–94), 147 n. 20; Buckler and Buckler, as above, 49–51 (English); Nicolaïdès 1996: 5 (French); G. Subotić and I. Toth, “Natpisi istorijske sadržine na freskama XI I XII veka,” *ZRVI* 36: 1997, 109 (Serbian). See also *BEIÜ* 1, no. 224 (p. 323–24).
- c. Nelson, as above, 112; Pentcheva, as above, 180; Lauxterman, *Poetry*, 166–67; Winfield and Winfield, as above, 175 (English); Nicolaïdès 1996: 108 (French); A. Paul, “Beobachtungen zu Epigrammen auf Objekten; Lassen wir Epigramme sprechen!,” in *Kulturhistorische Bedeutung byzantinischer Epigramme: Akten des internationalen Workshop (Wien, 1.–2. Dezember 2006)*, eds. W. Hörandner and A. Rhoby (Vienna, 2008) no. 1, 71 (German). See also *BEIÜ* 1, no. 230 (p. 329)
- d. Nicolaïdès, as above, 121 (French), see also *BEIÜ* 1, no. 225 (p. 325)



Fig. I.2.7a South wall under the dome. The Mother of God Arakiotissa, Panagia tou Arakos, Lagoudera, Cyprus

Photo: The Byzantine Institute and Dumbarton Oaks Fieldwork Records and Papers, c.late 1920s–2000s

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Significance

The inscriptions here identify the paintings' date and patron, but serve a notable range of further purposes, as well, inflecting the sophisticated interplay of the images' messages, enabling the depicted figures to speak to each other, and exposing varied layers of the patron's emotional and intellectual engagement with the great mural icon that he has commissioned.

The Author

Unknown.



Fig. I.2.7b Scroll of the Virgin Eleousa. Panagia tou Arakos, Lagoudera, Cyprus
© A. W. Carr

Text and Context

With their lithe, slender figures, rippling garments, and clear, luminous colors, the frescoes in Lagoudera's naos reflect the refined mannerism of the late twelfth century, and their elite visual style invited comparably elegant verbal inscriptions. The inscriptions at Lagoudera give voice either to the patron, or to individual holy figures. They do not, as in Asinou, give voice to the narrative scenes. As earlier at Asinou, the donor's inscriptions include a non-metrical statement of name and date, and a poetic petition addressing the Mother of God. Here, however, the two are aligned reciprocally across the naos, complementing one another in a dialog of donation and petition that is couched within a larger discourse of presentation played out by the sacred images around them.⁷ Thus they are presented together below as inscriptions I and II. The prose text stating Leon's presentation of the fresco cycle, over the north door, is accompanied by scenes of presentations received: the Virgin received in the Temple above, and Christ received in the arms of Symeon below.⁸ Opposite it, on the south wall, within the looming mural icon of the Virgin Arakiotissa presenting the Christ Child as if in a liturgical spoon, is Leon's

⁷ See the analysis of the naos imagery in Papanastasiou 2001: 491–501.

⁸ Reproduced in color in Chotzakoglou 2005, pl. 3; Sophocleous 1998, pl. 15; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, fig. 84.

long, poetic plea that she will – having received his images – present him and his family with the salvation they crave.⁹ The angels flanking Mary carry Passion Instruments, a precocious motif making explicit the cost of presenting her Child for humankind's salvation.¹⁰ The intensity of Leon's plea might be seen to imply that his offering, too, has come at the cost of suffering and loss.

The inscriptions giving voice to holy figures include above all the poetic dialogue contained on the scroll of the Mother of God Eleousa, who stands full-length in profile orant posture on the north bema pier, facing the standing Christ Antiphonetes on the south pier.¹¹ Andreas Rhoby has also identified a metrical couplet on the scroll of St. Kyriakos, who stands among the saints of the sanctoral cycle in the northwest bay.¹² The latter couplet is witty. But addressing the saint in the second person, instead of voicing his thoughts, it seems likely to have been composed about an icon, not for a scroll in his hand. Certainly it is exceptional in Lagoudera's sanctoral cycle.

The Mother of God bearing her poetic dialog with Christ, by contrast, is widely known, within and outside of Cyprus. Lagoudera's figure has many Cypriot sequels in the decades to 1330, iconographically uniform except for the adoption in the late thirteenth century of the five-line version of the dialog: 1) church of Joachim and Anna, Kalliana, north bema pier, thirteenth century, with only fragments of the discourse visible;¹³ 2) church of the Panagia, Moutoullas, of 1280, using the five-line version of the discourse;¹⁴ 3) St. Herakleidos in the Monastery of St. John Lampadistes, Kalopanagiotis, c.1300, with fragments of the five-line verse;¹⁵ 4) Panagia Phorbiotissa, Asinou, flanking the door from narthex to naos, 1332/3, with an abbreviated summary of the text;¹⁶ 5) Panagia Phorbiotissa, Asinou, flanking the entrance to the bema, 1340s, with the five-line version of the dialog.¹⁷

These examples post-date Lagoudera, which is widely cited as the earliest example on Cyprus.¹⁸ Four examples may, however, have existed earlier on Cyprus: in the *katholikon* of the Apsinthiotissa Monastery near Koutsovendis, dated near 1100 by Athanasios Pappageorghiou but to the late twelfth century by Andreas Rhoby;¹⁹ in 1105/6 in the naos at

9 Reproduced in color in Chotzakoglou 2005: 2, fig. 488; Winfield and Winfield 2003, pl. 4, 32; Sophocleous 1998, pl. 16, 24; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, fig. 85.

10 Millner 2011; Soteriou 1953–54: 89–91.

11 Reproduced in color in Sophocleous 1998, pl. 23; well reproduced in black and white in Maguire 1999, fig. 20]; see also Kalopissi-Verti 2006: 106; Winfield, and Winfield 2003, fig. 137, 283; Nicolaidès 1996, fig. 18, 77; Panagiotidi 1993–94, fig. 5

12 Winfield and Winfield 2003, fig. 105.

13 These are given in Chotzakoglou 2005, 1: 607 n. 1059.

14 See II.6.7.

15 Given in *BEIÛ* 1, 335.

16 See I.2.6 (I).

17 See I.2.6 (III).

18 This in accord with the judgment that the orant Virgin with the poetic dialog emerged in the mid twelfth century: Djordjević and Marković 2000–01: 24 and *passim*.

19 See in *BEIÛ* 1, 332; Chotzakoglou 2005: 1, 609; 2, fig. 441, where it is evident that the scroll is no longer legible in surviving photographs.

Asinou, where the program of the 1340s largely reproduces that of the early twelfth century;²⁰ in Kalliana, where the thirteenth-century image is likely to repeat one from the early twelfth century beneath it;²¹ and in the church of the Holy Apostles, Perachorio, where the full-length, profile orant Mother of God is only partially preserved.²² In addition, there is the closely related interchange between Christ and Mary in the tomb of Neophytos the Recluse at the Enkleistra.²³ Thus the figure at Lagoudera – though beautiful – may not have introduced the type to Cyprus, as often suggested.

20 Carr 2012: 238.

21 Chotzakoglou 2005, 1: 607–08.

22 Megaw and Hawkins 1962: 333, fig. 48, though this is unlikely to me because she faced not Christ, but John the Baptist,

23 See I.3.5 (II).

Text*a. Dedicatory Inscription over the North Door*

Ἄνιστορήθ(η) ὁ πάνσεπτος ναὸς τῆς ὑπ(ε)ρ(αγίας) Θ(εοτόκ)ου τοῦ Ἄρακ(ος)¹
 διὰ συνδρομ(ῆς) καὶ πολλοῦ πόθου κυροῦ Λέοντ(ος) τοῦ Αὐθέ(ν)τ(ος)· μηνὶ
 Δεκεμβρίῳ Ἰνδ(ικτιῶνος) ἰα΄ τοῦ ,ςψα΄ ἔτους.

b. Dedicatory Inscription around the Mother of God Arakiotissa

Ἡ Αρακιώτισσα καὶ κεχαριτωμένη·

Ἄχραντον ὁ σὴν ἐκμορφώσας εἰκόνα
 χρώμασι φθαρτοῖς, Πάναγνε Θεομητορ,
 πόθῳ σὺν πολλῶ καὶ θερμοτάτῃ πίστει,
 5 Λέων πενιχρός, εὐτελῆς σὸς [ο]ϊκέτης,
 ὁ τοῦ αὐθέντος πατρόθεν κεκλημένος,
 σὺν ὁμοζύγῳ καὶ συνδούλῃ [...]²
 αἰτοῦσι πιστῶς σὺν δάκρυσιν ἀμέτροις
 10 Εὐθυμον εὐρεῖν βίου λοιποῦ τὸ πέρασ
 σὺν ὁμοδόλοισ καὶ παισὶ σοῖς [ο]ϊκέταις,
 καὶ λήξεως τυχοῦσι τῶν σεσωσμένων·
 μόνη γὰρ ἔχεις τὸ δόξασθαι, Παρθένε,
 [ο]ϊκετῶν θέλειν δυσωπηθεῖσα πάντως
 τούτοις παρασχεῖν [...]τ[.....].³

c. Scroll of the Virgin Eleousa

Τί, μήτερ αἰτεῖς; τὴν βροτῶν σωτηρίαν.
 παρῶργισάν με. συμπάθησον, υἱέ μου.
 ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐπιστρέφουσιν. καὶ σῶσον χάριν.
 ἔξουσιν λύτρων. εὐχαριστῶ σοι, Λόγε.

d. Scroll of St. Kyriakos the Anchorite

Σκίλλης ἀμύνη, Κυριακέ, πικρία
 γεῦσιν γλυκείας ἢ θανεῖν κατεκρίθης.

Translation*a. Dedicatory Inscription over the North Door*⁴

The most venerable church of the all-holy Theotokos of Arakos was repainted with images through the contribution and great desire of Leon the Authentēs, the month of December, eleventh indiction, in the year 6701 (of Adam = 1192 CE).

*b. Dedicatory Inscription around the Mother of God Arakiotissa*⁵

Arakiotissa, Full of Grace

He who gave form to your flawless image
 With corruptible colors, All-pure Mother of God,
 With deep yearning and burning faith,
 5 The wretched Leon, your humble servant,
 Called Authentēs from his father,
 Along with his spouse and fellow-servant, ...
 Asking with faith, with measureless tears
 To find favorable end to the rest of their life
 10 With their children, fellows in servitude and your servants,
 And to enjoy the lot of the saved:
 For you alone, Virgin, have the glorification
 Of all servants, to wish – being implored – To grant them their [*desired*
salvation].

*c. Scroll of the Virgin Eleousa*⁶

What do you ask, mother? Humans' salvation.
 They have angered me. Have sympathy, my Son.
 But they do not repent. And save them by grace.
 They will be redeemed. Thank you, O Word.

*d. Scroll of St. Kyriakos the Anchorite*⁷

With the bitterness of onions, Kyriakos, you ward off
 the taste of sweetness through which you'd be condemned to death.

Commentary

1. The letters intended both here at the end of the church's nickname, and later in Leon's epithet, Authentēs, are variously supplied as either ... ος or ... ου.
2. Nicolaïdēs 1996: 5, follows Buckler and Buckler, "Dated Wall-Paintings," 49, who read the name Maria here. This does fit the scansion. But nothing is legible at this point today.
3. Tsopanakes 1986: 121 suggests [ποθη]τ[ῆν σωτηρίων], also adopted by Nicolaïdēs.
4. In contrast to similar statements of patronage in churches of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the inscription is deliberately calligraphic and without a distinguishing frame that might invite its perception as significant without being read.²⁴ Thus it accords with the literacy presumed by poetic inscriptions. Nonetheless, in contrast to its counterpart at Asinou, it is integrated into the larger scheme of the naos' visual program, taking place among other presentations, and materializing beneath the Keramidion, an image that is mystical as well as visual.
5. The poem introduces Leon as one who produces icons: what his patronage has given Mary is her beautiful image. Yet the words play briefly upon the paradox of such a gift. Holy icons present perfect images, but only by imperfect means, for their medium is color. Color, a volatile word in Byzantine usage, is the visible skin of substance, but not itself material. It offers the form but not the substance of what is seen. Nonetheless, it requires a material medium, and so is perishable and maculate. Though Mary's image is immaculate, the icon that gives it form is not.
6. The popularity of this figure shows how clearly it spoke to viewers. It exemplifies the eagerness of Byzantine viewers to give voice to painted figures, but its message goes farther, for the operative will is Mary's. She literally compels her Son to accede to her demand for humans' salvation. This reflects the growing dominance of the Mother of God in Byzantine devotional practice. In Lagoudera, Moutoullas, and the narthex at Asinou, Mary's power of mercy was concretized in the epithet Eleousa, but by the 1340s in the Asinou naos, the epithet had become unnecessary.
7. Intriguing here is the kinship of this couplet, in its second-person address and its witty tone, to the later epigrams composed by Manuel Philes about saints, often for or in response to icons of them. This couplet may have been composed for an icon, and as such offers insight into the sources upon which painters drew when composing a sanctoral cycle. We imagine them searching Scripture or saints' writings, but they may also have foraged in poetic anthologies.

²⁴ See the analysis of framed inscriptions as "icon-like," inviting comprehension without actual reading, in Gerstel, *Rural Lives*, 49: "The framed inscription was impressed as an image into the visual memory of those who used the church."

Text B | The Fourteenth-Century Inscription

Ed.: Teule, H. G. B., 2006, “A Theological Treatise by Išo’yahb bar Malkon Preserved in the Theological Compendium *Asfār al-asrār*,” *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 58, 235–52. A. W. Carr, “The Murals of the Bema and the Naos: The Paintings of the Late Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries,” in *Asinou Across Time*, 310; Winfield and Winfield, as above, 68; See also Tsopanakes, as above, 117–18; C. Mango, “Appendix to David C. Winfield, ‘The Church of the Panagia tou Arakos, Lagoudera: First Preliminary Report, 1968’,” *DOP* 23–24 (1969–70), 379–80

Monument/Artefact: Inscription around the Mother of God in the outer tympanum of the north door to the naos at Lagoudera; see fig. I.2.7c

Other Translations: Carr, as above, 310; Winfield and Winfield, as above, 68; Mango, as above, 379–80 (English)

Significance

Leontios’ reference to “the writer of this tablet” rather than to “the painter of this tablet” gives his inscription special interest. As Mango says, this suggests that the text was adopted from the colophon of a book. The entry on the Benaki Psalter has shown that the calligraphers of Komnenian Cyprus did use elaborate poetic colophons. A recurrent question posed by the mural inscriptions discussed here has been that of their source:



Fig. I.2.7c Mother of God in the outer tympanum of the north door to the naos at Lagoudera. Panagia tou Arakos, Lagoudera, Cyprus

© A. W. Carr

did patrons furnish them or painters; were they culled from theological texts or poetic anthologies; can we count on them to be in any sense medium-specific, or were they employed without medium-sensitivity? Leontios' choice of a manuscript colophon to set off the venerability of his image shows how unpredictable the answers to these questions can be.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

The earliest concrete testimony that the Panagia tou Arakos was functioning as a monastic church comes from Basil Barsky's record of his visit there in 1735.²⁵ Nothing indicates that the church had initially been built for this purpose. It seems likely that it assumed this role in the 1330s.²⁶ Water damage to the frescoes of 1192 was arrested at this time; a fresco painter or workshop was at work redressing the damage; and for the first time there is evidence of mural decoration in the narthex. The narthex was later demolished but left as testimony to its existence the frescoes that had occupied its east wall, which was also the west wall of the church.²⁷ We do not know when the narthex had been built, but the fact that it was frescoed only in the fourteenth century suggests that its construction may well have coincided with the church's adaptation to monastic use.

The fourteenth-century frescoes here belong to a cluster of Cypriot mural programs that are very similar in style and epigraphy to those of 1332/3 at Asinou and dated on this basis, making this period a particularly productive one artistically.²⁸ Among the frescoes here at Lagoudera is one with an inscription that has attracted particular interest. It shows the Virgin Mary, arms outspread in prayer and identified as the Mother of God Pantanassa, in the outer tympanum of the north door to the naos.²⁹ Arching over her figure is an inscription that exalts her prophetic acclaim by the prophet Habakkuk and closes with a plea for prayers on behalf of the painter, Leontios the Deacon. Leontios is the only painter of this period who is known by name, and much speculation has eddied around his likely role in the rich roster of mural programs that share the Asinou style.³⁰ As at Asinou at this date, it is Mary's image that warrants the use of an inscription; like the couplet around the Virgin Phorbiotissa over Asinou's door, Leontios' words set off the image as venerable,

²⁵ Winfield and Winfield 2003: 48–49, 52–54; as he did in so many Cypriot churches, Barsky left his name at Lagoudera, inscribed in the apse.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 55, 61.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, fig. 8, 300–03, and in color in Kalopissi-Verti 2012: 201–02, fig. 5.61.

²⁸ Kalopissi-Verti 2012: 201 lists, along with the narthex at Asinou and the murals at Lagoudera those in the naos at Asinou, St. Sozomenos in Potamia, the Holy Cross, Pelendri, and St. Marina, Pyrga.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 68–69, figs. 8, 303; Winfield 1969–70: 377–80, figs. 8, 9.

³⁰ Kalopissi-Verti 2012: 202–05; Carr 2012: 310; Winfield and Winfield 2003: 69.

wreathing it with spoken veneration. Composed in the second person, it invites the viewer to address Mary in prayer, which Leontios capitalizes upon to solicit prayer for himself. The text's rather complicated content pleads a metrical origin: Cyril Mango identified its source in a seventh- or eighth-century heirmos by George of Sicily,³¹ while Agapetos Tsopanakes nudged its syllables into a relatively respectable epigram.³² Mary's prefiguration by the prophets was a standard component of her veneration, but it assumed particular prominence in this group of mural programs.³³

³¹ Mango 1969–70: 379–80.

³² Tsopanakes 1986: 117–18.

³³ Carr 2012: 229, with further bibliography.

Text

Ἦχῳ εὐλάλῳ προδιαγνοὺς Ἀμβακούμ
 ἀραρότως ἐκ σοῦ Παρθένε Λόγου τὴν σάρκωσιν
 καὶ κόσμος λελύτρωται τῆς ἀρχεγόνου
 ἀρᾶς. εὐχέσαι τῷ γράψαντι τὴν δέλτον
 5 ταύτην Λέοντος τοῦ διακόνου, ἀμήν.

Translation

With a clear voice Habakkuk firmly foretold
 the Incarnation of the Word through you, O Virgin,
 and the world has been delivered from its original
 curse. Pray for the writer of this tablet,
 5 Leontios the Deacon. Amen.

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I.2.8

Inscriptions in the Church of the Holy Cross, Pelendri, Cyprus (1178 and fourteenth century)

ANNEMARIE WEYL CARR

Ed.: I. Dedicatory Inscription of the Year 1178: N. Zarras, *Ο ναός του Τιμίου Σταυρού στο Πελένδρι* (Nicosia, 2010), 15; C. Hadjichristodoulou in C. Gerasimou, D. Myrianthefs, K. Papaïoakeim, and C. Hadjichristodoulou, *Οι Ναοί των Πελεντρίων, Ιστορία – Αρχιτεκτονική – Τέχνη* = *The Churches of Pelendria, History – Architecture – Art* (Nicosia, 2005), 59, with unnumbered fig.; C. G. Chotzakoglou, “Βυζαντινή αρχιτεκτονική και τέχνη στην Κύπρο,” in *Ιστορία της Κύπρου, Τόμος Γ΄, Βυζαντινή Κύπρος, 465–787 = Πίνακες*, ed. T. Papadopoulos (Nicosia), 609 n. 1069; Papageorghiou, “Βυζαντινή ἐπιγραφική,” 112; Stylianos and Stylianos, *Painted Churches*, fig. 302

II. Dedicatory Inscription of the Fourteenth Century: Zarras, as above, 19; Gerasimou *et al.*, as above, 81, with unnumbered fig.

III. On the Dome: Zarras, as above, 27; *BEIÜ* 1, no. 251, 367–68, with German transl. and a list of previous editions; Papageorghiou, as above, 112

Monument/Artefact: Inscriptions in the church of the Holy Cross, Pelendri. Color photos of the inscription can be found as follows:

- I. Zarras, as above, fig. 8
- II. Zarras, as above, fig. 12
- III. Zarras, as above, fig. 18

Other Translations:

- I. Hadjichristodoulou as above, 59; Stylianos and Stylianos, *Painted Churches*, 507 (English)
- II. Hadjichristodoulou, as above, 83; Stylianos and Stylianos, *Painted Churches*, 223 (English)
- III. None

Significance

The Holy Cross is a village church. Both the church itself and the village it served expanded steadily in the twelfth through fourteenth centuries. Inscriptions cast precious light on the social and economic character of the building's enhancement, offering the earliest instance of communal patronage on the island – including the painter's name, a later and plausibly more elite example of shared patronage, and a verse inscription in the dome that seems truly cosmopolitan in origin.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

The church of the Holy Cross, Pelendri, sits on a bluff near the top of its village, with the land falling away precipitously to its west.¹ A cemetery just below it, and funerary portraits from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries in its naos and northern aisle, intimate that if not from its origins, it was for much of its history a funerary church.² A large, late twelfth-century icon of the *Ἐλκόμενος ἐπὶ Σταυροῦ* (Christ drawn to the cross) and a bronze cross of the twelfth century sheathed in far later silver relief attest the veneration of the cross to which the church owes its name.³ With westward expansion precluded by the steep terrain, the building sprawled to either side, adding extensions on both the north side and the south. The broad south aisle opens into an ample apse at its east end; the apseless north aisle, in turn, seems from its imagery to have been a Latin chapel. An elaborate Jesse Tree – the earliest in Cyprus – fills its west wall, a scene of the Doubting Thomas with kneeling portraits of a Latin couple occupies the south wall,⁴ and beside it are the painted arms of a member of the reigning Lusignan family, plausibly Jean de Lusignan, brother of King Peter I (r.1359–69) and Lord of Pelendri, who was murdered in 1375. The pell-mell addition of these spaces bespeaks the vigorous growth of the village under the Lusignans as both a royal fief and a commercial hub on one of the north–south routes crossing the Troodos mountains. A comprehensive campaign of fresco painting undertaken in the middle third of the fourteenth century binds all of these spaces together and sets its stamp on the church as a whole.⁵

The history of the Holy Cross as a village church is fascinatingly documented by two inscriptions recording shared community sponsorship of its upkeep and adornment. The earlier of the two, discovered in the 1990s when the mid fourteenth-century apse painting was removed, accompanies a lower layer of murals of modest quality on the apse conch and wall.⁶ It gives the date of 1178, names the major donors, who joined the village as a whole in supporting the work, and originally identified the monk who did the painting, though his name has now vanished. The inscription's first word, read as *Ἀνηκοδομιθη* by Christodoulos Hadjichristodoulou, may more correctly be *Ἄνακαινίσθη*, as read by

1 On the church see Zarras 2010; Gerasimou *et al.* 2005; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 223–32, 507–10.

2 Papacostas 1999, 1: 81.

3 Papageorghiou 1992, pll. 14a–14c; Gerasimou *et al.* 2005: 146–49.

4 Christoforaki 2000: 71–87.

5 Christoforaki 1996: 215–55; the campaign is variously dated to 1335–40 by Zarras 2010: 45, the mid fourteenth century by Sophia Kalopissi-Verti 2012a: 204, and the third quarter of the fourteenth century by Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 224.

6 Gerasimou *et al.* 2005: 58–59; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 507–10.

Nektarios Zarras, Athanasios Papageorghiou, and Andreas and Judith Stylianou. This would indicate that the church itself existed already, and pre-dated the campaign of 1178.

Such campaigns of collective community patronage are encountered as early as the eleventh century, but become far more numerous from the thirteenth century onward.⁷ The Holy Cross is the earliest case known on Cyprus. Typically, priests are named as instigating figures, for priests were characteristically among the more respected members of village communities.⁸ They may also have been capable of larger donations – as was perhaps the case with George here, though in cases where individual contributions were itemized, it was more often local officials than priests who made the big, enabling gifts, their donations amounting to many times those of the ordinary villagers.⁹ Angeliki Laiou points out, however, that villagers' modest gifts – characteristically of a tree, or tiny segment of land – were larger than meet the eye, as they entailed the labor of upkeep and harvesting, as well as the produce, over an extended period of time.

The second record of shared patronage at the Holy Cross accompanies the fresco campaign of the fourteenth century. This was detailed in an inscription over the western door of the church. It survives only in very partial condition, making it impossible to know whether it was a case of what Sophia Kalopissi-Verti calls cooperative patronage, shared among a group of three or four participants, or of collective patronage, in which a large group of individuals and/or families, often an entire village, participated.¹⁰

Knowing more about the supporters of the fourteenth-century campaign might have offered valuable help in explaining the wide range of styles in the frescoes, with imagery of metropolitan elegance in the dome and Jesse Tree, and of powerful, regional character elsewhere. The convergence of inspiration from diverse sources emerges vividly in the dome itself, which preserves a poetic inscription. With Hetoimasia and surging angels – though no Deesis – gathered around the Pantokrator, the dome adopts the local iconography first seen at Trikomo.¹¹ But its inscription is repeated widely throughout the Byzantine world,¹² prompting Athanasios Papageorghiou to write that “this must be from Constantinople. How else would one explain its appearance in the chapel of St. Nicholas at the Great Lavra on Mount Athos, which was painted by Frankos Katelanos in 1560 and in the dome of St. George of the Greeks in Venice?”¹³

7 See Kalopissi-Verti 2012a: 178–79; Kalopissi-Verti 2007: 333–40; Kalopissi-Verti 2012b: 125–40; and the fascinating analyses of the individual contributions in such shared enterprises in Kalopissi-Verti 1992: 65–82.

8 See Laiou 2012: 117–18.

9 See the cases of the church of the Anargyroi, Kepoula of 1265, and of the Archangel Michael church in Polemitas of 1278, both in the Mani, in Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 35.

10 Kalopissi-Verti 2012b: 125–26.

11 See II.6.8.

12 *BEIÜ* 1: 368 lists seven examples.

13 Papageorghiou 2003: 112 n. 43.

Texts

I. Dedicatory Inscription of the Year 1178

Ἀνακαινίσθη καὶ ζωγραφήσθη ὁ πάντιμος ναὸς τοῦ τιμίου καὶ προσκυνήτου σταυροῦ διὰ συνδρομῆς καὶ πόθου Γεωργίου ἱερέως καὶ τῶν δε λοιπῶν ἱερέων καὶ περιχωριοῦ Πελετρίων. ἐζωγραφήσθη δε διὰ ἐμοῦ χειρὸς ἀμαρτολοῦ τε ταπεινοῦ....ου τοῦ μοναχοῦ εὐχέστε αὐτοὺς διὰ τὸν Κύριον ὁ Θεὸς συγχωρήση αὐτοὺς ἀμήν ἔτος 5785 .

II. Dedicatory Inscription of the Fourteenth Century

Ἀνεκαινίσθη καὶ ἀνιστορίθη ὁ πάνσεπτος ναὸς τοῦ τιμίου καὶ ζωοποιοῦ σταυροῦ διὰ συνδρομῆς καὶ ἐξόδου καὶ πολλοῦ πόθου τοῦ σε[βαστοῦ]

III. Dome Inscription

Ἐγὼ κριτῆς τε καὶ Θεὸς πάντων πέλω·
[ἰδού, προ]κύψας ὑπόθεν πρὸ τῆς δίκης
παρεγγυῶμαι τοὺς ἐμοὺς τηρεῖν νόμους
ᾧσοις θελητὸν ἐκφυγεῖν τὰς βασά[νους].

Translation

I. Dedicatory Inscription of the Year 1178¹

The all-holy church of the holy and venerated Cross was restored and painted through the support and desire of the priest George and the other priests and the village of Pelendri. It was painted by the hand of me, sinful and humble os the monk. Pray for them to the Lord. May God forgive them. Amen. In the year 6676 (from Adam).

II. Dedicatory Inscription of the Fourteenth Century²

The most venerable church of the holy and life-giving Cross was restored and repainted with images through the support and great desire of the most respected

III. Dome Inscription³

I am judge and God of all.⁴
Behold: bending down from the heights before the Judgment,
I ask that all obey my laws
who want to avoid the torments.

Commentary

1. Among the first questions in the history of any object must be “who wanted it?” Much of Byzantine art history is focused on elite patronage. Yet medieval Cyprus was a village society, and inscriptions like this one recording popular patronage throw invaluable light on the range of social and economic resources that shaped its monuments.
2. The fragmentary state of the inscription makes it impossible to know how large the group was who participated in the funding, or whether any local lord, Greek or Latin, contributed. Nonetheless, the persistence of collaborative patronage as the church became not just larger but more pretentiously outfitted illuminates the rising fortunes of the village community.
3. This casts light on Cypriot enthusiasm for poetic inscriptions, which surged in the twelfth century with the influx of Komnenian artistic conventions, but dwindled thereafter. Thus use of an epigram here in the fourteenth century is exceptional. It occurs within a dome of regional iconography, but of extremely elite, Palaiologan style. Given its wide dissemination, it seems likely that the epigram – for all the local character of the iconography – was an import like the style.
4. God is called κριτής τῶν πάντων in Hebr. 12:23, which describes the Heavenly Jerusalem: ἀλλὰ προσελθύθατε Σιών ὄρει καὶ πόλει Θεοῦ ζῶντος, Ἱερουσαλήμ ἐπουρανίῳ, καὶ μυριάσιν ἀγγέλων, πανηγύρει καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρωτοτόκων ἐν οὐρανοῖς ἀπογεγραμμένων, καὶ κριτῇ Θεῶ πάντων: “But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all . . .”

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I.2.9 Manuel Straboromanos (c.1070–after 1118)

Epigrams on the Emperor's *Epanoklivanon*

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: J. P. Gautier, “Le dossier d’un haut fonctionnaire d’Alexis I^{er} Comnène, Manuel Straboromanos,” *REB* 23 (1965), 201

MS.: Florence, BML, Plutei 32.52 (s. XIV), f. 125r¹

Other Translations: None

Significance

The following series of dedicatory epigrams was written on a surprising object: an *epanoklivanon*, a piece of the imperial armor. The six different epigrams shuffle the same words around and were probably written for the commissioner to choose one to offer together with her gift. One of the texts echoes contemporary theological (and political) debates, while the last verses of the series offer an example of the successful re-use of poetry.

The Author

Manuel Straboromanos was a high dignitary at the court of Alexios I Komnenos. He is mostly known for his three orations addressed to the emperor Alexios I and his wife Eirene.² In addition to the poem discussed below, he composed one further poem, an epitaph for one of his children.³ Nikephoros Straboromanos, Manuel’s son, penned an epitaph for his father.⁴ Manuel, despite his natural inclination towards learning, followed a career in public affairs. He became *protonobelissimos* and *megas hetaireiarches* between the years 1108 and 1118.⁵ His father has been identified with Romanos, also an imperial dignitary (*protoproedros* and *megas hetaireiarches*).⁶ Romanos’ belongings were confiscated

1 Consulted. For a new description of the manuscript see Bernabò and Magneli 2011: 189–232, esp. 190–202.

2 Two laudatory speeches to Alexios Komnenos and a speech of consolation for Eirene Doukaina for her late brother; ed. Gautier 1965: 178–201, with corrections in Bühler 1969: 237–41. All three works can be found in a single manuscript, Paris, BnF Coisl. 136, ff. 243–249v. For a bibliography on Straboromanos and his work see Nesseris, Παιδεία, 2, 507–08 (no. 195); on Manuel Straboromanos as member of Eirene Doukaina’s circle see Grünbart 2015: 186.

3 Ed. Gautier 1965: 201–03.

4 Ed. Gautier 1965: 203–04.

5 Gautier 1965: 171.

6 Gautier 1965: 171.

at the beginning of Alexios I's (r.1081–1118) reign, probably for political reasons.⁷ But later, in 1092, Romanos appears to be in charge of a garrison in the region around Ohrid.⁸

Text and Context

At an unknown date, Eirene Doukaina⁹ commissioned an *epanoklivanon* (the Byzantine equivalent of the Western surcoat)¹⁰ as a gift for Emperor Alexios I. Straboromanos wrote the following verses about this gift. The *epanoklivanon* was sent to Alexios, while he was on an expedition. It is uncertain how Manuel came to compose these verses. It is unclear whether money or other rewards for Straboromanos were involved, the phrase *ek prosopou/ἐκ προσώπου* in the title of the first epigram and the proposition *apo/ἀπὸ* (as from ἀπὸ προσώπου) indicates that the verses that follow are *ethopoietic* texts: hence, it is not the author who speaks but someone else. It is not known whether Eirene herself commissioned Manuel to write these verses.¹¹

The first epigram assumes the voice of Alexios. One should note that even though the verses written on behalf of Eirene were transmitted under the same title, the scribe of the manuscript indicates, by placing a cross at the end of each epigram, that they are in fact five different epigrams of two to three verses (vv. 1–3, 4–5, 6–7, 8–10, and 11–12). The epigrams have similar content and thus the empress could choose the one of them that expressed her feelings best.¹² It is possible that the selected verses were then woven onto the *epanoklivanon*. Thus, the proposition *πρὸς* (*to*) in the title of the first text indicates that the verses are literally addressed to St. Demetrios with the voice of the emperor, and not necessarily that Alexios read the verses in front of St. Demetrios.

The style of the epigrams is not exceptional. A strongly evocative tone that often characterizes dedicatory epigrams on works of art is also apparent in the following string of texts. Regarding the metrics, Manuel uses the standard *dodecasyllable* verse with an accentuated antepenultimate syllable at the end of verses¹³ and a caesura after the fifth or the seventh syllable.

7 Romanos had supported Botaneiates: Cheynet, *Pouvoir*, 361.

8 Gautier 1965: 172; Cheynet, *Pouvoir*, 241.

9 Polemis, *Doukai* no. 26.

10 A cloth to be worn over the armor, like the western medieval surcoat; see the Commentary, n. 6.

11 On *ethopoïiai* and *ethopoietic* elements in dedicatory epigrams on works of art see Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 87–92; on *ethopoïia* in general see E. Jeffreys, Introduction, II.3.

12 On multiple epigrams written on the same subject for the patron to choose from see Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 37–39, where the earlier bibliography is also cited.

13 V. 8 finishes with a proper name and thus it is treated as exceptional.

Text

A. Τοῦ κυροῦ Μανουήλ τοῦ Στραβορωμανοῦ ἐκ προσώπου τοῦ βασιλέως κυροῦ Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ πρὸς τὸν ἅγιον Δημήτριον εἰκονισμένον ἐκ χρυσοῦ ἐν ἱματίῳ ὃ φορεῖται ἄνω τῶν ὑπτίων, καλεῖται δὲ ἐπανωκλίβανον.

Αὐτόν σε, μάρτυς, ἔνδοθεν στέρνοις ἔχων,
τὴν σὴν θέαν ἕξωθεν ἐν νώτοις φέρων,
ὡς ἐντὸς ἐκτὸς πάντοθεν σὺ μὲ σκέποις.

B. Τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν ἅγιον ἀπὸ τῆς δεσποίνης.

- a. Πέμπω σε, μάρτυς, ἡ βασιλῆς Εἰρήνη,
τῷ βασιλεῖ μου καὶ συνοίκῳ δεσπότη
ὄπλον δυνατόν, ἔνδυσιν σωτηρίου.
- b. Μάρτυς, τὰ νῶτα τῷ βασιλεῖ μου σκέπων
καὶ στέρνα σῶζε καὶ συνώθει τὸ ξίφος.¹
- c. Τῷ βασιλεῖ μου, μάρτυς, ἐν μάχαις γίνου
θώραξ κατ'ἐχθρῶν καὶ ἄκατ' ἐχθρῶν ἄ ξίφος.²
- d. Ἄλλοι.³
Ἀλέξιος γὰρ ᾧδε καὶ Δημήτριος,
ὁ βασιλεύς, ὁ μάρτυς, ἄμφω πρὸς μάχην⁴
ὀρμῶσι κοινῶς· φεῦγε, βαρβάρων γένος.
- e. Ἄλλοι.⁵
Μάρτυς, βασιλεύς, ἵππε, λόγχη, βάρβαροι,
σύμπνει, δίωκε, σπεῦδε, πληττε, πίπτετε.

Translation

- A. [Poem by] kyr Manuel Straboromanos on behalf of Emperor Alexios [I] Komnenos to St. Demetrios whose [picture] was woven in gold on the garment that is worn over the breastplate, the so-called *epanoklivanon*.⁶

Martyr, because I have you inside me, in my midst,
and I bear your appearance outside, on my back,
may you protect me from all sides, from inside as well as out.⁷

- B. Of the same [author], to the saint on behalf of the empress.⁸

- a. I, empress Eirene, send You, O Martyr,
to my emperor and husband the lord
[in order to become for him] a strong weapon and garment of salvation.
- b. Martyr, covering the rear of my emperor
protect his chest and brandish the sword together with him.
- c. Martyr, become armor and sword against foes
in the battle for my emperor.
- d. Other <verses>.
For here Alexios (is) also Demetrios,
the emperor and the martyr together
urge on battle;⁹ flee on race of barbarians!
- e. Other <verses>.
Martyr collaborate! Emperor chase away! Horse rush! Sword strike! Barbari-
ans die!¹⁰

Commentary

1. Following the manuscript, Gautier reads the second and the third poems together, as a single text. However, the repetition of the word “martyr” (“μάρτυς”) and of their subject matter indicates that they must be read as two separate epigrams.
2. The verse is corrupted. It consists of eleven syllables instead of twelve and the repetition of the phrase κατ’ ἐχθρῶν is certainly curious. The scribe probably made a mistake while copying and repeated the preceding word.
3. Not in Gautier’s edition.
4. Gautier (1965: 201) prints μαχήν, which is obviously a typographical mistake.
5. Not in Gautier’s edition.
- 6, 9. The word ἐπανωκλιβανον/*epanoklivanon* appears in a number of military treatises dating from the tenth century on (*LBG* s.v.). It means a garment worn “over the lamellar/scale armor”¹⁴ and probably looked similar to a medieval surcoat.¹⁵ *Epanoklivana* were used to protect the armor from the rain and the sun, as well as to adorn the military attire.¹⁶ They were heavily decorated and even included pearls and precious stones.
 St. Demetrios became the patron saint of the Komnenian dynasty from the very first years of Alexios’ reign.¹⁷ According to Anna Komnene, the saint appeared to the emperor in a dream painted on an icon and foretelling victory the night before the decisive battle against Bohemond, commander of the Normans, at Larissa (central Greece) in 1082.¹⁸ The choice of St. Demetrios as a patron saint reflects the dynasty’s military character.
7. The poet juxtaposes the “true” saint (who can only be seen with the eyes of the soul) and the saint’s appearance (to be seen with corporeal eyes). Reflections on the veneration of images appear rarely in epigrams on works of art. Since such references can be found only in the verses that are written on behalf of Alexios and not those on behalf of his wife, it may be possible to connect this epigram to the later years of the Komnenian dispute over the status of the icons and sacred objects.¹⁹ Alexios by pronouncing these verses demonstrates his orthodoxy regarding the veneration of the icons.
8. Although the verses are transmitted under the same title, they do not consist of one, coherent poem, but rather form a poetic unit. As markers in the manuscript suggest, they are five epigrams consisting of two to three verses each. All epigrams but the fourth one (“d”, vv. 8–10 according to Gautier’s numbering) place the word

14 Parani, *Reconstructing*, 118.

15 Grotowski, *Arms and Armour*, 178; Dawson 2012: 208.

16 Grotowski, *Arms and Armour*, 177–79; Parani, *Reconstructing*, 118–20.

17 Grotowski, *Arms and Armour*, 115–16.

18 *The Alexiad*, vv. 5–6.

19 See p. lii and Ch. Barber and D. Jenkins, in I.1.1.

“martyr” among the first words of the poem. This strongly evocative and dramatic tone reaches a climax in the last distich (which is in fact attributed to Psellos). In the first epigram (“a”, vv. 1–3 Gautier), Eirene states that she sends a gift, the *epanoklivanon*, and asks for the help of the saint for her husband. In the second epigram (“b”, vv. 4–5 Gautier), Eirene asks the saint to protect and help her husband in the battle. The third epigram (“c”, vv. 6–7 Gautier) conveys the same meaning; however Eirene appears to not only ask the saint to handle the sword together with the emperor, but instead to transform to the armor and the sword of Alexios. In the fourth epigram (“d”, vv. 8–10 Gautier), the empress understands the emperor and the saint to have unified in the face of a single soldier. The last distich (“e”, vv. 11–12 Gautier) has the most dramatic tone. Written in the present imperative the epigram needs to be read in an unusual fashion: the first word of the first verse of the distich (μάρτυς, v. 11) corresponds to the first word of the second verse (σύμπνυει, v. 12), the second word of the first verse to the second word of the second verse and so on.

10. These two verses have been attributed to the eleventh-century author Michael Psellos.²⁰ Re-used verses were often employed in Byzantium, especially if they were meant to become verse inscriptions. For example, a poem by the tenth-century John Geometres on the Forty Martyrs has been found on numerous monuments as a verse inscription and also in manuscripts under different ascriptions.²¹ Even poets themselves often recycled their own poems by using them on different occasions.²² The book by Ioannis Vassis, *Initia Carminorum Byzantinorum* (Berlin, 2005) and its supplement (*Parekbolai* 1 [2011]: 187–285) are extremely helpful for identifying re-used epigrams.

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²⁰ Westerink no. 27; Bernabò and Magneli 2011: 202.

²¹ Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 149–51.

²² Bernard, *Reading and Writing*, 248–51.

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I.3 *Eikon* and Iconography in Art and Literature

Introduction

FOTEINI SPINGOU

The word *eikon* in texts in medieval Greek was associated with all kinds of artistic representation: icons, frescoes, mosaics, tapestries, and other forms of visual art. The eleventh and twelfth centuries were crucial for the understanding and development of the Byzantine concept of *eikon* (pl. *eikones*). Some *eikones* were considered alive and animated (*empsychoi*). Depictions of the Holy acquired special appellations. New genres of icons such as vitae and calendar icons and new kinds of icons, such as the bilateral icon, were developed to serve the increasing importance of portable icons for the liturgy and private cult. Dedications of precious revetments to cover icons, restoration of decayed icons and frescoes, and epigrams written to give voice to the image and express the wishes of a donor are further indications of this increased cult. The texts in this chapter reveal the complex relationship between text and image, and the aspects of developing trends in visual arts that the Byzantines deemed worthy to record.

The first set of texts are epigrams composed by the most celebrated author of the twelfth century, Theodore Prodromos. They refer to depictions on a very unusual surface: the emperor's armor (Nikos Zagklas, I.3.1 in this volume). Theodore Prodromos wrote a further epigram on an icon of Christ. The ambiguity of his words demonstrates the difficulty of reconstructing original experiences using a text alone (Nikos Zagklas, I.3.2 in this volume). The next two contributions introduce examples of iconographic variations and new types bearing novel appellations that were developed in the twelfth century (Foteini Spingou, I.3.3 and I.3.4 in this volume). The inscriptions from the Enkleistra of St. Neophytos the Recluse in Cyprus, as well as the epigrams presented previously, demonstrate how closely text and image were associated in the mediation of a multisensory experience for the viewer. The texts on the walls of the enkleistra were tailor-made to accompany specific images, some of which offered novel subject matter and required explanatory notes (Annemarie Weyl Carr, I.3.5 in this volume).

The subsequent texts connect the acts of "seeing" and "saying." John Apokaukos' epigram explores viewing strategies for holy images using Platonic ideas on the relation of body and soul (Foteini Spingou, I.3.6 in this volume; on the importance of sight see also Alicia Walker, I.3.13 in this volume). In a highly emotional *ekphrasis*, Philagathos of Cerami speaks about the intensity of the feelings formed in the soul of the viewer by a scene of the Massacre of the Holy Innocents (Mircea Duluş, I.3.7 in this volume).

Secular iconographies were as important as religious ones. This observation may not be conveyed by the surviving corpus of artefacts with mythological subjects in museum



Fig. I.3 Ivory calendar icon of the twelve feasts, 6 × 4.8 cm, eleventh or twelfth centuries. Detroit Institute of Art, inv. no. 25.176

© Detroit Institute of Arts

and private collections, but it is clearly supported by the great number of texts that speak about such works. For example, Michael Italikos wrote a letter about his response to seeing an ancient coin (Emmanuel Bourbouhakis, I.3.8 in this volume). Numerous epigrams for rings indicate that Byzantines not only adorned themselves with crosses, *encolpia* or other prophylactic objects related to Christianity, but also with jewellery depicting imaginary and mythological creatures, such as Eros and the personifications of virtues

(Maria Mavroudi and Foteini Spingou, I.3.9, and Nikos Zagklas, I.3.10 in this volume). Descriptions of imaginary works of art in literary texts further demonstrate the amplification of the secular imaginary in the later centuries of the Byzantine era. An excerpt from Eumathios Makrembolites' *Hysmine and Hysminias* sheds light on the inscription's role as an essential complement to the image (Alicia Walker, I.3.11 in this volume). The decoration of spaces with secular scenes is also revealed in a poem on the tent of the great patron of arts the sebastokratorissa Eirene and in a comment on an ecclesiastical Canon about the decoration of houses (Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys, I.3.12, and Alicia Walker, I.3.13 in this volume). An epigram on the depiction of a young maiden captures the viewer's response to such images. Like the figures in religious icons, depicted mythological figures were discussed as if they were alive (Nikos Zagklas, I.3.14 in this volume). The final texts in this chapter once again reveal this period's preference for unconventional subjects: Eros becomes a painter in a poem by Manganeios Prodromos (Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys, I.3.16 in this volume) and Life is personified in a long poem on *Life and the World* (Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys, I.3.15 in this volume) – yet, this Life / *Vios* is not enough to absolve painting from the ancient accusation of deceitfulness.

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For an introduction to the "eikon" with further bibliography see M. Vassilaki, "Icons," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. E. Jeffreys, with J. Haldon and R. Cormack (Oxford, 2008), 758–69.

I.3.1 Theodore Prodromos (c.1100–1160)

On Three Round Frames with Depictions

NIKOS ZAGKLAS

Ed.: W. Hörandner, in Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 372–73 nos. 35–37

MS.:¹ Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 307 (s. XIII), f. 1v

Other Translations: None

Significance

An example of epigrams intended to be inscribed on round frames on a certain object that could have been a kind of imperial cloth or armor. It is hard to say whether these round frames belonged to a single object or to different ones.

The Author

See E. Jeffreys, I.7.6 in this volume.

Text and Context

The thirteenth-century manuscript Vatican City, BAV, Gr. 307 preserves three epigrams by Theodore Prodromos written for three different kinds of depictions: the first epigram is for an image of Christ together with the Holy Virgin, John the Baptist and the archangel Michael; the second for an image of Christ together with the three archangels; and the last for an image of Christ together with the three great Martyrs. The poems are addressed to an emperor but do not mention his name. Since Prodromos produced the largest portion of his poetry between the early 1120s and late 1150s, the addressee should be either John II Komnenos or Manuel I Komnenos.

The identification of the addressee is not the only issue that cannot be resolved. It is equally difficult to specify the object which furnished these three images. All three epigrams include the word κύκλος (*kyklos*, “circle”) in their titles; but this word raises more questions than it answers. Hörandner has noted that this could be a reference to a round frame on a ceremonial cloth, belt, or headgear.² This is a reasonable hypothesis, especially

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1 Mercati and Cavalieri 1923: 454–56. Consulted.

2 Hörandner 1974: 372.

since there are numerous epigrams written for such objects throughout the entire Byzantine period. However, in all three of them, content and vocabulary concentrate on the emperor's military feats. The holy individuals mentioned in each epigram protect him on the battlefield and demonstrate his military superiority over the barbaric enemies of the Empire. Thus, it is very possible that the epigrams were written for the emperor's armor (or an element of this armor),³ which could have been furnished with round frames that included representations of the saints.⁴ It is difficult to say whether these three representations and their accompanying epigrams were produced for different objects or for the same one.

Each epigram consists of eight dodecasyllabic verses (in total 24 verses). Prodrornos makes use of the caesura after the fifth or seventh syllable on fourteen and ten occasions, respectively.⁵ There are some deviations in terms of prosody, all of which concern the antepenultimate verse (a. vv. 1 and 2; b. v.1; c. v. 7).

3 E.g. *himation*, *pteryges*, *kremasmata*. The word κύκλος has also the meaning of "shield" (cf. LSJ s.v.); however, it is rather unlikely that this is the meaning of the word in the epigrams in question.

4 For an introduction to Byzantine armor see Haldon 2008: 473–81, with bibliography; see also F. Spingou, I.2.9 in this volume.

5 Interestingly, the B7 in the present poems is used much more often than other *Poems* of Prodrornos; see Hörandner in Theodore Prodrornos, *Historical Poems*, 125–28; Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 88–89.

Text

I. Εἰς τὸν κύκλον, ἐν ᾧ εἰσὶν ὁ Χριστὸς, ἡ Θεοτόκος καὶ ὁ Πρόδρομος καὶ ὁ ἀρχιστράτηγος
Μιχαήλ

Θεὸς περιφράττει σε, βασιλεῦ, κύκλω
χρυσοῦν ὑπελθῶν κύκλον, ὡς τὸν γῆς κύκλον
ποσὶν ὑποστρώσειε τοῖς σοῖς εὐδρόμοις.
μήτηρ ἄνανδρος πρὸς μάχας σε κρατύνει·
5 δρόμον λεαίνει Πρόδρομος σὸν πρὸς μάχας·
ἀρχιστράτηγος συστρατηγεῖ σοι μέγας·
ἐντεῦθεν ἀγέρωχος ἅπας σατράπης
σοὶ προσκυνήσει δουλικῶς ὡς δεσπότη.

II. Εἰς τὸν κύκλον, ἐν ᾧ ὁ Χριστὸς καὶ οἱ τρεῖς ἀρχιστράτηγοι

Ἵπερστρατήγῳ βασιλεῖ πολυάθλῳ
ἀρχιστρατήγους συστρατηγοῦντας βλέπω.
βάρβαρος οὐκοῦν ποῖος ἀρχισατράπης
ἢ τίς στρατάρχης ὑπέροφρος αὐθάδης
5 ἀντιπαλαμήσαιτο τῷ μυριάθλῳ;
οὐδεῖς, βασιλεῦ, ἀλλὰ πάντες ἄθρόον
πρὸς γῆν κεφαλὰς ὑποκλινοῦσι κάτω
Θεοῦ σε νικῶν φαιδρύνοντος ἀκτίσιν.

III. Εἰς τὸν κύκλον, ἐν ᾧ ὁ Χριστὸς καὶ οἱ τρεῖς μεγαλομάρτυρες

Τί καὶ πονεῖς ἀκάμα, τί μοχθεῖς πάλιν;
παύθητι μικρὸν καμάτων τῶν ἀσχέτων,
σχέθητι, φρικτέ, τῆς ῥύμης τῆς πρὸς μάχας.
τριας μεγάλων μαρτύρων ἀθληφόρων,
5 οὖς σοῦ κύκλω σώματος ὠραίου φέρεις,
καταβαλεῖ φάλαγγα πᾶσαν βαρβάρων.
ἔχεις θεὸν πρόμαχον· οὐ χρεῖα κάμνεις,
ἀλλ' ἀναδεῖσθαι τῶν τροπαίων τὸ στέφος.

Translation

I. On the round frame in which there are Christ, the Mother of God, Prodromos and the chief-commander Michael

God protects, Emperor, you with a fence all around by entering the gold circle, so that he may lay the circle of the earth at your swift feet. The immaculate mother makes you stronger for the battles;¹ [5] the Forerunner paves your way to the battles; the mighty chief commander² is your fellow-general. Thus, every arrogant satrap will slavishly serve you as lord.

II. On the round frame in which there are Christ and the three chief commanders³

I consider the chief commanders fellow generals of the supreme commander and king of the many labors.⁴ Thus, which barbarous chief satrap, or which supercilious and arrogant general [5] would fight against the victor of countless combats? No one, my emperor, but all at once will bow their heads down towards the earth, for God makes you radiant through shining victories.

III. On the round frame in which there are Christ and the three great Martyrs⁵

Why do you toil incessantly? Why do you undergo hardships again? Pause briefly from your unlimited labors; Hold back, most fearsome [emperor], before the intensity of the battle! The triad of the great victorious Martyrs [5], whom you bear in a circle on your beautiful body, will slay every phalanx of barbarians. You have God fighting for you; you should not toil, but crown yourself with a garland of victories.

Commentary

1. μήτηρ ἄνδρος is a very common word combination, especially in texts of liturgical use, such as hymnography and homilies (cf. *TLG*).
 2. ἀρχιστράτηγος: this is a reference to Archangel Michael.
 3. Although the first two archangels are most certainly Michael and Gabriel, it is not easy to determine who is the third archangel referred to in the poem. Other known archangels are Raphael and Uriel.⁶
 4. The opening verse is a reference to Christ, not the emperor.
 5. This is a reference to the three military Sts. George, Demetrios, and Theodore, not the three youths, as Wolfram Hörandner had noted in his edition of the poem.⁷ Theodore Prodromos wrote a cycle of tetrastichs on the lives of these three military saints.⁸
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6 See also Papagiannis 2012: 141.

7 In Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 372.

8 Giannelli 1963: 349–78.

I.3.2 Theodore Prodromos (c.1100–1160)

On an Icon Bearing a Depiction of Christ

NIKOS ZAGKLAS

Ed.: W. Hörandner, Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 447–48, no. 53

MSS.: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Roe 18 (a. 1349), ff. 450r–v¹

Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus Z 524 (s. XIII), f. 103r²

Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 1126 (s. XIV), ff. 149v–150r³

Other Translations: None

Significance

An example of a dedicatory epigram written by a celebrated Komnenian poet for an icon owned by a high-ranking official in the mid twelfth century. It is likely that the icon had a depiction of Christ's face.

The Author

See E. Jeffreys, I.7.6 in this volume.

Text and Context

This dedicatory epigram is written for an icon in the possession of Alexios Kontostephanos, son of Stephen Kontostephanos⁴ and nephew of the emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143–80). This is not the only work that was commissioned for this particular individual; there is also a cycle of four epigrams on Kontostephanos' sword.⁵ The exact date of

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1 For the manuscript see Coxe 1969: 471–79; Kubina 2013: 178–79. Consulted.

2 For the manuscript see Spingou 2014: 139–40; *eadem* 2015: 50–51. Consulted.

3 For the manuscript see Giannelli 1960: 351; Zagklas, *Neglected Poems* 137–45, with recent bibliography. Consulted.

4 Stephen Kontostephanos is the addressee of a group of verse epitaphs; see Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 435–42.

5 For an analysis and translation of this cycle, see N. Zagklas, II.4.1 in this volume. In addition to these two works, there is also a long verse epitaph commemorating the death of Alexios Kontostephanos preserved in codex. Laur. Conv. Sopp. 627 (s. XIII) under the name of Prodromos; however, according to Hörandner 1974: 444, its attribution to Prodromos should be rejected due to its late date.

composition for these two works cannot be determined, but it is likely that they were written sometime after the year 1150, when Kontostephanos was at the apex of his career.⁶

Both title and text suggest that the epigram under consideration was written for an icon of Christ, but they do not offer specific information regarding its iconography. However, given the reference to the story of the Holy Mandylion (vv. 7–8), it may have been a depiction of Christ's face. In order to enhance the significance of the icon and duly celebrate the depiction of Christ's shape on it, Prodromos makes use of a very elaborate discourse replete with a variety of similes and images. In the opening verses of the epigram, we are told that Christ himself is the painter of his own image. There follows the use of rich imagery from the Old and New Testaments: whereas God previously took the form of a burning bush in order to speak to Moses, he has now taken the form of a wooden icon (vv. 5–6). He imprinted his shape upon the wood, just like in the story of Abgar (vv. 7–8). Although he was crucified on a wooden cross for the sake of humanity, he appears again on wood (vv. 7–8). As with Abraham, who entertained the Holy Trinity in Mamre, Kontostephanos entertains God and offers him an ox (vv. 20–24). After developing all these images, the epigram concludes with a request to Christ to protect Alexios on the battlefield and to watch over his children and wife.

The epigram consists of thirty dodecasyllabic verses, all of which are accented on the antepenultimate syllable. In accordance with the metrical norms of other poetic works by Prodromos,⁷ the B5 occurs more often than the B7: 22 verses of the poem have the caesura after the fifth verse (73 percent), while the remaining eight have it after the seventh one (27 percent). As for prosody, there is a deviation in the proper name Κοντοστέφανον (the *epsilon* is counted as long), but also in two other places, where a syllable that would otherwise be long by position is counted as short (v. 2: γράψασσα and v. 3: ἔγραψεν).

6 Alexios Kontostephanos was *doux* of Thrakesion and participated in three councils (those of 1157, 1166, and 1170). PBW: Alexios 25004.

7 See, for instance, Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 125–28; Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 88–89.

Text

Εἰς εἰκόνα ἔχουσαν τὸν Χριστὸν ἱστορημένον

- Ἄν ἡ Θεοῦ χεὶρ οἶδε καὶ τύπους γράφειν
 ἢ πρὶν βροτοὺς γράψασα πλαστικοῖς νόμοις,
 ἢ σὴ σε χεὶρ ἔγραψεν ὧδε, παντάναξ,
 ἐξ αὐτοβαφῶν καὶ θεϊκῶν χρωμάτων.
- 5 ἢ μὴν προφήτην Μωυσῆν εὐρών νέον
 τὸ ξύλον εἰσδύς ὡς βάτον λαλεῖν θέλεις·
 ἢ μὴν δι' ἡμᾶς ὡς δι' Αὔγαρον πάλαι
 τὸ ξύλον εὐρών ἀπομάττη τὸν τύπον,
 ὡς ἄν τρίτον μόρφωμα τῆς σῆς ιδέας
- 10 λινοῦν, κεραμοῦν καὶ ξύλινον τυγχάνῃ.
 ἔδει γὰρ ἴσως τὸν ταθέντα σε ξύλῳ
 κἂν τῷ ξύλῳ νῦν ἐφανισθῆναι πάλιν.
 χθὲς εὐρών εὐτύχημα τὴν σὴν μητέρα
 νῦν καὶ τὸν υἱὸν καὶ θεὸν σε λαμβάνω·
- 15 ἴσως γάρ, ἴσως υἱικοῦ πόθου βίαις
 τῆς μητρὸς ἐκτὸς οὐκ ἐκαρτέρεις μένειν
 κἀντεῦθεν αὐτὴν ἤλθες εὐρήσων πάλιν.
 καὶ δόξα τῇ σῇ χρηστότητι, Χριστέ μου,
 ὅτι πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀξιοῖς καταλύειν.
- 20 κἂν οὐκ ἐγὼ γὰρ Ἀβραάμ τύπον φέρω,
 Μαμβρῆ τέως δρῦν τὴν κατοικίαν βλέπω,
 ἐν ἣ ξενίζω δουλικῶς τὸν δεσπότην
 καὶ τοῦ πόθου τὸν μόσχον ἄσμενος θύω,
 ἐξ οὗ φαγῶν μέμνησο τῆς σῆς ἐστίας.
- 25 Ἄλέξιόν με τὸν ξενίσαντα σκέπε
 Κοντοστέφανον Κομνηνὸν τὸ μητρόθεν
 στομῶν κατ' ἐχθρῶν ἐν μάχαις μοι τὴν σπάθην,
 φρουρῶν τὰ τέκνα, τὴν τεκοῦσαν συσκέπων
 τὴν ἀπὸ Δουκῶν ἰκέτιν σου Μαρίαν
- 30 καὶ τῆς ἐκεῖθεν ἀξιῶν κληρουχίας.

Translation

On an Icon Bearing a Depiction of Christ

If God's hand can also paint forms, that hand that earlier formed mortals from clay,¹ your own hand painted you here, o Lord of all, from divine colors of your own creation.² [5] Indeed, having found a new prophet Moses, you want to speak by entering into the wood as you once did with the thorn bush;³ indeed, for our sake, just as for Abgar long ago, having found the wood, you imprint [your] form,⁴ so that a third shape could receive your image, [10] namely linen, clay, and <now> wood. For having been crucified on wood, it was perhaps fitting that you should again appear in wood now. Yesterday, I found your mother by a stroke of good fortune, now I also receive you, the Son and God; [15] perhaps due to [your] affection as her Son, you could not wait to be without your mother; for this reason you came to find her again.⁶ And it is an honour, my Christ, that out of your kindness⁷ you deign to stay with us as our guest. [20] For even if I do not have the shape of Abraham, I consider [my] dwelling the Oak of Mamre, where like a slave, I entertain my Lord as a guest, and gladly sacrifice the calf of your desire,⁸ and when you eat of it, remember the house that hosts you. [25] Protect me, your host, Alexios Kontostephanos, Komnenos on my mother's side, by hardening my sword in battles against my enemies,⁹ guarding my children, and protecting the woman who bore them, your suppliant, Maria of the Doucas family, [30] and deem me worthy of the inheritance there [i.e. heaven].

Commentary

1. Though the first two verses were printed in Miller's edition of Manuel Philes' poetic works,⁸ Prodromos' authorship is out of question.⁹ As to the word combination πλαστικοῖς νόμοις, ("the laws of the plastic arts") attested only in Prodromos' poetic corpus, it should be construed as a reference to the creation of Adam from dust described in Gen. 2:7.
2. Αὐτοβαφής¹⁰ is a rare word throughout Late Antiquity and the Byzantine period (cf. *TLG*). Before Prodromos, it occurs in works of Nonnus of Panopolis, John Chrysostom, John of Gaza, and Michael Attaleiates. After Prodromos, it is attested only in the works of Gregorios Antiochos and Manuel Holobolos.
3. A reference to Ex. 3:1–6, which describes Moses' encounter with God on Mount Horeb and the appearance of the latter in the form of a burning bush. The story is also included in Prodromos' iambic and hexametric cycle of tetrastichs on the Old and New Testaments.¹¹
4. Though many Byzantine texts discuss the story of the holy Mandylion,¹² this is the single allusion to this story within Prodromos' poetic corpus.
5. A very interesting reference to the materials that receive the image of God: linen stands for the Mandylion of Abgar, clay for the man who was formed in the likeness of God, and wood for the icon that depicts Christ.
6. Vv. 13–17 offer insight into the twelfth-century practice of icon veneration. Here we are told that the icon of Christ was placed together with an icon of the Theotokos, which had been purchased by Kontostephanos the day before.
7. The wording of the verse bears conspicuous resemblance to a verse (Τῆ σῆ ἀφάτω δόξα χρηστότητι, ὦ ἡσοῦ) from a Canon, possibly written by Joseph the Studite.¹³
8. Alexios' hospitality of the icon of Christ is compared with that of Abraham as described in Gen 18:1–16. The *philoxenia* of Abraham is not only a recurrent motif in the poetic corpus of Prodromos, but also the subject matter of various Prodromic poems written for depictions of this event.¹⁴
9. Interestingly, Prodromos wrote a cycle of four epigrams which were meant to be inscribed on the sword of Alexios Kontostephanos.¹⁵

8 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, 270.

9 Hörandner 1974: 447.

10 "self-dipped," LSJ, s.v.

11 Papagiannis 1997: 57–58 no. 43.

12 For the story see Ševčenko, "Mandyas," *ODB* 2:1282–83; for texts dealing with this story see Guscini 2009.

13 Nicas and Schirò 1970: 53; this has not been noted in Hörandner's edition.

14 For more details on this issue see Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 225–30.

15 For a discussion of these epigrams see N. Zagklas, II.4.1 in this volume; as already noted by Hörandner, the similarity in the wording between this verse and the first two verses of the first poem from the cycle is very striking.

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I.3.3 *Anthologia Marciana*, Sylloge B (?twelfth century)

On a Depiction of the Most Holy Theotokos Surrounded by Heaven and Angels

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: Spingou, *Poetry for the Komnenoi*, B17; other editions: G. Tserevelakis, “Ἐπτὰ ἀνέκδοτα Βυζαντινὰ ἐπιγράμματα ἀπὸ τοῦ κώδικα Marcianus Graecus 524,” *Βυζαντινός Δόμος* 17/18 (2009/10), 283; Lambros, “Ὁ Μαρκιανὸς κώδιξ 524,” 22, vv. 1 and 10
MS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 524 (s. XIII ex.), f. 20v
Other Translations: Spingou, as above (English); Tserevelakis, as above, 283 (Modern Greek)

Significance

The epigram refers to a variation on the iconographic theme of the Vision of Isaiah: the icon portrayed the Virgin Mary instead of Christ on the Throne. The poet sees the painter as a new Isaiah who is divinely inspired to create the iconography.

The Author

The epigram below survives only in the so-called *Anthologia Marciana*, a vast anthology of mainly Komnenian poetry that can be found in the late thirteenth-century manuscript Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 524. The anthology is divided into seven sections (“Books”) with collections of attributed and/or unattributed poetry and long poems. Its structure resembles the famous Greek Anthology, although the division between books is less clearly indicated by the scribe. The order of the quires in the manuscript was mixed up in the fifteenth century when the manuscript was rebound. This caused confusion among scholars, who were troubled by the seeming lack of structure for the anthology. The *Anthologia Marciana* was probably compiled around the year 1200. It was copied by an anonymous scribe in the late thirteenth century from a manuscript that had lost its last pages.²

The epigram discussed below comes from Sylloge B, a section of *Anthologia Marciana* that collects mainly unattributed poetry from between the second and third quarters of the twelfth century.

¹ Consulted.

² For a detailed analysis of the *Anthologia Marciana* see Spingou, *Poetry for the Komnenoi*.

Text and Context

The date, the author, and the commissioner of the epigram are not known. The epigram refers to a depiction (εἰκῶν) of the Virgin Mary on a throne and surrounded by celestial orders. This iconography is a variation of “Isaiah’s Vision” (Is. 6:1–3) that presented the Lord seated on “a high and exalted throne” and surrounded by the highest angelic order of Seraphims. The Vision (with Christ depicted on the throne) was already a common iconographic theme from the eighth and ninth centuries.³ One of the most famous depictions of the Vision of Isaiah is contemporary to the text and can be found in a twelfth-century manuscript with the Homilies of James Kokkinobaphos.⁴

The painter is implicitly described as another Isaiah, who is divinely inspired to paint the particular image. Instead of depicting Christ on the throne, as was customary in the depiction of the “Vision of Isaiah,” he shows the Virgin Mary in that place. The Virgin is often depicted on a throne and being accompanied by Angels. Notably, in the twelfth-century manuscript Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 1162, f. 50v, the Virgin Eleousa is presented in Paradise, seated on a throne and holding Christ while being venerated by Angels and Prophets. Hans Belting has suggested that this illustration is a depiction of the role of the Theotokos in the opening and closing of Paradise, a theme that appears often in texts.⁵

3 Brubaker 1999: 365–66; for the depiction of the vision of Isaiah in the ninth-century manuscript Paris, BnF, Graecus 510, f. 67 see Brubaker 1999: 281–84.

4 Discussed in detail, with parallels, in Linardou 2011: 145–47; see Stornajolo 1910, pl. 52; Linardou 2011, pl. 9.5.

5 Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 294 and fig. 179.

Text

Εἰς εἰκόνα τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου ἔχουσαν κυκλόθεν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἀγγέλους παρεστῶτας

Ἐμψυχον εἰδῶς τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου θρόνον
 ὁ ζωγράφος σε καὶ γράφειν τολμᾷ, Κόρη,
 αἴγλη περιστέλλει δε φωτὸς κυκλόθεν
 καὶ τοῦτον ὥσπερ ἐνθρονίζει σοι μέσον
 5 τυπῶν ἐπ' ὤμων ἀγγέλων πεφρικῶτων
 καὶ τοὺς Χερουβὶμ ἱστορῶν νενευκότας·
 ὁρῶσι καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἄσωμάτῳ πάχει,
 ὄν ἄϋλως πρὶν οὐδαμῶς εἶχον βλέπειν
 καὶ τῶν ἑαυτῶν ταγμάτων ἐν ἐκστάσει
 10 σέ, Παρθένε, κρίνουσι τιμιωτέραν.

Translation

On a depiction of the most Holy Theotokos surrounded by Heaven and with Angels standing by her

Because he knows that you are the living throne of God the Word,
 the painter also dares to depict you, O Maiden.
 And he surrounds you¹ with radiant light on all sides
 and as it were enthroned him in your midst:
 5 he depicts (the throne) on the shoulders of astounded angels
 and paints the Cherubim bowing;
 for they now see in bodily matter
 Him, whom they could not see when he was without matter
 and in the astonishment, they judge you,
 10 O Virgin, to be more venerable than their own ranks.

Commentary

1. The emphasis on the circular depiction of the angelic orders may suggest that the depiction was placed on a vault, with the Virgin on the throne and the angels who supported it in the very middle and the angels of the rims. A comparison may be drawn with the twelfth-century fresco (and the accompanying epigram) in the church of St. George in Sofia (Bulgaria).⁶ In that case, Heaven – i.e. the angelic orders⁷ – appears to surround Christ.⁸

6 See *BEIÜ* 1, no. 5.

7 Cf. the reference to that part of the iconography in the epigram: see *BEIÜ* 1, no. 5, 21; on the angelic orders see Ps. Dionysios the Areopagite, *On the Celestial Order*.

8 The epigram in Sofia, despite being poorly preserved, includes references to the circular shape of the depiction (v. 2: κύκλω τρέχων).

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I.3.4

Epigrams on Depictions of Christ

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Significance

The following epigrams speak about two depictions of Christ, one probably labeled *Sophia* (Wisdom) and a second under the name *Peribleptos* (Conspicuous). The texts illustrate the challenges that a modern scholar faces in the reconstruction of iconographic programs from the evidence provided by epigrams on works of art. None of the epigrams has ever been fully published in the past.

Introduction

The following epigrams come from Sylloge B of the *Anthologia Marciana*.² As for most of the epigrams in this collection, nothing is known about their composition. It can be inferred from the texts that the first epigram concerns a depiction of Christ destined for monumental display, while the second was meant for the revetment of an icon for, probably, personal use. Although the texts only survive in the manuscript, they could have been destined to become verse inscriptions, as was the case for many of the epigrams in the *Anthologia Marciana*. The invitation to a mortal or a divine beholder to see the icon further corroborates this view.³

The texts concern the depiction of Christ. Both are related to variations of the representation of Christ enthroned. The first epigram may discuss an early example of Christ as *Sophia* or Wisdom. The second possibly focuses on the Last Judgment. The two texts do not aim to describe the icons, but to suggest a reading of the depictions and offer further levels of meaning, beyond what is immediately perceived by the eye.⁴

1 I am grateful to Ivan Drpić for all his comments.

2 On the *Anthologia Marciana* see F. Spingou, I.3.3 in this volume.

3 Text I, vv. 1, 6, 9; Text II, v. 11.

4 See also F. Spingou, Introduction, II.4.4 in this volume.

Text A | *Anthologia Marciana*, Sylloge B (?twelfth century)**On an Icon of Christ, Seated on a Throne and Having His Hands Outstretched**

Ed.: Spingou, *Poetry for the Komnenoi*, B85; other editions: Spingou, *Words and Artworks*, 81; Lambros, “Ο Μαρκανός κώδιξ 524,” no. 252 (153b), v. 1

MS.:⁵ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 524 (s. XIII ex.), f. 115v

Other Translations: None

Significance

The poet invites the viewer to admire the monumental image and, symbolically, the generosity of Christ to humans. The iconographic type of Christ to which the epigram refers cannot be deciphered with certainty, but probably had the appellation “Sophia.” The text is notable for drawing attention to one of the common trends in twelfth-century iconography, namely the use of texts as a source of inspiration for new pictorial compositions.

The Author

See F. Spingou, I.3.3 in this volume.

Text and Context

The text appears anonymously in the Sylloge B of the *Anthologia Marciana* and the name of the commissioner is not revealed. The composition of the epigram can be placed in the twelfth century, since most of the datable texts in Sylloge B come from between the 1130s and 1170s and certainly before c.1200 (that is, the approximate date of compilation for the anthology).⁶

The epigram likely refers to a fresco of Christ as Sophia/Wisdom, perhaps displayed in the apse of an unspecified church.⁷ The repetitive invitations to a beholder (ξέβε) to react to the iconography suggest that text and image were publicly displayed.⁸ The reference to a painter in v. 9 points to a painted form of art, and so to a fresco. The four imperatives in v. 6 that invite the beholder to approach, see, and stand before Christ would parallel the exhortation of the priest to the congregation to take, eat, and drink the body and the blood of Christ during the Holy Oblation, just before the Holy Communion begins.⁹ Finally, the first verse of the epigram suggests that the appellation “Sophia/Wisdom” was used in the image, since the narrator invites the beholder to see “Wisdom.” This suggestion is further confirmed with the allusion to two quotations about the Wisdom of God.¹⁰

⁵ Consulted.

⁶ See F. Spingou, I.3.3 in this volume.

⁷ The reference to a painter in v. 9 suggests that this was indeed a fresco and not a mosaic; for references to “Wisdom” see vv. 1 and 8.

⁸ See vv. 1, 6, 7.

⁹ Cf. Mt. 26:26.

¹⁰ See vv. 1, 3–5, 8.

The earliest surviving examples of Christ seated on a throne with hands extended appear only in the fourteenth century in churches from the Balkans.¹¹ In one case, Christ is labeled as ἡ ἐνυπόστατος τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγου Σοφία.¹² It is uncertain when this iconographic type first appeared.

The matter becomes even more complicated when considering that not only are there no earlier examples of similar depictions of Christ, but also no specific iconography has been associated with churches dedicated to the Wisdom of God in, e.g., Constantinople and Thessaloniki.¹³ Instead, Christ Pantokrator was usually associated with churches dedicated to the Wisdom of God. In the narthex of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, above the “imperial gate” (βασιλῆιος πύλη) an unidentified emperor renders *proskynesis* to Christ Pantokrator.¹⁴ Christ Pantokrator (meaning, “All-Sovereign”) is depicted frontally, blessing with his right hand and holding a Gospel book in his left. In some cases, Christ Pantokrator was seated on a throne (as in the case of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople).¹⁵ This would not have been the only occasion that Christ painted in the type of Pantokrator is named “Sophia”: a famous fourteenth-century icon, likely from the iconostasis of Hagia Sophia in Thessaloniki, portrays a frontal Christ holding a Gospel book firmly in one hand while offering a blessing with the other hand.¹⁶ The word-play in v. 8 of the epigram corroborates such an identification with the Pantokrator: the poet, paraphrasing 1 Cor. 1:24, does not refer to the δύναμις/*dynamis* of God to indicate “power,” instead he praises God’s κράτος/*kratos*.¹⁷ The second component of the word *Pantokrator* (-krator/κράτωρ) and the word *kratos* derive from the same root. Nonetheless, the enthroned Pantokrator is an iconographic type most frequently associated with the *Deesis* iconography or surrounded by angels, and thus it does not appear in sanctuary apses.¹⁸

The number of textual sources that are mentioned in the text is also remarkable: three authors from the New and Old Testament are named. Usually Byzantine authors alluded to quotations from the Scriptures, but only rarely offer a specific attribution – that said, it cannot be excluded that Solomon, Paul, and David were depicted close to Christ (perhaps holding rolls with related quotations).

11 See, e.g., the chapel of the Transfiguration in the Tower of Hrelja at the Monastery of Rila in Bulgaria, 1334/35; narthex of the *katholikon* of the so-called Monastery of Marko at Sušica near Skopje, North Macedonia, 1376/77; see Panajotova 1978: 404–15; Meyendorff 1959: 259–77. For the Monastery of Marko see Mirković 1961: 83–88. On a comparable fresco with Christ as the Angel of Wisdom from the Terra d’Otranto see Berger 1982: 124–34, who also attributes the iconography in St. Stephen at Soletto to Byzantine influence.

12 At Markov Manastir.

13 Pallas 1989–90: 138.

14 Discussed in Meyendorff 1959: 164; Pallas 1989–90: 138.

15 See Ševčenko in *ODB*, sv, “Christ. Types of Christ.”

16 Today in the Museum of Byzantine Culture in Thessaloniki no. BEI 503; for a high-quality, freely accessible image see <http://mbp.gr/en/object/christ-pantokrator> (accessed December 2020), also discussed in Pallas 1989–90: 138–39.

17 Paul 1 Cor. 1:24. In Paul’s words, Christ is Θεοῦ δύναμις καὶ Θεοῦ σοφία (“power/*dynamis* of God and wisdom of God”).

18 See, e.g., “The Pantokrator and the worshipping Angels” in the church of St. Mary of the Admiral in Palermo: Kitzinger 1990: 124–33 and fig. 1.

Text

Εἰς εἰκόνα τοῦ Χριστοῦ καθημένου ἐπὶ θρόνου καὶ ἠπλωμένης ἔχοντος τὰς χεῖρας

Εἰ τὴν σοφίαν κατιδεῖν βούλει, ξένε,
 ἢ Σολομῶντος ζωγραφουμένοις λόγοις
 τῇ δεξιᾷ μὲν τῶν χειρῶν διεγράφη
 μήκος βίου φέρουσα καὶ ζωῆς ἔτη,
 5 εὐωνύμῳ πλοῦτον δε καὶ δόξης κλέος,
 πρόσσελθε, δεῦρο, στήθι, τὴν γραφὴν βλέπε·
 ἰδοὺ γὰρ αὐτός, ὃν προεῖπε καὶ Παῦλος,
 Θεοῦ σοφίαν καὶ Θεοῦ πατρὸς κράτος,
 ἄνθρωπος ὄφθεις γραφῆναι τῷ ζωγράφῳ
 10 καὶ χεῖρας ἀπλοῖ καὶ πιμπλᾷ πᾶσαν φύσιν
 τῆς εὐδοκίας, ὡς Δαυὶδ μέλπει λύρα.
 ναὶ μηδὲ κλείσαις μηδαμῶς ταύτας, Λόγε.

Translation

On an icon of Christ, seated on a throne having his arms open

If you wish to see the Wisdom, Stranger¹
 which Solomon, in his painterly language, depicted²
 as having in her right hand longevity and many years of life,
 5 and with the left hand wealth³ and glorious fame,
 approach, come on, stand, and look at the painting.
 For here he is whom Paul, too, called
 the wisdom of God and the power of God the Father,⁴
 showing himself as man and, therefore, is depicted by the painter,
 10 and He extends his hands and fulfils every nature
 with joy, as the lyre of David sings.⁵
 Yes, Word, never close them [= your arms] for us!

Commentary

1. Reference to Christ as the Wisdom of God.
2. Vv. 2–5 paraphrase Prov. 3:5 and 3:16. The reference to the “painted words of Solomon” may indicate that verses from the Proverbs were indeed written next to the image.
3. This verse may allude to the wages of righteousness (μισθὸν ὁσιότητος) in Sap. Sol. 2:22.
4. Cf. 1 Cor. 1:24.
5. Dan. 7:9.

Text B | *Anthologia Marciana*, Sylloge B (?twelfth century)**On the Icon of Christ *Peribleptos***

Ed.: Spingou, *Poetry for the Komnenoi*, B56. Other editions: Spingou, *Words and Artworks*, 95; Lambros, “Ο Μαρκεσιανός κώδιξ 524,” no. 243 (145), only vv. 1–4, 16–17

MS.:¹⁹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 524 (s. XIII ex.), f. 106v

Other Translations: Spingou, *Poetry for the Komnenoi*, B56; partly in Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 375–76 (vv. 9–13)

Significance

This is a reference to an otherwise unknown iconographic type for Christ. It may be identified with an icon of the Christ enthroned but its exact appearance is unknown. The appearance of a donor portrait on the reverse side of the icon is also a remarkable feature of the iconography suggested by the text.

The Author

See F. Spingou, I.3.3 in this volume.

Text and Context

The otherwise unknown Basil Servlias offers a precious revetment to an icon of Christ *Peribleptos*. Basil may have been the commissioner of the icon, as, most remarkably, he asked for his portrait to be painted on the reverse. Donor portraits are known to have been executed on confined areas on icons and their revetments, and although it cannot be excluded that the epigram refers to a bilateral icon, this is the only donor's portrait known to have been placed on a part of the icon that would remain unapproachable to the viewer.

The appellation *Peribleptos* is unusual for Christ. This epithet was more commonly attributed to the Virgin Mary, since a famous, eleventh-century, monastery with that name existed in Constantinople.²⁰ The word *Peribleptos* itself means “seen by all sides” or “celebrated.” Since it was not the purpose of the epigram to give a detailed account of the icon, it is not possible to reconstruct the exact iconography. Alexandra-Kyriaki Wassiliou-Seibt has suggested that in this image Christ may have been depicted on the throne of the Last Judgment,²¹ yet references to the Second Coming are common in dedicatory epigrams on works of art. Beyond the question of iconography, this icon was intended for private devotions and may have been destined to be placed next to Basil's tomb. Given the eschatological tone of the epigram, the depiction of the means to achieve the donor's deepest wish – a place in Paradise – would be appropriate for both uses. The portrait would have worked as a constant prayer to God on behalf of the donor and his soul.

¹⁹ Consulted.

²⁰ Janin, *ÉglisesCP* no. 96, 218–22.

²¹ See vv. 16–17; Wassiliou-Seibt 2011: 53 and the overall soteriological overtone in the epigram.

This epigram, as with many of the surviving epigrams on works of art, is intended to help the viewer to comprehend the image; it is not intended to serve as a description of it. In light of the epigram, the donor's portrait becomes an integral part of the icon and the depicted scene: Basil appears to be present at that moment of the Revelation and he trembles fearing the Final Judgment. Ivan Drpić has noted that the image of a trembling donor encapsulates the general hesitation on behalf of the Byzantines to include a suppliant's portrait in an icon.²²

²² Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 378–79.

Text

Εἰς εἰκόνα τοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ Περιβλέπτου κοσμηθεῖσαν παρὰ Βασιλείου, ἧς ὀπισθεν ὁ αὐτὸς εἰκονίσθη

Εἰ καὶ τύπου πίνακα κοσμῶν σε, Λόγε,
 ὀπισθεν αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐμὴν γράφω θέαν
 πιστὸς λάτρης σὸς Βασίλειος Σερβλίας,
 ἀλλὰ τὸ δαυίδειον ἐξάδω μέλος·
 5 «ἐπίφανόν μοι σὸν πρόσωπον, Παντάναξ,
 ἰλαρὸν ὄμμα καὶ φιλόνηρον ῥέπων,
 σωθήσομαι γάρ». ἀκοὰς δέ μοι δίδου
 ἐμῶν προσευχῶν συμφερόντως εἰς τέλος·
 ὃν γὰρ Χερουβὶμ οὐ στέγοντα προσβλέπειν
 10 πρόσωπα κρύπτει τοῖς πτέρυξιν ἐν τρόμῳ,
 πῶς οὐχ ὄραν ἄν καὶ γεγραμμένος τρέμω;
 ὀπισθογραφῶν τοιγαροῦν μου τὸν τύπον
 κὰν τῆ γραφῆ σήμαντρα τοῦ φόβου φέρω.
 σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ τὸ πρόσωπον οὐκ ἀποστρέφων,
 15 χειρὸς χαρίζου δεξιᾶς μοι τὴν στάσιν,
 ὅταν καθίσῃς εἰς περίβλεπτον θρόνον
 κοινήν ἀνεγκλήτευτον ἐξάγων κρίσιν.

Translation

On an icon of Christ the *Peribleptos* adorned by Basil, on the back of which he himself was depicted.

Even if I, your faithful devotee, Basil Servlias,¹
 adorning a panel with your figure, o Word,
 paint my own figure on its back,
 still I sing the song of David:
 5 “show me² your face, King of all,
 directing your bright and compassionate eyes to me,
 for then I will be saved.”³ Lend your ear
 to my prayers according them an end which is best for me.
 Even painted, how could I not fear to look at him,
 10 whom the Cherubim cannot bear to look at,
 hiding their faces with their wings in fear?⁴
 That is why,⁵ my figure on the back [of your panel],⁶
 I bear the signs of fear in the picture.
 But You, without turning away your face,⁷
 15 grant me a place at your right hand;
 when you, sitting on your illustrious throne, on a conspicuous/*periblepton* throne,
 pass your irreversible judgment on all of us.⁸

Commentary

1. Basil Servlias is otherwise unknown. All twenty-seven members of the family that are attested mainly on seals lived in the eleventh and twelfth century and most of them held positions in the administration.²³
2. The poet toys with the ideas of seeing and hiding throughout the poem. This play is mostly relevant in an epigram written on Christ who can be “looked at from all sides” (“Peribleptos”).²⁴
3. Ps. 79 (80): 4, 8, 20; cf. Ps. 66 (67):2 ; Ps. 30 (31):17.
4. The syntax in vv. 9–11 is challenging. The object of ὁρᾶν is placed at the very beginning of the period and the negative οὐχ far from the verb τρέμω to which it relates. The disordered syntax is a rhetorical means to show the confusion of the speaker (the donor on this occasion). He is unable to speak, since he is in awe.
5. The first person singular does not imply that Basil Servlias was also the painter of icon, but rather that he was the donor.
6. Note that the word τύπος is used to indicate the portraits of both Christ and Basil Servlias.
7. Cf. Ps. 43 (44):25; Ps. 87 (88):151.
8. Dan. 3:54–55.

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²³ See Wassiliou-Seibt 2011 for a complete account.

²⁴ On this point see Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 377–78.

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I.3.5 ?St. Neophytos the Recluse (1134–1219?)

Inscriptions from the Enkleistra of St. Neophytos the Recluse, Tala, Paphos District, Cyprus

ANNEMARIE WEYL CARR

Ed.: I. *BEIÜ* 1, no. 243 (p. 356)

II. *BEIÜ* 1, no. 244 (p. 357–58) with German transl. and a list of previous editions and transls, especially C. Mango and E. J. W. Hawkins, “The Hermitage of St. Neophytos and Its Wall Paintings,” *DOP* 20 (1966), 184, drawing for the final line on A. C. Indianos and G. H. Thompson, “Wall-Paintings at St. Neophytos Monastery,” *Κυπρ.Σπ.* 3 (1939), 190. This is also reproduced in *BEIÜ* 1, no. 244, 358 (with a list of previous editions and transls).

III. *BEIÜ* 1, no. 241 (p. 353–54) (with German transl. and a list of previous editions and transls), especially Mango and Hawkins, as above, 166; see also C. G. Chotzakoglou, “Βυζαντινή ἀρχιτεκτονική καὶ τέχνη στὴν Κύπρο,” in *Ἱστορία τῆς Κύπρου*, ed. T. Papadopoullos, *Τόμος Γ΄. Βυζαντινὴ Κύπρος* (Nicosia, 2005), 1, 615 n. 1102

IV. *BEIÜ* 3, ZY1 (p. 761–62) with German transl. and previous editions; Mango and Hawkins, as above, 192–93.

Monument/Artefact: Three inscriptions on frescoes in the Enkleistra of St. Neophytos, and one engraved inscription dedicating the church of the Holy Cross within the Enkleistra, I = fig. I.3.5a, II = fig. I.3.5b, III = fig. I.3.5c. For IV see Rhoby, *BEIÜ* 3, fig. 132. Cf. Mango and Hawkins, as above, fig. 119

Other Translations:

I. A. Papageorghiou, “Λαξευτὰ ἀσκητήρια καὶ μοναστήρια τῆς Κύπρου,” Ἐπετηρίδα Κέντρου Μελετῶν Ἱερᾶς Μονῆς Κύκκου 4 (1999), 30; M. Panagiotidi, “The Question of the Role of the Donor and the Painter: A Rudimentary Approach,” *ΔΧΑΕ* 4.17 (1993–94), 146 n.15; R. Cormack, *Writing in Gold: Byzantine Society and Its Icons* (London, 1985), 233; Mango and Hawkins, as above, 181; I. P. Tsiknopoullos, *The Enkleistra and Saint Neophytos – Ἡ ἐγκλειστρα καὶ ὁ Ἅγιος Νεόφυτος* (Nicosia, 1965), pl. 32 (English); E. Hein, A. Jakovljević, and B. Kleidt, *Zypern – byzantinische Kirchen und Klöster, Mosaiken und Fresken* (Ratingen, 1996), 114 (German)

II. Panagiotidi, as above, 149; C. Galatariotou, *The Making of a Saint: The Life, Times, and Sanctification of Neophytos the Recluse* (Cambridge, 1999), 141; Mango and Hawkins, as above, 184 (English)

III. Panagiotidi, as above, 146 n.14; Cormack, as above, 242; Mango and Hawkins, as above, 166; Tsiknopoullos, as above, 30 (English)

IV. Mango and Hawkins, as above, 192–93

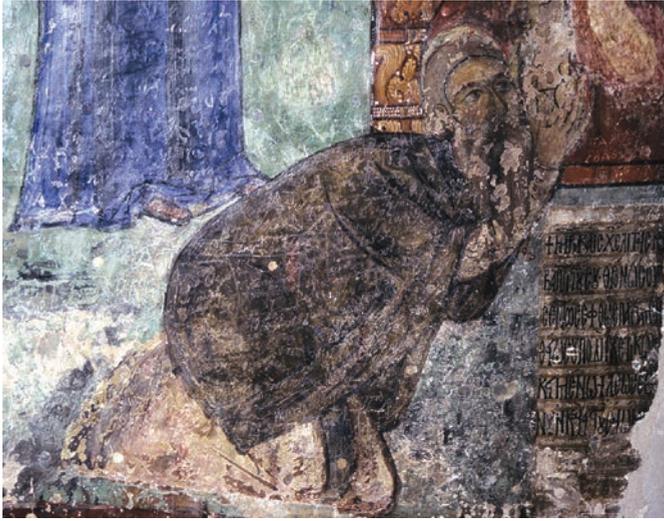


Fig. I.3.5a Deesis, Enkleistra of St. Neophytos the Recluse. Tala, Paphos
© A. W. Carr



Fig. I.3.5b Neophytos' tomb, Enkleistra of Neophytos the Recluse. Tala, Paphos,
Photo: The Byzantine Institute and Dumbarton Oaks Fieldwork Records and Papers,
c.late 1920s–2000s
© Collections and Fieldwork Archives, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard
University, Washington, D.C.



Fig. I.3.5c Neophytos' Ascension, Enkleistra, Neophytos the Recluse. Tala, Paphos, Photo: The Byzantine Institute and Dumbarton Oaks Fieldwork Records and Papers, c.late 1920s–2000s

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Significance

Rarely can Byzantine inscriptions on art be related so closely to the individuality of the patron as these: they are attributed to the Cypriot holy man, St. Neophytos the Recluse (1134-1219?), and accompany the frescoes painted in his own cell and chapel when he was resident there as a robust, self-aware fifty-year-old. He himself is recurrently their subject, and he is portrayed in the images. Thus, text and image are closely related. Yet eloquent gaps open up between them, leaving the frescoes' messages, intentions, and authorship fascinatingly open to interpretation.

The Author

See Text and Context.

Text and Context

The history of the holy man Neophytos and his hermitage in the hills near Tala in the Paphos District of Cyprus has been told often.¹ Neophytos (1134–?1219) grew up in Kato Drys near the village of Lefkara. Though his brother became a monk and eventual hegumen of the monastery of St. John Chrysostom near Koutsovendis, Neophytos was raised with no education, and learned to read only as an eighteen-year-old novice at the same monastery. His appetite for words, once aroused, was insatiable: his eventual literary corpus fills five volumes in its recent edition.² Craving the life of a recluse, he journeyed in 1158 to the Holy Land to find a spiritual father, but returned without success. A year later, over the objections of his hegumen, he set out once again, but was arrested at Paphos and robbed of all his funds. Unable to leave Cyprus, he wandered into the Troodos foothills, eventually finding a cave by a brook in a ravine. Here, he came to realize, was the place for the eremitic life he had sought elsewhere. Over the ensuing months, with vigorous excavation, he shaped the cave into a cell, a tomb space, and an altar, concluding his work on 14 September 1160, the Feast of the Cross. Five years later he secured a fragment of the True Cross. His “enkleistra” or place of seclusion was not so secluded that his reputation did not seep out – he was not in any case of a temperament to be a light under a bushel – and in 1170 the bishop of Paphos, Basil Kinnamos, tonsured him as a priest and induced him to take on a disciple. Over the following decade, further monks came, cells and a church of the Holy Cross were excavated adjoining the cave,³ and in 1177 a first draft of a monastic typikon was drawn up.⁴

During this construction, Neophytos installed a wall to separate his cell from the bema of the Holy Cross, and had it painted with a large Crucifixion.⁵ His asceticism did not rule out an image in his cell. Then in 1183, both his cell and the adjoining bema were richly frescoed by a painter of such elegance that he is assumed to have been furnished by the bishop on the basis of a recommendation from his Constantinopolitan relatives. Clearly self-aware, the painter signed and dated his work: ἀνιστοριθ[...]. λειστρα ... χειρο[5] εμου Θεοδώρου του Αψευδους [ἔ]τ[ε]ι ,σχ'α' (Ἰνδικτιῶνος) α' – the Enkleistra was painted with images by the hand of Theodoros Apseudes, in the year 6691 (1183), indication 1.⁶

1 Papacostas 2007: 76–79; Galatariotou 1991; Cormack 1985: 215–51; Mango and Hawkins 1966: 119–206; Tsiknopoullos 1955.

2 *Αγίου Νεοφύτου του Εγκλειστού Συγγράμματα*, ed. N. Gr. Zacharopoulos *et al.*, 6 vols. (Paphos, 1996–2008).

3 On the Enkleistra, see Papageorgiou 1998; Papageorgiou 1999: 62–69; Stylianos and Stylianos, *Painted Churches*, 351–69; Panagiotidi 1993–94: 143–56; Galatariotou 1991: 128–47; Cormack 1985: 215–51; Mango and Hawkins 1966: 119–206; Tsiknopoullos 1965; Indianos and Thompson 1939: 155–224.

4 The Typikon is known only from Neophytos' revised version of it completed on May 9, 1214 and preserved now in Edinburgh, University Library no. 224; see Saint Neophytos the Recluse, “Τυπικὴ Διαθήκη” ed. I. E. Stephanis, English transl. Coureas and Galatariotou.

5 Winfield 1978: 280, also records residues of painting on the sanctuary side of the wall, and on the wall that it abuts, indicating at least two phases of painting before 1183. On the Crucifixion, see Mango and Hawkins 1966: 176–79.

6 *Ibid.*, 183. This was recorded by Indianos and Thompson 1939: 187 as ἀνιστοριθι ... ο πανσεπιτος νας τες εγκλειστρας δια χειρος εμου Θεοδώρου του Ληευδους εν ετει ,σχ'α' ἀμην, and by Stylianos and Stylianos, “Donors and Dedicatory Inscriptions”: 132 as [... και] ειστ(ο)ρ(οφρ)α(φηθη) δια χειρος εμου Θεοδώρου Αψευ-

But Theodore was surely working with another acutely self-aware presence: Neophytos himself. Neophytos regarded the images in his Enkleistra as holy; he had no qualms about including full-scale portraits of himself among the images; and he expressed firm opinions about art and its patronage in his writings. He cannot have been indifferent to the imagery closing in around the tiny spaces of his life. He himself, in fact, is assumed to have composed the inscriptions accompanying them.

Some fifteen years later, in 1196, Neophytos excavated a new, more secluded cell in the rock above the naos of the Holy Cross, with an opening into its ceiling so he could hear the liturgy. In the wake of the excavation, the naos was frescoed accommodating the opening, and here again, Neophytos' portrait was included and the imagery can only have proceeded with his endorsement. The exceptional opportunity that the Enkleistra offers, of a gifted painter functioning in close proximity to an articulate, self-aware resident consumer of his work, has made it an extremely seductive art historical assignment.

Three of the four inscriptions included here are in the portion of the Enkleistra painted by Theodore. All are attributed to Neophytos himself. Each was composed to accompany an image, each is bound very directly to his own person through association with his portrait or his tomb, and in each case the image shrinks the distance between Neophytos and the holy figures whom he addresses, exposing domains of self-conception that still astonish. All of the texts are petitions, begging access to God's mercy; the images, by contrast, are in one way or another images of access attained. Their significance lies in the way the text and image work together. The first is a five-line epigram set within a near-life-sized image of the Deesis that rises over Neophytos' desk, with standing figures of Mary and the Baptist flanking an enthroned Christ against a luminous ground of lapis-lazuli blue.⁷ At its base, within the rectangle of its frame, is Neophytos himself, his epigram inscribed in front of him. The words are strikingly straight-forward, speaking to Christ himself with neither exaggerated humility nor aristocratic authority. The image, too, does not exaggerate Neophytos' abasement, showing him crouched in veneration but not diminutive in scale. His gesture, however, is extraordinary: he extends both hands to seize and caress the right foot of Christ. Few Byzantine images show supplicants seizing the foot of the person they petition, and Christ's foot is rarest of all.⁸ For decades, Neophytos sat at the little desk beneath the Deesis. He must often have craved the access it portrayed. In words, however, he could only crave it; art alone could claim it.

The second set of inscriptions accompanies one of the images painted within his tomb niche. The Anastasis rises on the niche's rear wall; the Crucifixion looms overhead, and to its side is an arched niche with images of Saints Basil and John Chrysostom flanking the

δους [ετ]ει ,σχ'α' ὄδαμ]. Mango wonders whether Apseudes was a patronymic, or an epithet referring to Theodore's images that do not lie.

7 Kazamia-Tsernou 2003, 243; Papageorghiou 1998: 29, fig. 9; Papageorghiou 1999, pl. 8; Constantinides 1999, pl. 2; Cormack 1985, fig. 87; Mango and Hawkins 1966, fig. 94.

8 The wife of the protospatharios Basil in the dedicatory miniature of Athos, Koutloumousiou 60, fol. 1v, grasps Christ's foot: see Spatharakis, *Portrait*, 83–84, fig. 52; otherwise, the hegumen Makar's hands are at the feet of St. Nicholas in Vatican, Vat. Reg. gr. 1, fol. 3 of the tenth century, and the nun Theotime's are at the feet of the Mother of God in Sinai, ms. Gr. 61, fol. 256v, of 1274; see Cannon 2012; Spatharakis 1974: 190–205.

enthroned Virgin and Child. It is this group that has written messages: each figure bears an inscribed scroll.⁹ Those of the two Fathers call one to the other, summoning the eyes to the Crucifixion and its stark, paradoxical vision of life-giving death. Within the niche, by contrast, it is the ears that triumph, in a quiet revelation that penetrates beyond death to heaven attained.¹⁰ Mary asks for the salvation of the one in the tomb, and Christ grants it. Their conversation, unique in an image of the Glykophilousa type, recalls the dialog on the scroll of the Virgin Eleousa in so many churches of the ensuing century. The earliest surviving instance of the dialog in Cyprus, at Lagoudera in 1192, postdates Neophytos' inscription, but the text itself had been widely known for centuries and is likely to have been used on Cyprus already earlier in the twelfth century.¹¹ Thus Neophytos' may have been a conscious adaptation of it to his individual need. Panagiotidi draws a telling contrast between the individual redemption extended in the Enkleistra's version of Mary's scroll, and the broadly encompassing exoneration of humankind in the dialog on the bema piers of Lagoudera and ensuing churches.¹² Yet more notably, the coercive quality of Mary's request is gone, and Christ volunteers his grace willingly and personally.

The most daring of all Neophytos' inscriptions accompanies a yet more exceptional image. This occupies much of the bema vault, just to the west of the image of Christ's ascension. It shows a tall, attenuated Neophytos, hands crossed on his breast, being raised by two archangels whose wings cross behind his back to create the impression that he, too, is winged.¹³ He is not haloed, though the crossed hands, seen in funerary images and scenes of Dormition, leave little doubt that the image shows Neophytos posthumously. The scene's many valences are explored by both Galatariotou and Cormack.¹⁴ Neophytos' own couplet that accompanies it is, for the first time, ambivalent, capable and perhaps deliberately intended to bear variant readings. Tsiknopoullos translated Neophytos' couplet to read "O holy twain, I fervently pray that this image should come true" at the Last Judgment;¹⁵ Mango by contrast, arguing that "to a Greek monk the primary meaning of the word σχῆμα would certainly have been that of 'monastic habit,'" suggested that the prayer should be paraphrased: "May I be indeed enrolled among the angels by virtue of my habit, my ἀγγελικὸν σχῆμα."¹⁶ This very ambivalence is surely the key to its significance.

Two further texts once inscribed in Neophytos' cell but now illegibly abraded reinforce the sense of self-referentiality pointed out already. One outlined Neophytos' own

9 Cormack 1985, fig. 88; Galatariotou 1991, fig. 13; Mango and Hawkins 1966, figs. 105, 107.

10 Fig. I.3.5.c in this volume shows well the relation of these figures to the Crucifixion and Anastasis; for a closer image of Mary's scroll see Mango and Hawkins 1966, fig. 107.

11 See A.W. Carr, I.2.7 in this volume, where the possibility of earlier examples at the Apsinthiotissa monastery, Asinou, and Kalliana are cited; on the antiquity of the dialog, see Kalopissi-Verti 2012: 155–56.

12 Cormack 1985: 233.

13 See Chotzakoglou 2005: 2, pl. 464; Papageorghiou 1998, pl. 4; Constantinides 1999, pl. 3; Galatariotou 1991, figs. 7, 8; Cormack 1985, fig. 93; Mango and Hawkins, 1966, color pl. opposite p. 166; Papageorghiou, *Masterpieces*, fig. XIX.

14 Galatariotou 1991: 141–46; Cormack 1985: 239–42.

15 Tsiknopoullos 1965: 30; *idem*, 1955: 119.

16 Mango and Hawkins 1966: 166.

life history;¹⁷ the other, above the tomb, was an epitaph, which represented Neophytos as speaking in the first person.¹⁸ Cyril Mango quips that in his Enkleistra, Neophytos built a monument to himself;¹⁹ certainly his self was a vivid part of its construction.

A final inscription, now carved rather than painted, was discovered displaced in the Enkleistra's refectory, and was ingeniously reconstructed by Cyril Mango and Ioannes Tsiknopoulos. It must have been the plaque dedicating the church of the Holy Cross. Andreas Rhoby wonders if it could have been composed by Neophytos, since it is metrically flawed.²⁰ Yet it is hard to imagine who else would so thoroughly identify with the church as the author does here, singing God's praises as much in the church's as in his own voice.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 174.

¹⁸ *BEIÜ* 1: no. 247, p. 360–61; Mango and Hawkins 1966: 183.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 129.

²⁰ *BEIÜ* 3: ZY 1, p. 761–63.

Text*I. Inscription accompanying the Deesis fresco*

Μητρικαῖς, Χριστέ, λιταῖ καὶ βαπτιστοῦ σου
 θρόνῳ σου σεπτῶ σεφθῶς παρισταμένῳ
 θείῳ σου ποδὶ ἱκετικῶς κειμένῳ
 ἴλεως ἔσο νῦν καὶ τοὺς αἰῶνας.

II. Inscription on Neophytos' tomb

+Πάρεσχε λύσιν, υἱέ μου, τῷ κειμένῳ +
 Δίδωμι καμφθεὶς σαῖς λιταῖς.

III. Inscription over Neophytos' Ascension

Τὸ σχῆμα τοῦτο, δυὰς [ἡγιασμένη]
 εἰς ἔργον ἔλθεῖν ἱκετεύω σὺν πόθῳ.

IV. Engraved inscription

[Ἔτυ]χον πρώην κατοίκησις [ὀρνίθων]
 ἐγενάμην δὲ σὴ κατοικία, Λόγε·]
 ἐπικέκλημαι σταυροῦ προ[μάχου κλήσει·
 κα]θηγίασμαι τῇ θεία λειτουργ[γία
 5 ἔχων διη]νεκῶς σῶμα τοῦ Δες[πότου·
 δό]ξα σοι, Λόγε, ὁ οὕτως εὐ[δο]κήσας·
 δόξα σοι, Χριστέ, κτίς[τα καὶ] ποιητά μου.

Translation*I. Inscription accompanying the Deesis fresco:*

Through the prayers of your Mother and your Baptist,
 who stand in reverence by your holy throne, O Christ,
 to him who lies a suppliant at your divine foot
 be merciful now, and for all eternity.

II. Inscription at Neophytos' tomb:

Grant redemption, my Son, to the one lying here.
 I give it, moved by your prayers.

III. Inscription over Neophytos' Ascension:

I pray fervently, holy pair,
 That this angelic habit comes to be.

IV. Engraved inscription:

I was in the past the dwelling place of birds.
 But then I became your home, Logos.
 I am called with the name of the cross, our defender.
 I am sanctified by the holy liturgy,
 5 As I hold forever the body of the Lord.
 Glory to you, Logos, who disposed it so well.
 Glory to you, Christ, my builder and creator.

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I.3.6 John Apokaukos (c.1155–1233)

Epigram on a Depiction of the Last Supper

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, “Επιγράμματα Ἰωάννου τοῦ Ἀποκαύκου,” *Ἄθηνᾶ* 15 (1903), 464 (no. 1); repr. in I. Delimaris, *Πατέρες τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικοὶ συγγραφεῖς τῆς δυτικῆς Ἑλλάδος 1: Ἄπαντα Ἰωάννου Ἀποκαύκου* (Nafpaktos, 2000), 465 and F. Dimitrakopoulos, “Τὰ ποιήματα τοῦ Ἰωάννου Ἀπόκαυκου,” *Ναυπακτικὰ* 10 (2001), 558

MS.:¹ St. Petersburg, RNB, Φ no. 906, Graecus 250 (= Granstr. 454) (s. XIII), f. 78v

Other Translations: Delimaris, as above, 481 (Modern Greek)

Significance

The depiction of the Last Supper was a popular iconographic subject in monastic refectories, but it was rarely associated with an epigram. The poet guides the viewer to understand that the image will serve the salvation of the viewer’s soul.

The Author

See F. Spingou and T. Tsampouras, I.2.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

The poem refers to a depiction of the Last Supper in the form of an icon or a fresco, but without offering further details. Depictions of the Last Supper were often placed in monastic refectories.² The strong allusion to the materiality of the human body (as opposed to the immateriality of the soul) and the direct reference to the act of dining (v. 3) corroborate further the possible inscriptional use of the text on a fresco in the assumed context.

Concepts of materiality and of immateriality converse throughout the epigram. From the very beginning of the text, Apokaukos suggests echoes of the Platonic ideas when he speaks of the body as the prison for the soul.³ He remarkably asks the viewer to transfer (διαπόρθησον) into his soul the picture made by the painter, to meditate through it and to begin the journey to salvation by starting from the image.

¹ Consulted.

² Popović 1998: 299; Orlandos 1958: 50; Talbot 2007: 111.

³ For a general assessment of Plato in Apokaukos work see Lambropoulos, *Ἀπόκαυκος*, 50–51.

Text

Στίχοι τοῦ παναγιωτάτου μητροπολίτου Ναυπάκτου εἰς τὸν Μυστικὸν Δεῖπνον

- Ἄν ἦν δυνατὸν καὶ μόνας ψυχὰς βλέπειν,
 λύσιν ὅταν λάβωσι δεσμῶν σαρκίου,
 ψυχῶν τὸ δεῖπνον εἶδες, ἀλλ' οὐ σωμάτων·
 ἐπεὶ δὲ σάρκα τὸ προκάλυμμα φέρεις,
 5 τῶν πνευμάτων τὸν δεῖπνον ἐν τούτοις βλέπε.
 καὶ γοῦν διαπύρρθευσον εἰς ψυχὴν μέσην
 τῆς χρωματούργοῦ γραφικῆς τὴν εἰκόνα,
 ψυχῆς τε τῆς σῆς ἐμμελῶς φρόντιζέ μοι,
 ὡς νυμφικῆς παστάδος ἔνδοθεν φθάσης.

Translation

Verses of the most holy metropolitan of Nafpaktos on the Last Supper.

- If it was possible indeed to see souls alone,
 when they are freed from the chains of the flesh,¹
 you would [here] a supper of souls, not of bodies.
 But since you are covered in flesh,²
 5 behold³ the Supper⁴ of the spirits in these [depictions];
 so transverse⁵ into your soul's midst
 the picture made by the painter's skill,
 and meticulously give heed to your soul for me,⁶
 so that you will enter the bridal chamber.⁷

Commentary

1. Plato, *Phaedo*, 67d.4.
2. Psellos, *Theologica Minora*, Oration no. 104, l. 72–92, p. 413.
3. Note the use of the verb βλέπω in imperative. Βλέπω has the meaning of “to look and trust your view,” while other verbs that indicate actions related to the sense of sight have a deeper meaning that reveals some uncertainty; cf. ὁρῶ = to see and perceive or νοῶ = perceive spiritually. See LSJ, sv.
4. Note that the word for supper appears in its neutral form in v. 3 (τὸ δεῖπνον), while here it is masculine (ὁ δεῖπνος); in the former verse it refers to a supper, while in the latter to the Last Supper.
5. Plato, *Symposium*, 292E, with the meaning “to explain.”⁵
6. The Greek text here refers to the painter as χρωματούργος; and to the “skill in depiction” as γραφικὴ [τέχνη]; on the latter cf. Plato, *Sophist*, 234b.
7. Cf. Mt. 25:1–13.

4 Dimitrakopoulos (2001: 558) refers to Plato, *Timaeus*, 100B; on the re-occurrence in Apokaukos' work of the body as the prison of the soul see Lampropoulos, *Ἀπόκαυκος*, 142 and 240 (Letter no. 111).

5 Cf. Dimitrakopoulos 2001: 558.

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I.3.7 Philagathos of Cerami (c.1080–post 1155)

The Massacre of the Holy Innocents

MIRCEA DULUŞ

Ed.: G. Rossi-Taibbi, *Filagato da Cerami, Omelie per i vangeli domenicali e le feste di tutto l'anno: Omelie per le feste fisse* (Palermo, 1969), *Homily 24*, 158–60

MS.:¹ Madrid, Biblioteca nacional de España, Graecus 4554 (s. XII), ff. 65r–67r; Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, graecus 250 (a.1301–11), ff. 93v–97r; Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 100 sup (Martini-Bassi 196) (s. XIV), ff. 83v–86r; El-Escorial, Real biblioteca, Ω.IV.27 (Andrés 579) (s. XIV), ff. 87r–91r; Paris, BNF, Coislin 277 (s. XIV), 147v–153v; Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 2194 (s. XIV), ff. 127r–32r

Other Translations: None

Significance

Philagathos' *ekphrasis* of the Massacre of the Holy Innocents is one of the most evocative depictions of grief and bereavement in the Byzantine homiletic tradition. Within his dramatic evocation, the homilist introduces the *ekphrasis* of a painting representing the New Testament episode as a means to enhance the persuasive effect of his account. The homily offers us a fine example of the role *ekphrasis* plays in inducing the audience to share the speaker's emotional state aroused by the image of the slaughter of the infants. Philagathos conveys the intensity of the scene by "seeing" in the painting the quasi-temporal unfolding of the massacre, while at the same time "hearing" through an *ethopoia* the comfortless mothers' lamentation.

The Author

Philagathos of Cerami is one of the most important representatives of the intense cultural renewal in the Norman Kingdom of Sicily. He flourished during the reigns of Roger II (r.1130–54) and William I (r.1154–66) and has often been called a court preacher, but it is more proper to consider him a preacher whose learning and distinction led to frequent appearances at court. He was probably born in the last quarter of the eleventh century in northeastern Sicily, at Cerami, and he is mostly known as the author of a substantial collection of homilies for the Sunday readings and the feasts of the liturgical year, known as the Italo-Greek homiliary.² He also wrote an allegorical interpretation of Heliodorus

¹ Not consulted.

² Rossi-Taibbi 1969.

Aethiopica, while two short epigrams on Galen and a grammar handbook have also been attributed to him.³

As an itinerant preacher, he traveled widely through Calabria and Sicily and delivered some of his compositions before Kings Roger II and William I. Philagathos preached in the church of the Monastery of San Salvatore in Messina, at Rossano, at Reggio, at Palermo, at Taormina, at his birthplace Cerami, and at other unspecified locations.⁴ Philagathos' sermons transmit a powerful persuasive effect. They are replete with vivid evocations achieved by drawing on a wide array of sources. Besides drawing from the work of Christian luminaries (in particular, the work of Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus Confessor, Cyril of Alexandria, Michael Psellos, and the *Monogenes* of Makarios Magnes), he was also influenced by rhetoricians from the Late Antique school of Gaza (for example, Procopius, and Aeneas), Lucian of Samosata, Alciphron, Synesius and most conspicuously the ancient novelists Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus. It is, therefore, not surprising that given his erudition, he acquired the appellation "the philosopher."

Text and Context

In the homily *For the Feast of the Holy Innocents* preached from the pulpit of the Archbishopric of Rossano,⁵ Philagathos describes a painting representing Herod the Great's infanticide and the slain children's comfortless mothers. The sermon conforms to a customary threefold division, a refined *proemium*, a "literal-historic" part (*historia*) that expounds the events narrated in the Gospel episode (Mt. 2:16–18), and the allegorical section that unveils the spiritual meaning (*theoria*) of the story.

The *ekphrasis* of the painting is placed in the section devoted to the 'literal-historic' exegesis, in which Philagathos first cites and refutes anti-Christian reprimands. The rebukes chastized Christ's flight to Egypt for having been motivated by merely human needs and condemned Christ for not having prevented Herod's massacre. Their formulation and reasoning is akin to the arguments advanced by Celsus, Porphyry, or the Emperor Julian, but the fragmentary transmission of Late Antique polemics does not permit a precise attribution. The description of the painting is set within the account of the Massacre, an *ekphrasis* within an *ekphrasis*. The narrative elaboration of the Massacre minutely complies with the definition of an *ekphrasis* as "a descriptive speech bringing the thing shown vividly before the eyes." Philagathos represents the unfolding of the bloodshed by an elaborate weaving together of citations, most prominently from Procopius of Gaza's lost *Monody for Antioch* and Gregory of Nyssa's *Homily on the Nativity*, complemented by an Homeric allusion.⁶

3 Bianchi 2006: 49–67; Irigoien 2001: 94; Lavagnini 1974: 768; Cupane 1978: 24–25.

4 Duluş 2011: 56–58.

5 Rossi-Taibbi 1969: liv.

6 I indicate these allusions in the notes accompanying the translation; for the allusions to Procopius of Gaza's *Monody* see also Corcella 2010: 31–34.

In this context, and in order to accentuate the vividness of the literary description Philagathos inserts the *ekphrasis* of a painting of the Massacre. He introduces the *ekphrasis* with the statement: “I saw this [scene of] suffering painted in colors on a panel, and I was moved to pity and tears.” Clearly, the rendition of emotional response aroused by the work of art represented an essential component in the *ekphraseis* of paintings from Late Antiquity onwards.⁷ In this tradition, Philagathos’ *ekphrasis* aims at imparting this woeful emotional effect by recreating the sight of the bloodshed for his audience. Unfortunately, it remains uncertain as to whether Philagathos was describing a real painting or had based his account only on the literary tradition. Considering the fact that Gregory of Nyssa, the author most cherished by the south Italian preacher, used a similar opening for an *ekphrasis* of a painting of the Sacrifice of Isaac rather favors the latter hypothesis.⁸

An important literary model for Philagathos’ *ekphrasis* of the painting is Procopius of Gaza’s *Description of the Image Placed in the City of Gaza*, a source hitherto unknown to the homiletic corpus. Procopius’ renowned *ekphrasis* presents the two main episodes from the Euripidean tragedy *Hippolytus Stephanephorus*.⁹ Philagathos resorts to Procopius’ rendition of the scene that features Theseus fallen asleep in the palace, surrounded by servants and his wife, Phaedra, for his depiction of Herod Antipas. As the rhetorical practice demanded for *ekphraseis* of actions, Philagathos recounts the scene as if unfolding in time, with Herod seeming to order the slaughter of the children, followed by the soldiers’ onslaught, and then the mothers gathering the scattered limbs and wailing over the deaths of their children. For picturing the ferocity of the scene, the preacher appropriated snippets befitting the theme from Cyril of Alexandria’s *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets*. Then, in order to evoke the emotion of the suffering, Philagathos gave the power of speech to the voiceless image, “since the artist could not impart voice to the colors, he signified the lamentations with letters.” This is a frequent rhetorical device in *ekphrasis* aiming “to make the event depicted immediate and vivid.”¹⁰ At the same time, by imagining the words of the grieving mothers, Philagathos typifies the expected reaction to a religious painting as imparted by the acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council of 787, which prescribed that “we must certainly bring to mind” the words of the protagonists when beholding an icon.¹¹ The *ekphrasis* concludes with a citation of verses from Euripides, which recall the atrocious suffering of Niobe and Alcestis. These were probably drawn from the rhetorical tradition, rather than directly from a reading of Euripides.¹²

7 James and Webb, “To Understand Ultimate Things,” 9–11.

8 Maguire, “Truth and Convention,” 130.

9 For Procopius of Gaza’s *ekphrasis* see Talgam 2004: 209–34; Drbal 2011: 106–22. See also Duluş 2020: 487–492.

10 James and Webb, “To Understand Ultimate Things,” 10.

11 Sahas 1986: 98.

12 Corcella 2011: 16–17.

Text

[6.] Ἦν μὲν καὶ ἄλλας αἰτίας προσθεῖναι τῆς τῶν νηπίων σφαγῆς, ἀλλ' ἐνηχεῖ μου τὰς τοῦ νοὸς ἀκοὰς ὁ τότε γενόμενος θόρυβος, καὶ τὸ κατὰ τῶν παιδῶν ἀπηνέστατον πρόσταγμα, καὶ ἡ ἀκουσθεῖσα φωνὴ ἐν Ῥαμᾶ, καὶ τὸ Οὐαί, καὶ ὁ θρήνος ὁ τῆς Ῥαχήλ ἐκεῖ τὸν λόγον ὑφέλκεται. ἀλλὰ ποῖος ἐφίκοιτο λόγος, εἰς τοσοῦτου πάθους ἀφήγησιν; τίς ἀξίως ἐκτραγωδήσειε τῆς συμφορᾶς ἐκείνης τὸ μέγεθος; ὦ θεᾶς ἀπευκτῆς, ὦ γνόφου δεινοῦ, κατασχόντος τότε τὴν Βηθλεέμ. ὦ γυναικῶν ὄλολυγῆς, οἰμωγῆς τε παιδῶν ἀρπαζομένων εἰς ὄλεθρον. Ἐθρήνουν πατέρες, προσέπιπτον τοῖς στρατιώταις, ἰκέτευον, καὶ μήτηρ περιεμέχυτο παῖδα, πατὴρ δὲ ἀνεκαλεῖτο γονήν. ὦρμα γυνὴ πρὸς φυγὴν, φόρτον τοῖς ὤμοις τὸ παιδίον ἐπάγουσα· ἀλλ' ἦν τῶν ὑπηρετῶν ὁ δρόμος ὀξύτερος. [7.] ἀλλήλοισι δὲ συνεκρούοντο, καὶ φωναὶ συμμιγεῖς ἀνηγείροντο· ἠπειλοῦν οἱ στρατιῶται δεινόν τι καὶ δρακοντῶδες, ἠγριωμένοις δεδορκότες τοῖς ὄμμασιν. ὠλόλυζον μητέρες αἵμασι πεφυρμένοι καὶ δάκρυσιν· ὠλοφύροντο νήπια ἔλεεινῶς συγκοπτόμενα. τὰ γὰρ ξίφη, ὡς ἔτυχεν, ἐπ' αὐτὰ φερόμενα ἀθλίως ἠκρωτηρίαζε· καὶ τὸ μὲν χειρῶν ἀπεστέρητο, τὸ δὲ τῷ πόδε συντριβὲν ἐξ ἡμισείας ἀπώλετο· ἄλλο κατεάγη τὴν κεφαλὴν, τοῦ σώματος τὰ καίρια παρασπῶμενον, τὸ δὲ ὄλον ἐτέμνετο, ὡς ὁ θυμὸς ἐδίδου αὐτοματιζῶν ἐκάστω τὸν θάνατον. ὦ πόσοι παῖδες, μέσον τμηθέντες, ἡμίθνητοι μεμενήκασιν, μηδὲ τελευτὴν ὀξυτέραν κερδαίνοντες, ἀλλὰ κατὰ βραχὺ δαπανώμενοι. παῖς παρέθεε τῇ μητρὶ καὶ ψελλιζούση φωνῇ τὴν τεκοῦσαν ἀνεκαλεῖτο. ἀλλὰ στρατιώτης ἐξάπινα εἰσδραμῶν, ἀφρηῖτο τῷ ξίφει τὴν κεφαλὴν· φθειγμένου δ' ἄρα τοῦδε, ἡ κἀρα κατεμίχθη τῇ κόνει. [8.] ἐξάγει γὰρ με ὁ λόγος τὰ τῆς ποιήσεως φθέγγασθαι· πᾶσαν ἡλικίαν τὸ πάθος τότε συνείληφε, καὶ τραγωδίας Ἐρινύς τῇ Βηθλεέμ ἐπεκώμαζε, τοῖς οἴκοθεν αὐτὴν πολέμοις μαστίζουσα. καὶ πρεσβύτης μὲν ἐδυσχέραινε τὸν μακρὸν χρόνον καταιτιώμενος, ὡς πάθεισιν αὐτὸν τοῖς παροῦσι τετηρηκότα, καὶ τὸν θάνατον ὡς βραδύνοντα κατεμέμεφε· ἡ δὲ μήτηρ ὅτι καὶ γέγονε μήτηρ ὠδύρετο· ἐμακαρίζοντο δὲ παρθένοι καὶ στεῖραι, καὶ θηλυτόκοι καὶ ἄγονοι. τάχα δὲ καὶ ταῖς τοιαύταις κοινὸν ἦν τὸ τῆς συμφορᾶς ἐξ ἑταιρείας ἢ αἵματος ἢ τρόπου ἀνακοινοῦμενον.

[9.] Εἶδον ἐγὼ τοῦτο τὸ πάθος χρώμασι γεγραμμένον ἐν πίνακι, καὶ πρὸς οἶκτον ἐκινήθη καὶ δάκρυα. ἐγγέγραπτο γὰρ ὁ μὲν τύραννος ἐκεῖνος Ἡρώδης ἐφ' ὑψηλοῦ τινος θρόνου σοβαρῶς ἐφεζόμενος, δριμύ τι καὶ θηριῶδες ὄρων κερηνότι τῷ βλέμματι. ὀρθὸν δὲ στήσας ἐν κολεῶ τὸ ξίφος, τὴν λαϊὰν ἐπ' αὐτῷ διανέπαιε, τὴν <δὲ> δεξιὰν προτείων ἐπιτάττειν ἐώκει τοῖς στρατιώταις ἀνηλεῶς θερίσαι τῶν νηπίων τὴν ἄρουραν. οἱ δὲ θηριοπρεπῶς ἐπιθρῶσκοντες, ἀφειδῶς τὰ δειλαία κατεμέλιζον. ἔγραψεν ὁ ζωγράφος καὶ τὰς ἀθλίας μητέρας οἰκτρὸν συνιστώσας θρήνον καὶ τοῖς αἵμασι κινρῶσας τὰ δάκρυα. καὶ ἡ μὲν ἔτιλλε τὰς κόμας, ἡ δὲ τοῖς ὄνυξι τὰς παρειὰς περιέδρυσεν· ἄλλη διέρρησε τὸν πέπλον, καὶ τὰ στέρνα παραγυμνοῦσα τὸν μαστὸν ὑπέδεικνυ καταλειφθέντα τοῦ θηλάζοντος ἔρημον· ἑτέρα δὲ τοῦ κατακοπέντος παιδίου τὰ διεσπαρμένα μέλη συνέλεγε· καὶ ἄλλη νεοσφαγῆς ἐν τοῖς γόνασι κρατοῦσα τὸ νήπιον, πικρῶς ὠλοφύρετο. [10.] καὶ ἐπειδὴ μὴ εἶχεν ὁ τεχνίτης φωνὴν ἐνθεῖναι τοῖς χρώμασιν, ἐσήμανε τοὺς θρήνους τοῖς γράμμασιν. ἐδόκει γὰρ ἐπιτραγωδεῖν ὧδέ πη τὸ γύναιον· «ὦ παιδίον δυστυχῆς ἀθλιωτέρας μητρὸς, ἔλάνθανες ἄρα ξίφει καὶ θανάτῳ ἄωρῳ τικτόμενον. ὦ μάτην γονίμου γαστρὸς, ὦ ζηλωτῆς εὐτεκνίας, ἐπ' ὀλίγον μὲν εὐφρανάσης, ἐπὶ πλέον δὲ ἀνιώσης τὴν δειλαίαν ἐμέ.

Translation

[6.] Indeed, other reasons for the massacre of children could be added, but the uproar that then arose resounds in the ears of my mind, as well as the atrocious command given against the children, and the voice heard in Ramah, and woe, and Rachel's lamentation, which in that place was weighing upon her speech.¹ But what word could be seemly for recounting a suffering as great as this? Whoever could describe appropriately with woeful words the magnitude of that misfortune?² O horrendous spectacle! O terrible darkness, which at that time spread over Bethlehem! O loud cry of women, and children's weeping when snatched away towards destruction! The fathers wailed, they fell down before the soldiers kneeling, beseeching them; *a mother embraced her child*³ and a father called his offspring. A woman rushed out fleeing, carrying the child as a burden upon her shoulders, but the henchmen's running was faster. [7.] They collided with each other and mingled voices arose. The soldiers *blustered terrible threats, flashing*⁴ forth like snakes with savage eyes. The mothers wept bitterly, drenched by blood and tears;⁵ the babes sobbed when pitifully cleaved asunder. For the swords, randomly raining down upon them, inflicted horrendous mutilations. One was deprived of hands, while one died with legs cut in half. *Another had his head cut off, having detached the body's most important part*;⁶ another one was entirely cut, since wrath acting spontaneously brought death to every single one. *O how many children cut in half laid half-dead, not even having the benefit of a swifter death*,⁷ but they expired only slowly. *A child ran to his mother, and called her with faltering voice*.⁸ But a soldier rushing towards him with the sword immediately severed his head; and "*while he was yet speaking his head was mingled with the dust*";⁹ [8.] (for the speech leads me up to utter poetical words). Calamity struck every generation at that time and a tragic Erinys¹⁰ assaulted Bethlehem, scourging it with internecine fights. And indeed, the old man bewailed, cursing his many years, for having kept him alive only to bring him the present misfortunes and he blamed death for being slow to arrive; whereas the mother lamented that she had become a mother; happy instead were the virgins and the barren women, and those who had begotten girls, or the childless lot. Yet perhaps, even these women participated in the misfortune because of friendship, blood, or natural affection.

[9.] I saw this [scene of] suffering painted in colors on a panel, and I was moved to pity and tears.¹¹ For that tyrant Herod was depicted sitting on a high throne haughtily, looking with wide-open eyes,¹² fierce and savage. *While he held* the sword *straight* in its sheath, *he rested* his left hand upon it, and as he stretched forth his right hand he seemed to be ordering the soldiers to reap without pity the land of the infants.¹³ And *springing like beasts* they *chopped unmercifully* the wretched [lads].¹⁴ The painter also represented the miserable mothers, lamenting piteously as they mixed [their] tears with blood. And one tore her hair, another scraped the skin of her cheeks with her nails, another tore her robe, and laying bare her chest, showed her breast, now without the feeding baby.¹⁵ Another gathered the scattered limbs of the slaughtered child. And another holding on her knees her newly murdered child wept bitterly. [10.] And since the artist could not provide a voice to the colors, he imprinted the lamentations in letters. For it seemed that the woman lamented in this manner: "O hapless child of a more miserable mother, unaware of the

ὦ μελῶν ἀπαλῶν, καὶ γλώττης ψελλιζούσης ἠδύ, νῦν δὲ φεῦ σιγησάσης ἐσχάτην σιγὴν. ὦ δεξιᾶς ἀδίκου ξιφήρους, ὅτι μὴ πρὸ σοῦ, παιδίον, τὴν τεκοῦσαν ἀπέκτεινεν. ἔγρεο, σπλάγχνον ἐμόν, ἀποτίναξον τὸν βαρὺν τοῦτον ὕπνον, ὃν σοι ὁ ἀπηνῆς στρατιώτης ἐνέθηκεν, ὑφαπλώθητι ταῖς ἀγκάλαις τῆς σῆς ἀθλίας μητρός, ἐπιλαβοῦ τοῦ πρὶν σοι ποθουμένου μαζοῦ, ἐπίδειξον τὸ γλυκὺ καὶ σύνηθες ἐκεῖνο μειδιάμα». ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀφῆκε τὸ ἀπηνῆς τοῦ τυράννου ἐπίταγμα. [11.] τοιαῦτα λέγειν ἐώκει, καὶ συνεῖρεν ἴσως τὰ τῆς Νιόβης καὶ τῆς Ἀλκίστεως:

*Μάτην ἄρα σε, τέκνον, ἐξεθρεψάμην,
μάτην ἐμόχθουν καὶ κατεξάνθη πόνοις.
ζηλῶ δ' ἀγάμους καὶ γυναῖκας ἀτέκνους·
βέλτιον γὰρ μὴ τεμεῖν ἢ τίττειν εἰς δάκρυα.*

sword, and for an untimely death engendered! O womb, fertile in vain! O fruitfulness admired, though it gladdened me a little, yet wretchedness wholly returned to me! O tender limbs and sweetly bumbling tongue, yet now, alas, keeping everlasting silence! O that the unrighteous right hand, armed with a sword, had not slain the mother, instead of you, O child! Awake my child, shake off this heavy sleep, which the cruel soldier has cast you into! Compose [yourself] upon the elbows of your miserable mother! Lay hold of your once beloved breast! Show forth that sweet and constant smile!” But the tyrant’s cruel command did not permit it. [11.] It appeared seemly to say such words and perhaps the words of Niobe and Alcestis add [to them]:⁶

In vain, O child, I nourished you,
 In vain, I labored and was torn out by toils;
 I envy the unmarried lot and the childless women;
 For it is better not to have given birth than to give birth to tears.

Commentary

1. Mt. 2:18; cf. Jer. 31:15.
2. These questions expressing anxiety and hesitation of the rhetor's ability to find words adequate to the misfortune are a well-established convention in laments.¹³
3. The formulation is derived from Procopius of Gaza's *Monody for Antioch* (= Bekker, 169, 4–5, fr. incert.).
4. The expression “flashing forth like snakes” – *δεινόν τι καὶ δρακοντῶδες, ἠγριωμένοις δεδορκότες* – mirrors Gregory of Nyssa's phrasing from the *Seventh Homily on Beatitudes*:¹⁴ ὀφθαλμοὶ μὲν ὑπὸ τὴν τῶν βλεφάρων περιγραφὴν ἐξωθοῦνται, ὕφαιμόν τι καὶ δρακοντῶδες πρὸς τὸ λυποῦν ἀτενίζοντες – “The eyes protrude beyond the surrounding eye-lids, staring bloodshot and like a snake's so as to hurt.”¹⁵
5. The vivid description of being drenched “by blood and tears” evokes a literary convention often encountered in laments;¹⁶ this emphasis on extreme gestures of bereavement is recurrent in Philagathos as can be observed in the sermon “On the Widow's Son”: Καὶ ἰδὼν τὴν χήραν οὕτως ἡμίγυμνον, αἵματι φυρωμένην καὶ δάκρυσιν: “And seeing the widow in this way half naked, drenched by blood and tears.”¹⁷
6. The phrasing is inspired from Procopius of Gaza, *Monody for Antioch* (= Bekker, 153, 21–23).
7. Procopius of Gaza, *Monody for Antioch* (= Bekker, 153, 24–26, fr. incert.).
8. Gregory of Nyssa, *Oration on the Nativity of Christ*, PG 46, coll. 1145: ἀλλ' ἀκροᾶται τοῦ ἄλλου ἤδη φθεγγομένου καὶ ψελλιζομένη τῇ φωνῇ τὴν μητέρα μετὰ δακρύων ἀνακαλοῦντος. τί πάθη; τίς γένηται; τῇ τίνος ἀντιβοήσει φωνῇ; τῇ τίνος οἰμωγῇ ἀντοδύρηται: “And she was listening as the other was ere now speaking and calling in tears her mother with a faltering voice. O what is to befall her? Who could take this? By whose voice could her cry be answered? By whose weeping could her lamentation be surpassed?”
9. Philagathos cites *Il. X.* 457, which presents Diomedes beheading Dolon: “Diomedes sprang upon him with his sword and smote him full upon the neck, and shore off both the sinews, and even *while he was yet speaking his head was mingled with the dust.*”¹⁸ By this poetical twist, Philagathos evokes the hopelessness of the children's flight and their inevitable death; for the citation recalls the narrative context of the *Iliad* as Dolon who, despite being a fast runner, was swiftly hunted down by Diomedes and Odysseus with help from the goddess Athena.
10. In Greek mythology, the Erynies were chthonic deities of vengeance.
11. By stating that the image of the massacre conjures the reality of the event while imbuing the beholder with empathy for the suffering evoked, Philagathos points to

13 For other examples see Alexiou 2002: 161–65.

14 Gregory of Nyssa, *Seventh Homily on Beatitudes*, GNO VII 2, 156, 1–2, transl. Hall, 80.

15 Transl. Hall, 80.

16 See for this Alexiou 2002: 162–64.

17 *Hom.* 6.13, ed. Rossi-Taibbi, 42.

18 *Iliad* 10.455–57, transl. Murray, 469.

a Byzantine aesthetic experience that is shaped by the confluence of *ekphrasis*, emotions, and iconic thought.¹⁹ In particular, Philagathos echoes a literary tradition that recalls Gregory of Nyssa's *ekphrasis* of a painting figuring the sacrifice of Isaac in *On the Divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit*.²⁰

12. For the description of the painting the homilist follows several literary models; first, it is noteworthy that the expression “looking with wide-open eyes” – ὀρώων κεχηρηνότητι τῷ βλέμματι – is recurrent in Philagathos' homilies; the preacher employs a similar formulation in the sermon “On the Raising of the Son of the Widow of Nain” for describing the widow while “gazing steadfastly at the unblinking child, with eyes open wide” – ἐνατενίζουσα τῷ παιδί ἀσκαρδαμύκτω καὶ κεχηρηνότητι τῷ βλέμματι.²¹ Furthermore, the vignette appears to allude to a similar scene of bereavement from Pseudo-Nilus of Ancyra's *Narrations Concerning the Slaughter of the Monks of Sinai*. Specifically, the expression refers to the reaction of a mother when she learned that her child had been slain: οὐτ' ἔκλαιον λοιπὸν οὐτ' ὠδυρόμην, ἀλλ' ἀτενῶς ἔβλεπον πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀσκαρδαμυκτῶν κεχηρηνότητι τῷ βλέμματι.²² “After that I did not weep or lament but just stared at him with eyes open wide, without blinking . . .”²³ Arguably, the contextual parallelism constitutes an argument for tracing Philagathos' snippet to Pseudo-Nilus' *Narrations*.
13. Philagathos' description of Herod as ὀρθὸν δὲ στήσας ἐν κολεῶ τὸ ξίφος, τὴν λαϊάν ἐπ' αὐτῷ διανέπαιε – “while he held the sword straight in its sheath, he rested his left hand upon it” – has close parallels with Procopius of Gaza's *Description of the Image Placed in the City of Gaza*. It appears that Philagathos fashioned his account after Procopius' description of the boy bearing the fan from the main scene of the painting, which features Theseus asleep. Taking advantage of his master's sleep, the boy abandoned his duties and fell asleep: ὅπως δὲ μὴ λάθη παραρρυσέν, ὀρθὸν τοῦτο στήσας τὸ σῶμα ἀνέκλινε, λαῖω συνέχων τῷ πῆχει καὶ πρὸς ἀσφάλειαν τῇ χειρὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐρειδόμενος.²⁴ “But that he may not slip off, while holding this (i.e. the fan) upright he bent his body, leaning on his left forearm and propping his head up on his hand as a precaution against falling.” Then, Philagathos' formulation τὴν λαϊάν ἐπ' αὐτῷ διανέπαιε recalls Procopius of Gaza's similar usage of διαναπαύω for picturing Theseus who “rests his body” – διαναπαύει τὸ σῶμα²⁵ – while lying on his bed at noon at the center of a hypostyle hall. The fact that Philagathos was acquainted with Procopius of Gaza's *Description of the Image* is further confirmed by the homily delivered for the third Sunday after Pentecost (Mt. 6:22–23). Here, the homilist adapted a

19 See James and Webb, “To Understand Ultimate Things,” 9–11.

20 PG 46, coll. 572C.

21 *Hom.* 6.8, ed. Rossi-Taibbi, 40.

22 Pseudo-Nilus of Ancyra, *Narrations*, 6.1.11–12, ed. F. Conca.

23 Transl. Caner: 117.

24 Procopius of Gaza, *Opus* 9.13, ed. Amato 2014: 196.

25 Procopius of Gaza, *Opus* 9.10, ed. Amato 2014: 194.

passage from Procopius' account of the painting of Phaedra²⁶ for portraying a deacon sleeping during the liturgy.²⁷

14. With respect to style, as the technique of *ekphrasis* prescribes, Philagathos' language aims to reflect the events described.²⁸ For achieving this stylistic quality, the homilist appropriated passages referring to savagery from Cyril of Alexandria's *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets*. First, the characterization of the soldiers who are "springing like beasts" – οἱ δὲ θηριοπρεπῶς ἐπιθρώσκοντες – is indebted to Cyril's exegesis of Michaias 2:10–11: κατεστάλαξε δὲ καὶ εἰς νοῦν αὐτοῖς καὶ καρδίαν, τὴν διὰ πλανήσεως μέθην, ἐφ' ἣ δικαίως καὶ ἀπολώλασι, θηριοπρεπῶς ἐπιθρώσκοντες, παντὶ τε θράσει καὶ δυσφημίᾳ χρώμενοι:²⁹ "He distilled into their mind and heart an intoxication through error in which they rightly perish in a frenzy befitting wild animals employing utter audacity and abuse."³⁰ Then, Philagathos' statement that the soldiers "chopped unmercifully the wretched [lads]" – ἀφειδῶς τὰ δειλαία κατεμέλιζον – goes back to Cyril's exegesis of Michaias 3:1–4: ἀνήμερον κατὰ τῶν ἐμῶν προβάτων ποιουμένους τὴν ἔφοδον . . . τοὺς ἀποδέροντας μὲν τὰ πρόβατα, καταξαινοντας δὲ καὶ σάρκας, καὶ καταμελίζοντας ἀφειδῶς καὶ οἶον ἔφοντας διὰ χύτρας:³¹ "[Y]ou made savage and heartless attacks on my sheep . . . skinning the sheep, tearing their flesh, chopping it unmercifully, and, as it were, cooking it in a pot."³²
15. Similar gestures of bereavement were often recorded in hagiography and their frequency may indicate that they continued to endure within the ritual practice of mourning in the popular tradition, as Margaret Alexiou argued.³³
16. The first two verses are in all likelihood reminiscent of Euripides: διὰ κενῆς ἄρα / ἐν σπαργάνοις σε μαστὸς ἔξεθρεψ' ὄδε, / μάτην δ' ἐμόχθουν καὶ κατεξάνθην πόνους ("In vain and all in vain, / This breast in swaddling-bands hath nurtured thee");³⁴ similar verses, but without Philagathos' emphasis on "worthlessness" – μάτην – recur in Euripides' *Medea*: ἄλλως ἄρ' ὑμᾶς, ὦ τέκν', ἔξεθρεψάμην, / ἄλλως δ' ἐμόχθουν καὶ κατεξάνθην πόνους, – "For naught, for naught, my babes, I nurtured you / And all for naught I labored, travail-worn";³⁵ the last verse goes back to Euripides, *Alcestis*: ζηλῶ δ' ἀγάμους ἀτέκνους τε βροτῶν ("I envy the lot / Of the man without wife / Without child: single-wrought / is the strand of his life");³⁶ the reference to Niobe in association with the third verse cited by Philagathos appears in the rhetorical tradition, particularly in Aphthonius' *Progymnasmata*, X. 35–36: (ed. H. Rabe): Ἥθοποιίας μελέτη-

26 Procopius of Gaza, *Opus* 9.17, ed. Amato 2014: 198.

27 *PG* 132, coll. 813D–816A.

28 Webb 2009: 57.

29 Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets*, 1.640.10, ed. Pusey.

30 Transl. Hill 2008: 209.

31 Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Twelve Prophets*, 1.645.15–19, ed. Pusey.

32 Transl. Hill 2008: 213.

33 Alexiou 2002: 163.

34 *Troïades*, 758–60, transl. Way 1930: 417.

35 *Medea*, 1029–1030, transl. Way 1930: 365.

36 *Alcestis*, 882, transl. Way 1928: 481.

τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους *Νιόβη* κειμένων τῶν παίδων. Οἶαν ἂνθ' οἷας ἀλλάσσομαι τύχην ἄπαις ἢ πρὶν εὐπαις δοκοῦσα; καὶ περιέστη τὸ πλῆθος εἰς ἔνδειαν καὶ μήτηρ ἐνὸς οὐχ ὑπάρχου παιδὸς ἢ πολλῶν τοῦτο δόξασα πρότερον. ὡς ἔδει τὴν ἀρχὴν *μη̅ τεκεῖν ἢ τι̅ κτειν εἰς δάκρυα*. τῶν οὐ τεκόντων οἱ στερηθέντες εἰσὶν ἀτυχέστεροι· τὸ γὰρ εἰς πείραν ἦκον ἀνιαρὸν εἰς ἀφαίρεσιν: “An Exercise in Characterization: ‘What Words Niobe Might Say when Her Children Lie Dead.’ ‘How great is the change in my fortune! – childless now, once seeming blessed with children. Abundance has turned into want and I who earlier seemed the mother of many children am now not the mother of one! As a result, I ought not to have given birth to start with, rather than giving birth to tears. Those deprived are more unfortunate than those not having given birth; for what has once been experienced gives pain when taken away.’”³⁷ The dreadful suffering from the loss is enhanced by the invocation of Niobe and Alcestis; Niobe, according to myth, lost all of her twelve or more children when they were slain by Apollo and Artemis; already in the *Iliad*, Niobe is a type for mourning, for she is referred to by Achilles when handed the body of Hector, killed and kept unburied for several days, over to Priam;³⁸ Alcestis, on the other hand, gives up her life for that of Admetus, her newly-wed husband; the verse cited by Philagathos is part of Admetus’ lamentation.³⁹ As noted above, the verses are in all likelihood derived from a rhetorical compilation that grouped the verses according to the theme of mourning or suffering; for the first two verses are taken from Andromache’s lament from Euripides’ play, *The Daughters of Troy*, upon hearing that her baby son, Astyanax, had been condemned to die.

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³⁷ Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata*, transl. Kennedy: 116.

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I.3.8 Michael Italikos (c.1100–before 1157)

Render unto Caesar: A Collector Parts with a Rare Coin

EMMANUEL C. BOURBOUHAKIS

Ed.: P. Gautier, *Michel Italikos. Lettres et Discours* (Paris, 1972), 209–10

MS.: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Barocci 131 (s. XIII), f. 337r¹

Other Translations: Gautier's edition includes summaries of each text, but no translation

Significance

Italikos' letter reveals its author as an antiquarian and aesthete describing a rare and fine object in terms akin to a modern auction-house catalogue. There is little of the rhetorical flourish we might have expected from a twelfth-century intellectual on such an occasion rich with potential for punning and displays of erudition. Although such late Roman medallions with inset coins dating to c.500–700 are not unknown, details about their use and value in later medieval contexts are scarce.

The Author

A model of mid twelfth-century learning, Michael Italikos embodied the intellectual ideals of his time, becoming well versed in both religious and secular learning. After serving as an instructor of medicine sometime in the 1120s, an appointment brokered by his patroness, the empress dowager Eirene Doukaina, wife of the deceased founder of the Komnenian dynasty, Alexios I, Italikos went on to have a successful career as a member of the teaching clergy of Hagia Sophia (c.1142). Eventually he was named metropolitan of Philippopolis. He is assumed to have lived no later than 1157, as his name is not mentioned in the synod held that year. His career spanned the Komnenian dynasty, having begun under Alexios I and ended under Manuel I. His extant corpus consists of some forty-five texts, divided into letters, occasional speeches, and funeral laments, all written in a style characterized by genuine formal mastery and erudition. The strength of his teaching may be gauged by his best-known student, the highly regarded and prolific poet Theodore Prodromos.² Of his various surviving works he is best known for an encomium for John II Komnenos (r.1118–43), which he may have composed in order to dissociate himself publicly from Anna Komnene and her unsuccessful bid to keep John from coming to

¹ Consulted.

² See E. Jeffreys, I.7.6 in this volume.

the throne. As his name indicates (“Italikos” is an adjective = Italian), he was probably of Italian descent, in which case he or his ancestors would have most likely migrated from one of the Greek-speaking, former Byzantine territories of southern Italy. His possible Italian background has fueled speculation that Italikos knew Latin, a theory seemingly corroborated by a passage in Niketas Choniates’ *History* in which Italikos is described as charming the crusading German king Conrad III (r.1138–52) with his mellifluous, presumably Latin eloquence, since Conrad knew no Greek and Italikos no German.³ This has in turn prompted conjecture that Italikos may have been the “Greek philosopher” who, according to Peter the Deacon’s account of a Byzantine mission to Pope Innocent II in 1137, engaged his western counterparts in theological debate in Latin.⁴ It is interesting then to note that Italikos at least appears unsure about the sense of the Latin inscription on the coin mentioned in this letter.

Text and Context

Italikos describes in precise detail a very old and rare coin set in a gold medallion and meant to be worn by its owner as a *phylacterion* (φυλακτήριον) designed to ward off all manner of ill, especially the plague. The letter’s immediate context was Italikos’ recent appointment to the imperially sponsored chair of medicine (διδάσκαλος τῶν ἰατρῶν), a post he appears to have turned down in an earlier and seemingly haughty letter to his patroness, Eirene Doukaina.⁵ On that occasion Italikos confidently pointed out that he had no need of such titles to establish his expertise as a teacher of medicine. There is no mention in the present letter of Italikos’ previous rejection of the post and it may indeed have been a feigned demurral. Nevertheless, Italikos’ subsequent career suggests he had his sights set on other, more prestigious appointments and his tenure as the court’s chief medical expert was simply a temporary sinecure.

The attribution of apotropaic power to defend the one who wears the medallion from disease, especially against the plague, may be suspected of an undercurrent of irony between medical experts inclined to dismiss such claims as superstition. Yet we should not hurry to discount belief in the efficacy of such objects. The coin’s apotropaic power is ascribed to the cross it bears on the reverse side, whose ability to ward off disease is alleged to come “not from some magical art . . . but derived from some divine power which was perhaps inserted into it by the forging instruments” (or perhaps “during the forging process”). It is unclear what Italikos means by this last conjecture. That said, he adds that the medallion is missing the noose from which to hang its chain, suggesting that his faith in the object’s effectiveness was not sufficient to wear it himself.

While there are no surviving objects with the exact characteristics described by Italikos, we do have a number of examples of coins that are similarly set in medallions and

3 Choniates, *History*, 62.13–63.17.

4 *Altercatio pro Romana Ecclesia contra Graecum quendam*, 10–32; cf. Bloch 1946: 163–224.

5 Italikos, *Letter 5*, ed. Gautier, 93–98.

ringed with precious stones and meant to be worn on a chain. We should perhaps imagine a hybrid similar to the fourth-century Byzantine circular pendant made of gold with a double *solidus* of Constantine I, now in the Dumbarton Oaks museum (BZ.1970.37.1&2), and the similarly early Byzantine framed gold medallion depicting an emperor on the obverse in the Freer Gallery of Art (F1909.67).⁶ Both bear a close resemblance in form and function to the medallion described by Italikos. The rarity of the coin, the unusually fine workmanship, and not least the fact that it was supposed to have been worn by an (unnamed) emperor, no doubt increased its value among collectors.

With the letter's opening phrase, "*I render this tax remittance to my Caesar*," a near-direct quote from a well-known episode in the Gospel (Mt. 22:15–22), Italikos implies that he sent the rare and probably expensive coin as a symbolic remittance to the *Aktouarios* who, as the chief physician of Constantinople, was Italikos nominal superior. The allusion to scripture here may not be without ironic ambiguity. In the story of the Gospels, the Pharisees attempt to entrap Jesus by having their students ask him whether they ought to pay the poll tax to the Roman authorities, hoping to denounce him as a tax-evader. Jesus evades their trap by recommending they "give unto Caesar what is Caesar's," observing that the emperor's image adorned the coinage. Italikos thus hints at a symbolic payment for his post. In Italikos' case this might have been doubly necessary in light of the dowager empress Eirene Doukaina's intervention to secure the post on his behalf, effectively bypassing the authority of the *Aktouarios* who may have expected to disburse patronage through appointments in his own department. Little else is known about Italikos' career in medicine other than the passing references to his appointment to the teaching post in this and the earlier letter cited (n. 5).

6 For comparanda to the Constantinian *solidus* see the gold and silver coins published by Bruun et al. 1964: 161–63, 165–236, as well as the late Roman medallions published by Bellinger 1958: 125, 127–56; cf. Grierson 1996: 139–45. See also P. Grierson and J. W. Nesbitt in *ODB*, s.v. "medallion."

Text

Τῷ ἀκτουαρίῳ

[p. 209] Κῆνσον τοῦτον ἀποδίδωμι τῷ ἐμῷ καίσαρι· ἤδη γάρ σοι στρατῷ καὶ ὡς ὄρῳ, μᾶλλον δὲ τοῖς σοῖς ἀπογέγραμμαι, διδάσκαλος ἱατρῶν χειροτονηθεῖς. πλήν οὐκ ἀπὸ στόματος ἰχθύος ἀνείλκυσα τὸν στατήρα τουτονὶ καθάπερ ὁ κορυφαῖος ἐκεῖνος, ἀλλ' ἐχαρίσθη μοι τὸ χρήμα παρά τινος τῶν ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ· μᾶλλον δέ, ἵνα παραστήσω τὸ τοῦ χρήματος εὐγενές, βασιλείοις ἐνέπρεπε στέρνοις. μίαν μὲν αὐτοῦ ταύτην ἔχεις εὐγένειαν, ἑτέραν δὲ χρυσός ἐστιν, οὐχ εἷς ἅπας, οὐδ' ἀπὸ μιᾶς ποιότητος, ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν ἀρτάνη χρυσοῦ λευκοτέρου, αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ ἐπιστέρνιον φυλακτῆριον χρυσοῦ τοῦ τιμαλφεστάτου, καὶ μεθ' ὃν οὐκ ἂν ἐφεύρης τὸν λῶν καὶ καθαρώτερον. τίνος δὲ ἡ ἐπιγραφὴ; οὔτε τοῦ πρώτου καίσαρος, οὔτε τοῦ μετ' ἐκεῖνον εὐθύς Τιβερίου τὰ σκήπτρα τῆς βασιλείας ἐπιτροπεύσαντος, οὔτε τοῦ τῶν πάλαι βασιλευσάντων, ἀλλὰ τοῦ ἐν βασιλεῦσι βασιλικωτάτου καὶ εὐσεβεστάτου καὶ κρείττονος· Κωνσταντῖνον γὰρ ἀπομάττεται καὶ Ἑλένην τοὺς θειοτάτους· ἐκ θατέρου δὲ αὐτὸν τὸν Χριστὸν Ῥωμαϊκωτέροις τοῖς ἐκτυπώμασι καὶ οἷοις ὁ τότε χρόνος ἐνέγραφε. περὶ δὲ τὴν ἴτυν τοῦ κύκλου γράμμασιν οὐχ Ἑλληνικοῖς ἐνσεσήμασται· οἶμαι δὲ καὶ τούτους Ῥωμαίων εἶναι τοὺς χαρακτῆρας καὶ ἔξεστί σοι λαβόντι ἀναγινώσκειν τὰ γράμματα· σὺ γὰρ ἴσως καὶ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἄδαῆς.

[p. 210] “Ἐξεῖς δὲ τοῦτο οὐ μόνον φυλακτῆριον τῆς ἀποτροπαίου φύσεως, ὡς καὶ τὸ τροπαιοφόρον ὄπλον τὸν σταυρὸν ἐντετυπωμένον ἔχον, ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἔστι τις ἀπόρρητος δύναμις ἰδιάζουσα τῷ χρήματι τούτῳ, οὐκ ἀπὸ τινος τέχνης μαγικῆς περιειργασμένη, οἷα πολλὰ Χαλδαῖοι τελοῦσι καὶ τῶν Ἀσσυρίων οἱ θεουργοί, ἀλλ' ἐκ τινος δυνάμεως θείας ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν χαλκοτύπων ὀργάνων ἴσως ἐμβεβλημένης, τοὺς φοροῦντας ἐξάντεις ποιοῦσα τοῦ λοιμώδους νοσήματος. οὐδὲν οὖν σοι δεῖ οὔτε καθαρτηρίων φαρμάκων, οὔτ' ἀλλοιώσεως τῶν ἀέρων, οὔτ' ἄλλης τοιαύτης τινὸς ἱατρικῆς ἀρωγῆς, τὸ νόμισμα φοροῦντι τὸ Κωνσταντῖνειον. ἐπ' αὐτῷ γὰρ τούτῳ καὶ χρυσῆν ἴσην ἐξωθεν περιτιθέντες καὶ ἀρτάνη προδήσαντες ὥσπερ ὄρῳ καὶ τοῦτο πεποιημένον, εἰ καὶ τῆς κρεμάθρας ἀπέρρηκται, ἐπιστήθιον ἅπαντες φέρουσιν εἰς ἀποτροπήν, ὡς πού τις ἔφησε τῶν ἡμετέρων, πάντων τῶν ἐπερχομένων αὐτοῖς κακῶν, ὥστε ὄρα εἶ τι ἐπιζητοίης τούτου δῶρον ἐπιτεπέστερον ἕτερον.

Σὺ δὲ ἀλλὰ καὶ μαργάρους αὐτῷ περιθήσεις, δύο μὲν ἄνω μεγίστους πρὸς τῇ συναφῇ τῆς χρυσῆς μνήνθου, κύκλωθεν δὲ μικροτέρους καὶ τὸ θεῖον τοῦτο νόμισμα περιθέοντας· οὕτω γὰρ καὶ πρότερον ἐκεκόσμητο, ἀλλ' ἡ χρεῖα τοὺς μαργάρους παρείλετο. μὴ θάψω τὸν καλὸν ἀκτουαρίον. ἄνευ μέντοι τούτων δίδωμι τὸν χρυσόν, ὡς ὄρῳ, οὐχ ὡς χρυσόν, ἀλλ' ὡς βασιλικὸν νόμισμα καὶ ἄρρητόν τινα περιβεβλημένον ἀλκῆν.

Translation

To the *Aktouarios*¹

[p. 209] *I render this tax remittance to my Caesar,*² for I now serve under your command and as you can see, I am in fact enlisted as one of your own, having been appointed professor of medicine.³ Except that I did not fish this coin out of a fish's mouth⁴ as that well-known head of the chorus [the apostle Peter] did. The coin was a gift to me from one of those in power; or rather, that I may describe the nobility of the object, it used to grace an imperial chest. And there you have one aspect of its nobility. Another is that it is made of gold, not in its entirety, or of a single quality; the chain is of whiter gold while the amulet which hangs on the chest is of a most precious gold, a better or purer sort of which you will not find. But whose is the inscription? It is not of the first Caesar [Augustus], nor of the one immediately after him, Tiberius, who assumed possession of the royal scepter, nor of any of those who ruled long ago, but of that most royal, pious, and powerful of the emperors. It has an impression of the most divine Constantine and Helena, while on the reverse Christ himself appears in relief more in keeping with the Roman style of the time. Along the outer rim of the circle are stamped non-Greek letters. I believe these also to be Roman characters, which you will be able to read when you receive it, for you perhaps are not ignorant even of such things.⁵

[p. 210] You can use it not just as an amulet of an apotropaic nature, since it also has stamped on it the cross, the victory-bearing weapon, but this coin has some special secret power, fashioned not from some magical art, such as those often performed by the Chaldeans⁶ and the priests of the Assyrians, but derived from some divine power which was inserted into it by the forging instruments, rendering the one who wears it immune to the plague. And so you no longer stand in need of purgative medicines, change of climate, nor any other such medical relief when you wear the Constantinian coin. They added an equal amount of gold along the coin's exterior perimeter and attached a noose, which you can see was done, even if it has been severed from its chain. All people wear this on their chest in order to ward off "all the evils that assail them," as one of our own said somewhere.⁷ See then whether you could ask for any gift more pleasing than this.

But in your case, you will add pearls along its rim as well, two large ones on the top, where the golden chain attaches, while smaller ones run along the circular edge of this divine coin, for it was thus adorned before, but necessity removed the pearls. May I never have to bury the good *Aktouarios*.⁸ Of course I give the gold, as you see, without the [pearls], not as gold *per se*, but as an imperial coin surrounded by a kind of immense and sacred defense.

Commentary

1. Aktouarios (Lat. *actuarius* or *actarius*): name of an imperial official whose functions changed over the centuries, having begun as a fiscal administrator in the late Roman empire attached to military detachments. In the twelfth century, the Aktouarios appears to have been the title of the chief physician of Constantinople. Italikos is thus writing to his superior in the “college of physicians.”
2. A clear allusion to the well-known episode in Mt. 22:17–21, where Jesus is queried about the necessity of paying poll-taxes to the Roman authorities, to which he replies with the aphoristic sounding Ἀπόδοτε οὖν τὰ Καίσαρος Καίσαρι καὶ τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ τῷ Θεῷ.
3. See Text and Context.
4. A reference to Mt. 17:27.
5. Italikos’ uncertainty about the Latin inscription on the coin contrasts with his alleged knowledge of the language. It is possible he is in fact expressing ignorance of the obsolete abbreviations on the legend, but we might have expected some mention of his Latinity in that case.
6. In antiquity Chaldaeans had acquired a legendary reputation for magic because of their supposed knowledge of astrology, e.g., Herodotus 1.181. Likewise, Assyrian physician-priests were thought to have employed apotropaic magic.⁷
7. The reference is to the Old Testament story of Job 2:11, whose figures Byzantine Christians deemed “our own.”
8. The expression, admittedly rare, appears to have been used affectionately between friends and acquaintances to mean “may you out-live me.”⁸

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⁷ Scurlock 1999.

⁸ See the note by Drexel 1940: 405.

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I.3.9

Epigrams on Rings from the Twelfth and Fourteenth Centuries

MARIA MAVROUDI AND FOTEINI SPINGOU

Significance: The epigrams below give evidence of the iconography on minor objects for daily use, such as rings.

Introduction

Finger rings were ubiquitous in Byzantine everyday life. They were considered very personal objects and they were often buried together with their owners.¹ They also functioned as amulets.² Usually such rings bear inscriptions naming the owner. The most lavish ones are inscribed with literary texts either composed for the very object, or recycled from similar ones. The following pages include seven epigrams composed by prominent court authors in the twelfth and late thirteenth/early fourteenth centuries. Two of these texts refer to rings for unspecified use (perhaps signet finger rings); and the rest were attached on a wedding ring.

1 Finger rings have been found in the tombs of adults and children alike. See Talbot 2009: 300–01 n. 80.

2 See, e.g., Walker 2001: 149–64.

Text A | Manuel Philes (c.1270–after 1332/34 or mid 1340s)**On a Ring (i)**

Ed.: Manuel Philes, *Poems* No. 17, ed. Miller, vol. II p. 58; *BEIÜ* 3, AddII12

MS.:³ Paris, BNF, Graecus 2876 (s. XIV), f. 59v cf. Ashmolean museum, inv. no. WA1897.CDEF.F383 (see fig. I.3.9a–d)

Other Translations: Spier, *Rings*, 39 (English); A. Rhoby in *BEIÜ* 3, AddII12 (German)



Fig. I.3.9a WA1897.CDEF.F383, probably Venetian Italian. Ornamental ring images © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford



Fig. I.3.9b WA1897.CDEF.F383, probably Venetian Italian. Ornamental ring images © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.



Fig. I.3.9c WA1897.CDEF.F383, probably Venetian Italian. Ornamental ring images © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford



Fig. I.3.9d WA1897.CDEF.F383, probably Venetian Italian. Ornamental ring images © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

Significance

A popular inscription on later Byzantine golden finger rings. It provides evidence regarding the viewer's response – in this case the viewer was probably the owner, who by reading the inscription would be reminded of the temporality of human life. Given the restricted surface of the object the inscription would have the role of an image.

The Author

See A. Rhoby and M. Bazzani, I.4.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

The epigram survives in a manuscript and *in situ*, as a verse inscribed on two rings in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.⁴ A third ring inscribed with the first verse is also known,

³ Consulted.

⁴ *BEIÜ* 3: AddII12; Spier, *Rings*, 35, 36 (Cat. nos. 13, 19), p. 39.

in this case followed by Ps. 26 (27): 1–2.⁵ The epigram was employed on different kinds of rings – signet rings, which also bear a heraldic emblem in the bezel, and rings with an apotropäic function.⁶

Of a greatest interest is the inscription to be found on a ring in the Ashmolean Museum (inv. no. WA1897.CDEF.F383; see, figs. I.3.9a–d). The ring was found in 1840 in the Castle of Chalcis (Euboea, Greece) and was presented to Queen Victoria in 1897, by Dr C. D. E. Fortnum (thus, it is part of the “Fortnum collection” in the same museum). The first verse of the poem, as inscribed on the ring, reads: ΕΚΓΗCOXPΗCOCEKXOOCTOCAPKI. That first verse misses its last two letters. The second verse is inscribed as a mirror image of the first, thus forcing the viewer to stop, take off his ring, and then read the inscription in full. The wording is odd, as it starts with incomprehensible letters and lacks part of the last word: ΟΟΦΑΝΔΕΠΠΙΛΟCEKΔΕΠΠΙΛΟΥΤΙΝΧΑ. The scribe/craftsman probably copied the inscription from a fully circular ring (that is, a ring missing a signet or a bezel). The letters rho, iota, and the lunate sigma could easily be seen as circles and thus as the omicron inscribed here. Further evidence that the craftsman did not necessarily understand the inscription is the reversed nu that can be seen in the same line.

5 Spier, *Rings*, 35 (Cat. no. 12), p. 39.

6 Cf. Spier, *Rings*, 35 (Cat. no. 12).

Text

Εἰς δακτύλιον

Ἐκ γῆς ὁ χρυσός, ἐκ χοῦς τὸ σαρκίον·
ἄμφω δὲ πηλός, ἐκ δὲ πηλοῦ τίς χάρις;

Translation

On a Ring

Gold is from the earth, flesh from dust;
Both are clay, and what grace may come from clay?'

Commentary

1. According to Gen. 2:7, God made Adam from clay.

Text B | Manuel Philes (c.1270–after 1332/34 or mid 1340s)**On a Ring (ii)**

Ed.: I. Manuel Philes, *Poems*, ed. Miller, vol. I, 214 (Fl. 39, 1)

II. Manuel Philes, *Poems*, ed. Miller, vol. II, 191–92 (Par. 148)

MSS.:⁷ I. Florence, BML, Plutei 32.19 (s. XIV), f. 89v

Athens, EBE, Metochion 351 (s. XIV), f. 86r

II. Paris, BnF Grec 2876 (s. XIV), ff. 222v–223r

Athens, EBE, Metochion 351 (s. XIV), ff. 85v–86r

Other Translations: None

Significance

Text I is an epigram on a ring that survives only in manuscripts, but it could have been used as a verse inscription. Text II indicates how such epigrams were composed. Epigrams on works of art were usually products of a commission, which might (though not necessarily) involve compensation for the author. After improvizing on the subject, the poet presented his best verses as one text.

The Author

See Text A, The Author.

Text and Context

The exact context of Text I, an epigram on a ring, is unknown. The poet insists on the vanity of earthly possessions, including gold, that continuously change owners. The concise and universal content of the couplet made it an appropriate inscription for rings. Both verses can also be found as part of a series of verses published under the title “[Verses] on a ring, improvised” [= II, v. 18 and 22].

Miller, who consulted only the Parisian manuscript, published the verses under “II” below as a single poem. However, the Athenian manuscript has the verses separated as if they were different poems. Indeed, the distinction into brief epigrams is supported further by the lack of syntactical cohesion and the repetition of both words and content. The lack of discourse markers, (such as ἀλλά, δέ, μέν, καί, etc.) gives each verse an independent status. The verses play with the same words and conceits; the deceptive power of gold over humans is emphasized in three verses (vv. 1, 11, and 14). The “fluidity” of the gold (referring to its form before it is molded) is discussed in verses 15 and 20–21. The meaning of verses 7–8 is summarized in verse 9. The conceit of verse 4 is discussed also in verse 10 and verses 12–13, etc. The word “σφενδόνη,” which is an idiomatic word for “ring,” is repeated four times, and the “paleness” of the gold is mentioned three times with the adjective “ὠχρός” and its derivatives. Furthermore, verses 23, 24, and 25 do not convey a full

⁷ Consulted.

meaning by themselves – it is necessary to pair them up with a verse referring to gold. For example, verse 25 can be equally well combined with verses 2 or 6 or 20. One can imagine the set of verses published here under “II” as a box with Lego bricks that one can assemble in various ways to create different coherent wholes. That the pairing of random individual verses can create a new whole is evident in the version of Text A on a ring where the first verse is paired with two verses from the Psalms.

The lack of cohesion among the verses has also been observed by Ioannis Vassis, who treated each verse as a separate poem in his *Initia Carminorum Byzantinorum*.⁸ In the Commentary, we argue that some of these verses should be read together.

8 Vassis includes each verse of this poem as a separate lemma, considering it the first verse of a different poem.

Text

I. Εἰς δακτύλιον

Χρυσῆ κρεμάθρα, καρδιῶν ἢ σφενδόνη,
 χθὲς τίνος ἦσθα; νῦν δ' ἐμός, τίνος δ' ἔση;

II. Εἰς δακτύλιον αὐθωρόν¹

Ἵχθρός φονευτῆς, συμφορῶν² γέμων πλάνος,
 ἐγὼ σὸς ἐχθρός εἰμι, σὺ δέ μοι φίλος.

Πρὸ τοῦ τέλους ἔχεις με δακτύλου³ τάφον.

Ἄγει νεκρὸς τὸν ζῶντα, κἂν ὁ ζῶν φέρῃ.

5 ἼΗ σφενδόνη θέλγητρον ἐν τῷ δακτύλῳ.
 ἼΕμὲ βλέπων, ἄνθρωπε, μὴ φρόνει μέγα.
 στενοῦ βίου γνώρισμα καὶ φθόνου τύπος
 ἢ σφαιροειδῆς συστροφή τῆς σφενδόνης.

ἼΗ σφενδόνη γνώρισμα τοῦ στενοῦ βίου.

10 Ὁ κόσμος ὠχρὸς, ὁ χρυσὸς πάντως νέκυς.
 Χρυσοῦ πλάνης ἄφυκτον ἐν σφαίρα σκότος.
 ἼΕν σφενδόνη δάκτυλος, ἐν χρυσῷ βίος·
 ἄψυχον ἔμπνουν ὠραῖζεν τίς χάρις;
 Εἰκῆ, χρυσέ, πλανᾷς με, κἂν στέργῃς τέως.
 15 ῥεύσεις πρὸς ἄλλον ἐξ ἐμοῦ, καὶ τίς χάρις;
 Ὅψιν ὁ χρυσὸς τακεροῦ φέρει φθόνου·
 πόσοι χρυσὸν κρύπτουσιν ἀνθρώπων τάφοι!
 Χρυσῆ κρεμάθρα καρδιῶν ἢ σφενδόνη.

ἼΕξ ὠχρότητος τίς ἐν ἡμῖν φαιδρότης;

20 – Ὅρα, χρυσὸς μὲν εἰμι, πλήν χύδην ῥέω.
 – ἼΗξεις⁴ πρὸς ἄλλον, κἂν ἐμὲ στέργῃς τέως.

Χθὲς τίνος⁵ ἦσθα; νῦν δ' ἐμός· τίνος δ' ἔση;

Εἰ λίπος εἶχες, κέρδος ἂν ἦν σοι πλέον.

Μῆ⁶ πρὸς τὰς ἀρχάς, πρὸς δὲ πᾶν τέλος⁷ σκόπει.

25 ὼνησά που τρεῖς ὄλεσα μυρίους.

Translation

I. On a Ring

Golden pendant, sling for hearts,
Whose were you yesterday? Now you are mine, but whose will you become?

II. [Verses] on a Ring, Improvised

I, a pale slayer, deceptive, loaded with misfortunes,
am your enemy, but you are my friend.⁸

You have me on your finger similar to a tomb, even before the end.

A deceased person leads a man who is alive, even if the man carries the deceased.⁹

5 The pendant is a charm on the finger.

Seeing me, man, do not think haughtily;
the sphere-shaped twists of the pendant¹⁰
are signs of a narrow life¹¹ and an image of envy.¹²

The pendant is a sign of a narrow life.¹³

10 The adornment is pale, the gold is entirely dead.

The darkness in the sphere is inevitable because of the gold's deceit.

The finger <lies> on a pendant, life <lies> on gold;
what is the beautiful when the inanimate beautifies the inspirited?¹⁴

It seems, gold, that you are deceiving me even if you used to favor me.

15 What is the point, if you flow away from me towards someone else?¹⁵

The appearance of gold brings a languishing envy.
How many tombs of men hide gold!¹⁶

A golden pendant [is] a sling for hearts.¹⁷

What happiness can the paleness bring to us?

20 – Look, I am gold, but I flow in all directions.

– You will reach another man, even if you used to favor me in the past.¹⁸

To whom did you belong in the past? Now, you are mine, but whose will you
become [in the future]?¹⁹

If you used to have some fat, is there a gain for you any longer?

Observe not [the] beginning [of one's life] but [his] end.

25 I helped three, but I destroyed many.²⁰

Commentary

1. Amended punctuation.
 2. συμφοράν instead of συμφορῶν in the Athenian manuscript.
 3. χρυσοῦ instead of δακτύλου in the Athenian manuscript.
 4. φεύξη instead of ἤξει in the Athenian manuscript.
 5. τινός instead of τίνος in the Athenian manuscript.
 6. γῆ instead of μῆ in the Athenian manuscript.
 7. τὰ τέλη instead of πᾶν τέλος in the Athenian manuscript.
 8. V. 2 makes little sense if it is not combined with a verse specifying who is the “pale slayer” and deceiver.
 9. The poet understands the gold as “unanimated” material, as opposed to the spirited pictures discussed above.
 10. The poet compares the ring to a sphere.
 11. Cf. Mt. 7:13.
 12. The three verses are syntactically and conceptually coherent. The ring is speaking, to explain why someone should not admire this (presumably luxurious) ring.
 13. Cf. Mt. 7:13.
 14. The reference to the “inanimate” (ἄψυχον) in v. 13 cannot be understood without the nouns “pendant” and “gold” (σφενδόνη, χρυσός) in v. 12. Similarly “inspired” (ἔμπνου) of v. 13 refers to the “finger” and “life” (δάκτυλος, βίος) of v. 12. Thus the two verses should be considered as a single epigram.
 15. V. 15 explains the reason for the deceptive properties of gold. Thus, vv. 14 and 15 need to be read together. Indeed, these two verses are also offered as a distich by the scribe of the Athenian manuscript.
 16. V. 17 explains that envy languishes, because it can be found in tombs. So vv. 16 and 17 form a single poem.
 17. Cf. I, v. 1.
 18. Vv. 20 and 21 are a dialog between gold and a man. Gold invites the man to look and consider the fluid nature of the precious metal (when molten, presumably). The man replies that if this is so, what would it gain for him, since the gold will come into someone else’s possession in due course.
 19. Cf. I, v. 2.
 20. The personified gold is speaking here.
-

Text C | Theodore Prodromos (c.1100–1160)

On a Ring Having Two Trees Depicted

Ed.: Zagklas, *Neglected Poems* no. 17, 389–90 (attrib. to Theodore Prodromos); previous edition: Manuel Philes, *Poems*, ed. Miller, II 269 (Vat. 5–8, attrib. to Manuel Philes)

MSS.:⁹ See Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 396

Other Translations: Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 389–90

Significance

This is an example of texts discussing a rare iconography for the gemstones on a betrothal ring. The imagery of the trees that blossom out of the lovers' chests was inspired by contemporary romances.

Text and Context

According to the title, these epigrams were meant to accompany one or more finger rings with precious gemstones that were engraved with vivid images. They were first published under the name of Manuel Philes, but Nikos Zagklas has recently proved that they come from the pen of Theodore Prodromos, since they also survive in the manuscript with the collected works of this most-celebrated author.¹⁰ Since all five epigrams convey exactly the same message, using almost the same wording, it is possible they were trial pieces from which the commissioner could select the one that best fitted his taste.¹¹

The epigrams refer to a wedding. Before the wedding ceremony a betrothal would take place. According to Late Byzantine liturgical practices, rings were exchanged three times in the course of the betrothal.¹² The title of the epigram refers to a single ring, and so the epigram may reflect an early Byzantine practice according to which the groom kept the most valuable of the two rings.¹³ Another possibility for the unusual reference is that the two rings were not identical.

The title suggests that the ring depicted “two lovers from whose bosoms grow two trees joining their vertices into a single cluster.” The tree motif was most appropriate for a wedding. The families that the groom and the bride hail from are considered trees and the young individuals its branches. Through the wedding, the two trees (= families) are united. Court poetry from the twelfth century, but also other verse inscriptions on rings,¹⁴ emphasize the tree as a metaphor for the family. Moreover, as Nikos Zagklas has

⁹ Not consulted.

¹⁰ On MS Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 305 see Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 141–45.

¹¹ Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 394.

¹² On the role of the ring in late Byzantine betrothal ceremony see, e.g., Gerstel and Talbot 2008: 94–96.

¹³ Walker 2010: 854–56; see also Trahoulia 2008: 33–40.

¹⁴ See, e.g., Μνηστρον Στεφάνου Δουκικῆς ῥίζης/Κομνηνοφυτῆς ταῖν χερσῶν Ἄννα δέχου = “This is a pledge (of marriage) of Stephen from the root of the Doukas family/accept with both hands Anna the sprout of the Komnenoi,” *BEIÜ* 2: Με105; Heichelheim and Hickl-Snabo 1965: 317–19.

argued, it is possible that the motif was ultimately borrowed from Achilles Tatius' romance *Leukippe and Kleitophon*¹⁵ – a work that influenced much twelfth-century court literature, including the composition of the Komnenian novels. This is not the first time that imagery depicted on an artwork can be directly related to the romances. Nicolette Trahoulia and Alicia Walker have argued that the famous incense burner from the treasury of San Marco in Venice evokes elements found in similar texts.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ach. Tatius, *Leukippe and Kleitophon* 1.15, see also Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 391.

¹⁶ Walker 2011: 55–68, Trahoulia 2008.

Text

I. Εἰς δακτύλιον, ἔχοντα σφραγίδα ἐρώντας δύο, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν στέρνων αὐτῶν δύο δένδρα ἐκπεφυκότα καὶ εἰς ἓνα συγκορυφούμενα κόρυβον.

Ἐκ τῶν ποθούντων δένδρα, τοῖς δένδροις γάμος·
αὐτοῖς δὲ τοῖς ποθοῦσιν οὐδαμοῦ γάμος.

II. Εἰς τὸ αὐτό.

Ἐκ καρδιῶν τὰ δένδρα καὶ ξυνεπλάκη·
Ἔρωσ, ἔρωσ σύναπτε καὶ τὰς καρδίας.

III. Εἰς τὸ αὐτό.

Ἐρᾷ τὰ δένδρα, καὶ φιλεῖ, καὶ μίγνυται·
ἐρῶμεν, οὐ φιλοῦμεν, οὐ μιγνύμεθα.

IV. Εἰς τὸ αὐτό.

Ἔρωσ, τὰ δένδρα καὶ φύεις καὶ μιγνύεις·
τὰ στέρνα δ' ἐξέβρηξας, οὐχὶ μιγνύεις.

V. Εἰς τὸ αὐτό.

Εἰς δένδρον ἓν τὰ δένδρα συμπεφυκότα,
δοίητε καρπὸν τῶν ἐρώντων τὸν γάμον.

Translation

I. On a ring with a gemstone depicting two lovers; from their bosoms grow two trees joining their vertices into a single cluster.

From those who desire each other trees [grow], and the trees wed;
yet for those who desire themselves, there is no wedding anywhere.

II. On the same [subject]

The trees come from the hearts even entwined.
Love, oh Love, join also the hearts together!

III. On the same [subject]

The trees are in love, and kiss, and make love.
We are in love, but do not kiss, do not make love.

IV. On the same [subject]

Love, you made the trees grow and unite them.
yet, since you ripped open their bosoms, you do not join them.

V. On the same [subject]

You, two trees which have grown together as one tree,
may give as fruit a wedding for the lovers.

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Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*.

I.3.10 Niketas Eugenianos (c.1110–1180)

On a Ring with Chastity and Eros

NIKOS ZAGKLAS

Ed.: S. Lambros, “Ἐπιγράμματα ἀνέκδοτα,” *NE* 11.4 (1914), 355 no. 8

MS.:¹ Vatican City, BAV, Urbinus Graecus 134 (s. XV), ff. 121v–122r²

Other Translations: Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 392–93

Significance

Example of an epigram for a ring revolving around the two polar opposite themes of chastity and eros. Moreover, Eugenianos draws his inspiration from a poem of the *Greek Anthology*.

The Author

See E. Jeffreys, I.8.11 in this volume.

Text and Context

Although it is not possible to shed light on the exact circumstances of the composition of Eugenianos’ epigram, it could have been inscribed on a ring.³ This was a very common practice throughout Byzantine times.⁴ According to the text of the epigram, one has to hold Chastity and Eros in balance, for a complete commitment to either Chastity or Eros may lead to demise. In order to make this message clear, Eugenianos puts forward the example of Phaedra and Hippolytus: the former lost her life due to her feverish love for Hippolytus, while the latter died because of his steadfast commitment to a celibate life.

It should be stressed that this particular epigram is preserved together with a group of epigrams modeled on various poems from the *Greek Anthology*.⁵ In particular,

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1 Not consulted.

2 Stornajolo 1895: 248–55.

3 There are many ring epigrams dealing with the issue of eros; see Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 389–94.

4 For Later Byzantine rings see Spier, *Late Byzantine Rings*, with literature about earlier rings; see also M. Mavroudi and F. Spingou, I.3.9 in this volume.

5 Pezopoulos 1928/9: 373–74; it is interesting to note that some parts of Eugenianos’ novel are also modeled on poems from the *Greek Anthology*; cf. Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 349.

Eugenianos modeled his ring epigram on poem no. 132 from the ninth book of the *Pala-tine Anthology*:⁶

Σωφροσύνη καὶ Ἔρως κατεναντίον ἀλλήλοισιν
 ἐλθόντες ψυχὰς ὤλεσαν ἀμφότεροι·
 Φαίδρην μὲν κτεῖνεν πυρόεις πόθος Ἴππολύτῳ,
 Ἴππόλυτον δ' ἀγνή πέφνε σαοφροσύνη.

Chastity and Love, meeting in the lists, both destroyed life. Her burning love for Hippolytus slew Phaedra, and his pure chastity slew Hippolytus.

The appropriation of a poem from the *Greek Anthology* may raise some doubts about its potential use as a ring epigram. However, it may be suggested that Byzantine poets made use of earlier models of literary epigrams for the composition of epigrams with a utilitarian purpose.

As far as metrics are concerned, Eugenianos follows the typical norms of Byzantine times. Three verses have a “Binnenschluß” after the fifth syllable (vv. 1, 2, and 4), while the other two introduce this after the seventh (vv. 3 and 5). As to prosody, the long and short syllables are always treated correctly, while the *dichrona* are freely scanned.

6 Ed. Paton: 69.

Text

Εἷς δακτύλιον ἔχοντα καὶ Σωφροσύνην καὶ Ἔρωτα

Ἔρωσ φονουργεῖ, Σωφροσύνη κτιννύει.
 ζυγιστατοῦμαι τοῖν δυοῖν τούτοιιν μέσον.
 ἔρωσ γὰρ αὐτὴν Φαῖδραν ὀλλύει πάλαι·
 ναί· καὶ τὸν Ἴππόλυτον ἐξάγει βίου
 5 ὁ στερκτὸς αὐτῷ σωφρονέστατος τρόπος.

Translation

On a ring bearing Chastity and Eros

Eros murders, Chastity slays!¹ I balance in the midst of these two. For Eros ruined Phaedra long ago; and yes, [5] his amiable and most prudent mode of life put Hippolytus to death.²

Commentary

1. The Greek word “φονουργέω” (mean. commit murder, kill, *LBG* s.v.) is an *hapax legomenon*.
 2. According to Euripides’ play, Hippolytus rejected Aphrodite in order to remain a celibate devotee of Artemis. To punish Hippolytus, Aphrodite made Phaedra, his stepmother, fall in love with him. The outcome is tragic for both of them: whereas Phaedra commits suicide, Hippolytus is killed by Poseidon at Theseus’ request, when the latter found a letter by Phaedra accusing his son of rape.
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Spier, *Rings*.

Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*.

I.3.11 Eumathios Makrembolites (fl. mid twelfth century)

Domestic Garden Sculpture and Wallpainting in the Romance *Hysmine* and *Hysminias*

ALICIA WALKER

Translation: Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 179–81, 185–90, 201–08

Ed.: M. Marcovich, *Eustathius Macrembolites, De Hysmines et Hysminias amoribus libri XI* (Munich, 2001), 3–5, 12–20, 37–47¹

MSS.: (selection)²

Oxford, Bodleian Library, Barocci 131 (s. XIII), ff. 487r–507v

Vatican City, BAV, Barberinus graecus 29 (s. XIII), ff. 2r–24v

Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 1390 (s. XV), ff. 138r–158v

Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 114 (s. XIII–XIV), ff. 3r–53r

Other Translations: E. Jeffreys, “Eumathios Makrembolites, *Hysmine and Hysminias*,” in *Byzantine Novels*, 177–269 (English); F. Meunier, *Eumathios: Les amours homonymes* (Paris, 1991) (French); K. Plepelits, *Eustathios Makrembolites: Hysmine und Hysminias* (Stuttgart, 1989) (German); F. Conca, *Il romanzo bizantino del XII secolo* (Turin, 1994) (Italian); K. Poulos, *Ευστάθιος Μακρεμβολίτης, Υσμίνη και Υσμινίας* (Athens, 1996) (Modern Greek).

Significance

These passages from *Hysmine and Hysminias* provide extended ekphrastic accounts of elaborate works of art, which suggest the kinds of decoration that embellished elite residences of the Komnenian era.³ Makrembolites’ descriptions also serve as veritable inventories of the middle Byzantine iconography of pastoral scenes, personifications of the virtues, and the labors of the months, offering perspective on the details that a contemporaneous viewer might have expected in such depictions. Along these same

1 Although see the informative critique of Miroslav Marcovich’s edition found in I. Nilsson, review of *Eustathius Macrembolites. De Hysmines et Hysminias Amoribus Libri XI*, ed. M. Marcovich, *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2001.08.35, <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2001/2001-08-35.html>.

2 A total of forty-three manuscripts of *Hysmine and Hysminias* are extant. From this group, nine date to the Byzantine era, of which four (noted here) date from the thirteenth to early fourteenth centuries and were the primary basis for the edition by Marcovich (2001); I have not consulted any of these manuscripts, and the text appears as edited by Marcovich. On the transmission of *Hysmine and Hysminias* see Jeffreys 2012: 166–67; Cataldi Palau 1980. Although there are a large number of extant copies of *Hysmine and Hysminias*, the vast majority belong to periods significantly after its twelfth-century composition. As Agapitos and Smith (1992: 66) note, the surviving copies attest to the early modern popularity of the romance, but offer no evidence for its Byzantine readership.

3 See, e.g., A. Walker in I.3.13.

lines, Hysminias' and Kratisthenes' reception and analysis of these works of art model the interpretive skills that elite Byzantine viewers would have exercised in their own engagement with luxury artistic programs.⁴

The Author

The exact identity of the author of *Hysmine and Hysminias* remains uncertain.⁵ Some manuscripts refer to him as "Eumathios" while others use the first name "Eustathios."⁶ All manuscripts that identify the author give his family name as "Makrembolites." The Makrembolitai were an illustrious, aristocratic family, and the author is said to have held the title of *protonobellissimos* at the Komnenian court.⁷ Herbert Hunger proposes that the author should be identified as the Eumathios Makrembolites who served as eparch of Constantinople and was an associate of the late twelfth-century canonist Theodore Balsamon, but this attribution remains uncertain.⁸

Text and Context

The date of the composition of *Hysmine and Hysminias* is difficult to determine.⁹ Elizabeth Jeffreys offers two approaches to this question. On the one hand, working from the assumption that the author is Eumathios Makrembolites, she estimates his year of death to be around 1185 and speculates that *Hysmine and Hysminias* could have been written before 1166.¹⁰ On the other hand, taking into consideration the novel's relationship to the other Komnenian romances and additional literary works of the era, she suggests a date in the 1140s or 1150s.¹¹ Based on this logic, a date in the mid-twelfth century can be proposed.

Hysmine and Hysminias is one of the four so-called Komnenian novels, secular works that revived the late antique romance tradition and provided entertaining stories set in pagan, classicizing environments. They reflect the elevated literary tastes of the Komnenian court and were written for an audience of educated, elite readers.¹² Of the four novels, only *Hysmine and Hysminias* is in prose. It tells the tale of a young man, Hysminias, who

4 On this point, see Chatterjee 2013; Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 156–58. Several recent studies have noted the value of *Hysmine and Hysminias* for illuminating attitudes toward secular art in the Komnenian era: for example, see Woodfin, 2016: 151–80, esp. 169–70; Walker 2011; Trahoulia 2008.

5 For a summary of the debate surrounding the author's identity see Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 159–60.

6 Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 160.

7 A. Kazhdan, *ODB* s.v. "Makrembolites."

8 Hunger 1998: 1–28. Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 159–61, contends that the attribution is "likely," but also points to the circumstantial nature of the evidence and urges caution in accepting it without circumspection.

9 For a synthesis of the complex historiography surrounding efforts to date *Hysmine and Hysminias* see Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 161–65.

10 Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 161.

11 Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 165.

12 On the audience and intellectual context of the Komnenian novels see Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 11–13; Nilsson 2001: 28–36; Jeffreys 1998; Magdalino 1992; Alexiou 1977.

is sent as a herald to represent his city, Eurycomis, at the festival of Zeus in the nearby town of Aulicomis. He is received by a local noble, Sosthenes, and offered hospitality at the latter's luxurious home, which has a beautiful garden.¹³ On his first night in Aulicomis, Hysminias encounters Sosthenes' daughter, Hysmine, who flirts openly with the herald. Hysminias initially resists Hysmine's advances, but eventually succumbs to the power of love. The couple is accidentally separated and endures a long series of traumas and mishaps until ultimately being reunited and married.

The passages discussed here describe the garden of Sosthenes and the works of art that adorn it.¹⁴ These man-made features include an elaborate marble fountain embellished with a complex sculptural program in bronze and gold; a painting of four female personifications of virtues alongside Eros enthroned and surrounded by devotees; and another wall painting depicting vignettes of the labors of the months. The scenes in which the paintings and sculptures are described appear in the first half of the book, during which Hysmine and Hysminias meet and fall in love.

When Hysminias and Kratisthenes, his cousin and travel companion, enter Sosthenes' garden for the first time, they are captivated by its wonders (I.5.1–6.2). While they laud the natural beauty of the environment, it is the artificial features that absorb the majority of their attention.¹⁵ Hysminias (who also serves as the narrator of the novel) focuses especially on the elaborate fountain at the heart of the garden, which includes a complex arrangement of bronze sculptures depicting a goat and a goatherd, a rabbit, and several birds. The inclusion of the goatherd associates the assemblage with the pastoral tradition, evoking a longstanding trope for the celebration of natural bounty, carefree living, and simple pleasures.¹⁶ The construction is topped by a golden eagle, which serves as the main spout.¹⁷ The other birds that adorn the fountain are said to sing, indicating that they are mechanical devices, presumably powered by the flow of water through the fountain.¹⁸ Throughout the description of the fountain, Makrembolites notes the diversity of marble used in its construction and the spectacular range of its colors. Thessalian marble – a distinctive green stone used extensively in elite foundations in Constantinople and considered among the most valued of Byzantine marbles – composes the main basin.¹⁹ The

13 On the importance of gardens in the narratives of the Byzantine romances and their connections with the heroines of these stories see Nilsson 2001: 209–13, 263–64; Barber 1992; Littlewood 1979.

14 Regarding actual elite gardens in Byzantium and their representation in the Byzantine textual tradition see Dolezal 2002; H. Maguire 2000; Littlewood 1997.

15 An interest in artifice over nature – or in the tension between the two – is characteristic of both the ancient and medieval Greek novels; on this point see Beaton 1996: 65–68; Barber 1992: 5–10.

16 Regarding the relation of *Hysmine and Hysminias* to the late antique tradition of pastoral literature see Burton 2006: 571–77.

17 Full consideration of the form and function of fountain spouts and their finials is found in E. Maguire 2016.

18 For discussion of these and other mechanical devices at the middle Byzantine court and in elite gardens see Dolezal 2002: 128–32; Trilling 1997; Brett 1954; regarding automata as a *topos* in the Byzantine romances see Dolezal and Mavroudi 2002: 130–32.

19 On the status of Thessalian marble and its use in Byzantine construction see Melfos 2008.

fountain's opulent materials and high-quality sculpture effectively convey the luxury of the water feature and garden as well as of the residence in which they are found.²⁰

On the next day, Hysminias and Kratisthenes return to the garden and focus their attention on a set of paintings that embellish the tall enclosing wall (II.1.1–11.3). This part of the decorative program is separated into two scenes: a group of four women in a row (II.2.1–6.7) followed by an enthroned male youth surrounded by people from all walks of life who pay homage to him (II.7.11–IV.1.3). Makrembolites does not immediately disclose the identity of these characters, but instead catalogs their attributes and physical appearances, thereby engaging the reader in the decipherment of them. Hysminias and Kratisthenes then notice brief inscriptions that name the figures. The four women personify the cardinal virtues: Prudence, Fortitude, Chastity, and Justice.²¹ The two men review the iconography, relating it to the characteristics of each virtue. Similarly, the enthroned youth is revealed by an inscription to be Eros. After failing to analyze the figure of Eros correctly, Hysminias defers to Kratisthenes' interpretive acumen, asking him to explain the image. Kratisthenes expounds that the painting attests to Eros' might over humankind as well as the animals of land and sea; he also points to the constancy of Eros' authority because he holds dominion over both Night and Day. Kratisthenes and Hysminias do not account for the connection between the four personifications and the enthroned Eros.²²

By the third day, Hysminias has fallen in love with Hysmine. After flirting with her at dinner and then embracing Hysmine in Sosthenes' garden, Hysminias later finds himself in the garden with Kratisthenes, who draws Hysminias' attention to the next section of the wall painting. Adjacent to the enthroned Eros, the two men discover a series of vignettes, each depicting a different figure engaged in a distinct activity (IV.4.3–20.6). Again, an inscription cues their interpretation, and they understand each scene to represent a separate season and the actions appropriate to that time of the year. Kratisthenes and Hysminias debate the meaning of this final section of the decorative program, with Hysminias arguing that the image states the totality of Eros' power over time, while Kratisthenes posits instead that the image shows time as outside of Eros' proper domain (IV.20.1–6). In this instance, Krathisthenes' reading is proved insufficient, and Hysminias wins their debate.

The description of Hysminias' and Kratisthenes' initial encounters with and subsequent interpretations (and misinterpretations) of these works of art models the skills of visual analysis that were no doubt expected of the elite, well-educated, twelfth-century audiences who read the Komnenian novels.²³ Many details of these fictional artistic

20 Regarding the marbles cited by Makrembolites see Gnoli 1988: 184–85.

21 For discussion of the virtues and their personifications in Byzantine art and culture, especially imperial ideology, see Jolivet-Lévy 2011; Ševčenko 2006.

22 Over the course of the novel, however, it becomes apparent that the protagonists must uphold these virtues against the onslaught of Eros' influence. Ultimately, Hysmine's and Hysminias' steadfast behavior earns them the right to enjoy fully the pleasures of Eros at the end of the story, when they are bound in marriage; see Nilsson 2001: 131–34.

23 See the extended discussion in Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 139–203; see also Chatterjee 2013.

programs find parallels in surviving works of Byzantine art, suggesting that Makrembolites' descriptions were inspired by contemporaneous sculptures and wall decorations and reflect elite fashions of the time.²⁴

Together, the works of art described in Books I, II, and IV of *Hysmine and Hysminias* introduce key themes of the narrative, including the omnipotence of Eros (and erotic love), but also the need for virtuous comportment in response to his influence. In addition, Roderick Beaton and Ingela Nilsson emphasize the importance of the garden and its decorations for initiating reflection on the relation between art and nature as well as comparison between the visual and verbal arts and their mutual vulnerability to the ravages of time, all of which are concerns expressed throughout the text.²⁵

Karl Plepelits has advanced a theological reading of the works of art described in *Hysmine and Hysminias*.²⁶ However, as Joan B. Burton notes, Makrembolites emphasizes traditional bucolic and other classicizing details of the iconography, and makes no allusion to Christian themes or symbolism, thereby discouraging a religious interpretation of the scenes.²⁷ Indeed, Hysminias initially attempts to read the portraits of the virtues and Eros by means of a patristic maxim (II.8.1), but soon realizes the insufficiency of this approach. His own error and correction might be understood as a warning against the audience's following a similar interpretive path. While remaining skeptical of an explicitly theological interpretation of *Hysmine and Hysminias*, other scholars have proposed alternative allegorical analyses. Viewing the novel through the lens of antique, especially Platonic, philosophy Margaret Alexiou argues in favor of a more subtly Christian reading, one engaged deeply with the psychological and physical experiences of erotic love.²⁸ Panagiotis Roilos further develops this approach in his Neoplatonic, specifically Proclean interpretation of the allegorical dimensions of the novel.²⁹ Despite differences in their modes of analysis, all these scholars judge the novel to be more than light entertainment. Instead, they see profound meaning beyond the surface narrative of the romance, understanding *Hysmine and Hysminias* to be engaged with the highest level of literary and intellectual production and reception in twelfth-century Byzantium.³⁰

24 Nilsson 2001: 102–03; for identification of specific parallels to extant works of Byzantine art see p. 330–32.

25 Nilsson 2001: 125–39; Beaton 1996: 82–87; see also Agapitos and Smith 1992: 42–43. Regarding the relation of visual and verbal rhetoric in the Komnenian era more broadly see Agapitos 2000: 173–85, esp. 179–84; Magdalino and Nelson, “Emperor,” 123–83, esp. 166–67.

26 See Plepelits 1989: 29–61.

27 Burton 2006: 575–67; for additional doubt cast on Plepelits' reductively Christian allegorical reading of the novel see Jeffreys 2005: 317, n. 34; Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 140 n. 118; Alexiou 2002: 112, 124; Jeffreys 1998: 192.

28 Alexiou 2002: 118–27; see also Polyakova (1979), who initiated this perspective on *Hysmine and Hysminias* by proposing that it should be read as an allegory of love.

29 Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 139–203.

30 On this point see esp. Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 130–39.

Text

[I.5.1] Φρέαρ ὡσεὶ πῆχεις ὠρωρυκτο τέσσαρας· σφενδόνη τὸ σχῆμα τῷ φρέατι· κιονοειδῆς αὐλὸς περὶ τὸ μεσαίτατον κέντρου λόγον ἐπέχων πρὸς τὸ τοῦ φρέατος κύκλωμα· λίθος ἦν ὁ αὐλός, καὶ λίθος ἑκατοντάχρους. [2] ἐκ Θετταλῆς λίθου φιάλη περὶ τὴν κορυφὴν τοῦ αὐλοῦ, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ κατάχρυσος ἀετὸς ὕδωρ ἀποπτύων τοῦ στόματος. [3] ἡ φιάλη τὸ ὕδωρ ἐδέχετο· ὁ ἀετὸς ἐξέτεινε τὸ πτερόν, ὡς δοκεῖν ἐθέλειν λελοῦσθαι. [4] ἀρτιτόκος αἰξ τοὺς ἐμπροσθίους ὀκλάσασα τῶν ποδῶν πίνει τοῦ ὕδατος· αἰπόλος τῇ θηλῇ παρακάθηται, ψαύει τῶν οὐθάτων· καὶ ἡ μὲν πίνει τοῦ ὕδατος, ὁ δ' ἀμέλγει γάλα λευκόν· καὶ ὅσον αὕτη προσκέχηνε τῷ ποτῶ, ὁ αἰπόλος οὐκ ἀνανεύει τῆς ἀμολγῆς, τὸ δ' ὑπὸ τὴν θηλὴν ποιμενικὸν κισσύβιον οὐκ ἀσφαλῶς ὀχυρωθὲν τὴν περὶ τὸν πυθμένα ὀπὴν οὐκ ἐπέχει τὴν ἐκ τῆς θηλῆς ἐκροτὴν. [5] καὶ λαγῶς τῷ κύκλῳ συνεφιζάνει, καὶ τῷ δεξιῷ τῶν ἐμπροσθίων ποδῶν ἀνορύπτων ὡσπερ τὸ στόμα πηγῆν ὕδατος ἐκέιθεν ἀναστομοῖ καὶ ὄλην καταβρέχει τὴν γένυν.

[6] Συνεπεκάθητο δὲ τῷ φρέατι περὶ τὸ στεφάνωμα καὶ χελιδῶν καὶ ταῶς καὶ περιστερὰ καὶ ἀλεκτρυῶν, ἃ πάνθ' Ἡφαιστος ἐχαλκούργησε καὶ Δαιδάλου χεῖρ ἐτεχνούργησεν. ὕδωρ ἐξεχεῖτο τῶν χελιδῶν αὐτῶν, ὃ μετὰ φόφου ῥέον φωνὴν τοῖς ὄρνισιν ἐχαρίζετο· ἐπιθύριζε καὶ τὰ πέταλα τῶν δένδρων τῷ ζεφύρῳ ἀνακρουόμενα· εἴπες ἂν ἀκούσας ἠδὺ μελίζεσθαι τὰ πτηνὰ. [7] τὸ δὲ γε καταρρέον ὕδωρ διειδὲς ὄν πρὸς τὰς τῶν λίθων χροιάς μετεβάλλετο. τὸν τοῦ φρέατος πυθμένα νησιώτης ἐκόσμηε λίθος λευκὸς μὲν, ἀλλ' ὑπεμελαινέτο κατὰ μέρη· καὶ τὸ μελάνωμα τέχνην ἀπεμιμείτο ζωγράφου, ὡς ἐντεῦθεν δοκεῖν τὸ ὕδωρ κινεῖσθαι διηνεκῶς καὶ κατακυματοῦσθαι καὶ οἶον ἀνακυρτοῦσθαι· τὰ κύκλωθεν ἐκόσμηε τοῦ φρέατος λίθος Χίος ὁ ἐκ Λακαίνης, καὶ Θετταλὸς ἐτέρωθεν, καὶ μέσον πολύχρους τις καὶ οἶον ἑκατοντάχρους, ἐναλλάξ ἀλλήλοις προσαρμολύζομενοι. [8] καὶ ἦν θέαμα καινὸν καὶ ὄλον χάριτος καὶ φρέαρ οὕτω ποικίλον καὶ πτηνὰ τὸ ὕδωρ ἐκπτύοντα καὶ Θετταλὴ φιάλη καὶ κατάχρυσος ἀετὸς πηγῆν φέρων ἐν στόματι.

[6.1] Κλίνας! γύρωθεν στοιχηδόν, οὐκ ἀπὸ ξύλων, οὐκ ἐξ ἐλέφαντος, ἀλλ' ἐκ λίθων τιμίων καὶ λαμπρῶν· Θετταλαὶ τὴν βάσιν, τὰς πλευρὰς Χαλκίτιδι λίθῳ περικοσμούμεναι. [2] ἡμισφαίρια περὶ τὰς κλίνας ὑπέκειτο· ἃ πάνθ' ὁ τεχνίτης ἐκ Πεντελῆς [ἐλάξευσεν] εἰς ποδὸς ἀνάπαυλαν ἐτεχνούργησε· τὰς κλίνας μυρρίνας πάντοθεν περιέσκεπον εὐφυῶς ἀνατεταμέναι, πρὸς ἀλλήλας συνδούμεναι καὶ πρὸς ὄροφον οἶον ἀπευθυνόμεναι.

[II.1.1]

Τῇ δ' ὕστεραῖα πάλιν ἐπὶ τὸν κῆπον γενόμενοι τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ταῖς χάρισιν ἐτρεφόμεθα, τὴν ἡδονὴν μεθέλκοντες ἐπὶ τὰς ψυχὰς· ἦν γὰρ ἀγαθῶν χωρίον ὁ κῆπος καὶ θεῶν δάπεδον καὶ ὄλος χάρις καὶ ἡδονή, τέρψις ὀφθαλμῶν, καρδίας παραψυχή, παραμυθία ψυχῆς, μελῶν ἄνεσις, ἀνάπαυλα σώματος. [2] τὰ μὲν οὖν περὶ τὸν κῆπον ὅσα καὶ οἶα· τὸ δὲ γε θριγγίον, ἄλλο τεράστιον, τοσοῦτον εἰς ὕψος αἰρόμενον ὅσον ἀνεπίβατα τὰν τῷ κήπῳ τηρεῖν καὶ ὀφθαλμοῖς καὶ ποσί, πάντοθεν κατεχαριτοῦτο χειρὶ ζωγράφου σοφῆ.

[2.1] Παρθένοι τέτταρες ἐγεγράφατο στοιχηδόν. ἡ πρώτη λαμπρῶς τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐστεφάνωτο. Λίθοι περὶ τὸν στέφανον μάλα τηλαυγεῖς, πῦρ ἀπαστράπτοντες καὶ φῶς ἀπαυγάζοντες, ὑδάτων μεστοί. [2] εἴποις ἰδῶν μεμίχθαι τὰ ἄμικτα, ὕδωρ καὶ πῦρ, ἐν λίθῳ, καὶ ἄμφω τερπνὰ καὶ ἄμφω χαρίεντα. τὸ μὲν κυματοῦται τῷ ἐρυθρήματι, τὸ

Translation⁴[I.5.1]⁵

A well had been dug about four cubits deep, circular in form; a hollow column made the central point of the circuit of the well; the column was of marble, marble of a hundred hues.⁶ [2] On top of it was a basin of Thessalian marble,⁷ and on it a golden eagle was spouting water from its beak.⁸ The basin received the water; the eagle stretched out its wings as if it wanted to bathe.⁹ [3] A goat that had just given birth crouches over its fore feet to drink the water; the goatherd sits by the teat, feeling the udder. The goat drinks the water, the goatherd squeezes out the white milk; [4] and as long as the goat gulped down the water, the goatherd does not abandon his milking but the wooden shepherd's bowl that he had placed under the teat does not have the opening at its base firmly closed and it does not hold the stream from the teat.¹⁰ [5] And a hare joins the circle and, dipping his right forepaw in, he makes a stream of water spurt up into his mouth and wets all his face.¹¹

[6] Perched around the coping of the well are a swallow and a peacock and a dove and a cockerel, all of which Hephaistos had cast in bronze and Daedalus' hand had crafted.¹² Water poured out of their beaks, with a flowing sound which endowed the birds with song.¹³ The leaves of the trees, stirred by the zephyr, whispered; hearing this you would have said that the birds were singing sweetly. [7] The flowing water through its clarity took on the colors of the marble.¹⁴ Island marble¹⁵ decorated the base of the well; it was white but with a black hue in places and the black imitated the painter's art since the water seemed to be in constant motion and to billow up and almost burst out.¹⁶ The well's surround was decorated with marble from Chios,¹⁷ coming from Lakonia,¹⁸ and on the other side with Thessalian marble and the central section had multi-colored marble of a hundred hues, fitting in alternately with one another.¹⁹ This was a novel sight and full of charm – the well with its variegated colors, the birds spouting water, the Thessalian basin, and the golden eagle with the fountain in its beak.²⁰

[6.1] There were seats set round about in a row, not made from wood or from ivory but from costly gleaming marble; Thessalian marble made up the base while the sides were decorated with marble from Chalkidike.²¹ There were hemispheres close by the couches, [2] which the craftsman had hewn entirely from Pentelic²² marble as foot rests; myrtles, cleverly trained upwards, overshadowed the seats on all sides, intertwined with each other and shaped into a kind of roof.

[II.1.1]²³

On the following day we went into the garden again, and fed our eyes with its charms, drawing the pleasure down into our souls. For the garden was the abode of all good things, a dwelling place for the gods, and was all charm and pleasure, a delight to the eyes, comfort to the heart, consolation to the soul, repose for the limbs and rest for the body. [2] So much for the garden. The surrounding wall was another marvel; of sufficient height to prevent invasion of the garden by eyes and feet, it was graced everywhere by the hand of a skilled painter.

δ' ἀπαστράπτει· οὕτως ὁ τεχνίτης ἀκριβῶς τὴν φύσιν τῶν λίθων ἀπεμιμήσατο. [3] μάργαροι περικυκλοῦσι τοὺς λίθους κατὰ χιόνα λευκοί, σφαιροειδεῖς τὸ σχῆμα τὸ μῆκος ὑπὲρ τὰς φύσεις αὐτῶν· οἷς ἐγὼ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ὅλους ἀποδοὺς εἶπον μετὰ θάμβους καὶ ἡδονῆς· «χάλαζα καὶ ἄνθρακες πυρός». ὁ δὲ Κρατισθένης (παρῆν γὰρ καὶ αὐτός) ἀνεκάγχασέ μου τῆ παραχρῆσει τοῦ ῥήματος.

[4] Ὁ πλόκαμος εὐφυῶς περὶ τοὺς ὤμους ἤπλωται τῆς παρθένου καὶ βοστρυχοῦται μὲν ὡς εἰκός, ὑποχρυσίζει δὲ τὸ βοστρυχώμα. ὀρμίσκος περὶ τὸν τράχηλον ἐξ ἀργυρίου μετὰ στιγμαίων χρυσοῦ· ὑάκινθος ὁ πόρπαξ αὐτῶ. [5] χεῖρες τῆ παρθένω λευκαὶ καὶ ὄντως παρθενικαί· ἡ δεξιὰ ταθεῖσα καὶ αὖ κυρτωθεῖσα τῆς κεφαλῆς ἤψατο τῷ δακτύλῳ καὶ τοῦ περὶ τὸ μέτωπον ἄνθρακος· ἡ δὲ λαϊὰ σφαιρίδιόν τι κατέχει περιτερές. [6] ὁ δεξιὸς ποὺς ἀσάνδαλος τῆ παρθένω· τὸν γὰρ τοι λαῖον ἐπεκάλυπτε τὸ χιτώνιον. ὅλος ὁ χιτῶν ἀκαλλῆς καὶ οἷον ἀγροικικώτερος· τὸν γὰρ πάντα κόσμον περὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν τῆς κόρης ὁ τεχνίτης ἐκένωσε, τὰ δ' ἄλλα ὡς ἔτυχε κατεπέχρωσεν.

[3.1] Ἡ μετ' αὐτὴν παρθένος καὶ τῆ τάξει δευτέρα ὄλη στρατιῶτις πλὴν τοῦ προσώπου, εἰ μὴ δ' ὅτι καὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἀγριωτέρα ἢ κατὰ παρθένον ἰδεῖν. [2] κόρυς περιαστράπτει τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ ταύτην κατακοσμεῖ, θυρεὸς τὸ στέρνον, φολιδωτὸς χιτῶν τὸ μετάφρενον, μίτρα τὴν ζώνην· τὸν ταρσόν, τὴν χεῖρα καὶ τᾶλλα τῶν μελῶν στρατιωτικῶς κατεπέφρακτο. [3] ἡ χεὶρ κατὰ δρυὸν παχεῖα· οἱ δὲ γε δάκτυλοι πρὸς τὸ παρθενικὸν ἐγεγράφατο. ἐν ὅσοις τῶν μελῶν ἐγυμνοῦτο, ὄλη παρθένος ἦν ἡ στρατιῶτις· ἐν ὅσοις δὲ κατεπέφρακτο, ὄλην στρατιῶτιν τὴν παρθένον ὄραξ. ἀσπίς τῆ λαϊᾶ τῆ παρθένω, εἰ δὲ γε βούλει, τῆ στρατιώτιδι· τῆ δ' αὖ ἐτέρα δολιχὸν ἔγχος, γραφεῖον Ἄρεος.

[4.1] Ἡ μετ' αὐτὴν ὄλη παρθένος, ὄλη σεμνὴ τὴν ὄψιν, τὸ σχῆμα, τὸν χιτῶνα, τὸ πέδιλον· ἐστεφανωμένη τὴν κεφαλὴν οὐκ ἐκ λίθων κατὰ τὴν πρώτην, οὐκ ἐκ μαργάρων κατὰ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς, ἀλλ' ὅλοις φύλλοις ἀλλ' ὅλοις ἄνθεσι. [2] ῥόδον οὐκ εἶχεν ὁ στέφανος ἢ λαθομένου τοῦ τεχνίτου ἢ φεισαμένου ἢ τῶν χρωμάτων ἠττωμένων τῆς τοῦ ῥόδου βαφῆς. ὁ πλόκαμος τῆ κόρη κατεχεῖτο μικρὸν καὶ αὖ περὶ τὸν στέφανον ἀνεδέδετο. [3] λευκὴ καλύπτρα τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ τὰ περὶ τὸ μέτωπον κατεκάλυπτεν. ἀραχνώδης ὁ χιτῶν τῆ παρθένω, τὸ χρῶμα λευκός, ποδιῆρης τὸ σχῆμα καὶ ὅλος πλατύς.

[4] Ἡ δεξιὰ τῶν χειρῶν δεξιῶς ἐπικειμένη τῷ στήθει τὸν ὁμώνυμον κατακαλύπτει μαζόν· οἱ δάκτυλοι τὸν λαῖον ὅλον περικαλύπτουσι κατεπικείμενοι καὶ φυλάσσοντες (ἄμαστον εἶποις ἰδὼν γεγράφθει τὴν κόρην)· ἡ δ' ἐτέρα χεὶρ τὸ χιτώνιον ἀνέχει πρὸ τῶν μηρῶν· ὁ γὰρ βορραῖς ἐδόκει πνεῖν κατὰ μέτωπον καὶ τὸ πολὺ τοῦ χιτῶνος περὶ τὴν πτέρναν ἐξέχυσεν. [5] οὕτως ἡ κόρη σεμνὴ καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα θρασύ καὶ λεπτὸν τὸ χιτώνιον· διὰ γὰρ τοι παρθενικῆς ἀπαλόχροος οὐ διάησιν αἰθηρηγενέτης βορραῖς. ὁ δεξιὸς τῶν ποδῶν περὶ θάτερον στρέφεται καὶ κατεπίκειται καὶ συμπλέκεται, μηρὸς ἐν μηρῶ καὶ ὅλος ποὺς ἐν ποδί, ἵνα μὴ τῷ λεπτῷ τοῦ χιτῶνος τὸ σῶμα διαφωτίζηται. μέλαν τὸ πέδιλον τοῖν ποδοῖν καὶ ἀσφαλῶς ἐσκευασμένον καὶ μὴ κατὰ παρθένον ἠμφισμένον.

[5.1] Ἡ τετάρτη καὶ τελευταία <παρθένος> ἐξ ἄρτι ῥαγέντος νέφους ἀπορρυῆναι δοκεῖ καὶ ὡς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ διακύπτει· καὶ ὄλη αἰθέριος, τὸ σχῆμα σεμνὴ, χαρίεσσα μέντοι τὸ πρόσωπον. ἐρυθρὸς ὁ χιτῶν, ἀλλ' ἔχει τι καὶ λευκότητος· εἰ δὲ τοῦ σώματός ἐστι τὸ λευκὸν καὶ διαρρεῖ τὸν χιτῶνα, ὁ τεχνίτης οὐκ ἀφῆκεν ὄραῖν. [2] θριξ πᾶσα τῆς κόρης εὐφυῶς συνῆκται πρὸς τὸ μετάφρενον. Τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ὅλους ἔχει πρὸς οὐρανόν. στάθμη

[2.1] Four maidens had been depicted in a row. On the head of the first was a brilliant crown; the gems round the crown gleamed brightly, flashing fire and giving off light, yet full of water.²⁴ [2] On seeing them, you might say that the immiscible, fire and water, were mingled in the gem, and both were delightful and both were charming. The one glows with its red hue while the other sparkles – so accurately did the craftsman imitate the nature of the gems. [3] Pearls surround the gems, white as snow, circular in shape, of an unnatural size.²⁵ I fixed my eyes immovably on them and said with amazement and pleasure, “Hail and coals of fire.”²⁶ Kratisthenes (for he was with me) burst out laughing at my misuse of language.²⁷

[4] The maiden’s locks were spread lavishly over her shoulders and curled in the usual manner; the curls were fairish in color. A necklet of silver with flecks of gold was around the maiden’s throat; its clasp was of aquamarine. [5] The maiden’s hands were white and truly virginal;²⁸ her right hand was stretched out and curved back and touched her head and the ruby on her forehead with her finger; her left hand held a most delightful sphere.²⁹ [6] The maiden’s right foot had no sandal, the left was covered by her tunic. The whole tunic was rather ugly and somewhat crude, for the craftsman had expended all the decoration on the girl’s head, and painted the rest rather haphazardly.³⁰

[3.1] The maiden that came after her, second in line, was entirely military, apart from her face, except that her eyes were somewhat wilder than a maiden’s should be.³¹ [2] A helmet flashes on her head and adorns it. A square shield is on her chest, a tunic of scales on her back, and a belt around her waist; her feet, hands and all the rest of her body were protected by armor in military fashion. [3] Her arm was as sturdy as an oak, yet her fingers had been painted as those of a maiden. Wherever her limbs were bare, the soldier was entirely a maiden but wherever she wore armor, you see that the maiden was entirely a soldier. The maiden, or, if you prefer, the soldier, had a shield in her left hand, and in her right a long spear, Ares’ pen.³²

[4.1] The figure that came after her was entirely maidenly, entirely stately as to her face, her appearance, her tunic, her sandals, with her head crowned, not with gems like the first, not with pearls like the girl at the beginning, but entirely with leaves, entirely with flowers.³³ [2] There were no roses in the crown, either because the craftsman had made a mistake or had decided against it or because his colors were defeated by the hue of roses. The girl’s locks were tied back a little and also restrained by the crown. [3] A white veil was over her head and covered part of her forehead. The maiden’s tunic was gossamer thin, white in color, reaching to her feet and very full.

[4] Her right arm is laid dextrously on her bosom, covering the homonymous breast, while her fingers rest on her left breast, concealing it completely and guarding it; looking at the girl you might have said that she had been painted without breasts. Her other hand held her tunic around her thighs; for the north wind seemed to be blowing full in her face and most of her tunic was billowing around her heels. [5] Thus the girl was stately, the wind strong, and the tunic light; but the north wind, scion of clear skies, did not whistle through the maiden’s tender flesh. Her right leg is twisted round the other, and clings there and is entwined, thigh with thigh, and foot completely over foot, so that her body

καί φλόξ ταῖν χεροῖν, ἡ μὲν ἐπὶ δεξιᾷ, ἡ δ' ἐπ' ἀριστερᾷ. τὼ πόδε μέχρι καὶ κνημῶν ἐξέφυγεν ὁ χιτῶν.

[6.1] Οὕτω μὲν οὖν εἶχον αἱ γυναῖκες· τὸ δὲ περὶ ταύτας δρᾶμα² καὶ τίνες αὐταὶ μαθεῖν ἐζητοῦμεν φιλοπονώτερον· γράμματα τοῖνυν ὀρῶμεν ὑπὲρ τὰς κεφαλὰς τῶν παρθένων, ἃ πάνθ' ὑπῆρχον ἰαμβεῖον ἔν εἰς τέτταρα τετμημένον καὶ ταῖς παρθένοις τὰς κλήσεις ἀφοσιούμενον· τὸ δ' εἶχεν οὕτω·

Φρόνησις, Ἰσχύς, Σωφροσύνη καὶ Θέμις.

[2] Ἐντεῦθεν ἐφιλοσοφοῦμεν τὰ τῶν γυναικῶν σχήματα καὶ τὰ μέχρι τοῦ τόθ' ἡμῖν κατελαμβάνομεν ἀκατάληπτα, τὸν λαμπρὸν στέφανον τῆς πρώτης παρθένου, τοὺς περὶ τὸν στέφανον λίθους, τοὺς μαργάρους, τὸν περὶ τὴν δέρην χρυσόν, τὸν ἄργυρον, τὸν ὑάκινθον, τὸ σχῆμα τῆς κόρης. [3] τὸ σχῆμα τῆς δεξιᾶς μονοῦ λεγοῦσης ὡς «ἐνταῦθα τὸν ὄλβον ἔχω περὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν», τὸ περὶ τὴν λαιὰν σφαιρίδιον, ὡς συνέχει τὸ πᾶν, καὶ τὸ τοῦ χιτῶνος ἀπερικόσμητον, ὡς τᾶλλα πάντα πλὴν τῆς κεφαλῆς ἀκοσμήτως ἢ φρόνησις ἔσταλται.

Τὸ στρατιωτικὸν σχῆμα τῆς μετ' αὐτήν, τὴν ἐν στρατιώτιδι παρθένον, καὶ αὐτὸν αὐτὸν τὸν ὄλβον στρατιῶτιν, τὴν ὄλην παρθένον· ἀνδρεία γὰρ ὡς τῇ φύσει στρατιῶτις, καὶ τῇ κλήσει παρθένος· [4] ὅθεν ἐν οἷς μὴ περιφράττοιο στρατιωτικῶς, ὅλη παρθένος ἐστὶ καὶ κλήσει καὶ σώματι· ἐν οἷς δὲ τὴν ἰσχύν ὑπαίνειττοιο, ὅλη στρατιῶτις ἢ παρθένος ἐστὶ· καὶ ὡς ἐν τῇ φύσει τὴν κλήσιν ὁ ζωγράφος παρεφυλάξατο, οὕτω καὶ τῇ κλήσει τὴν φύσιν ὄλην ὑπεχρωμάτισε.

[5] Τῆς ἐτέρας καὶ τρίτης τὸν ἐξ ἀνθέων στέφανον, τὸν ἐξ ἀμαράντων φυτῶν, τὴν συστολήν τοῦ πλοκάμου, τὴν καλύπτραν τῆς κεφαλῆς, τὴν περιστολήν τῶν στέρνων, τὴν φυλακὴν τῶν μαστῶν, τὸν ἐπὶ τῷ μηρῷ μηρόν, τὴν καὶ μέχρι πνεύματος σωφροσύνην, καὶ τᾶλλα πάνθ' ὅποσα πανευφυῶς ὁ τεχνίτης τῇ φίλῃ μοι παρθένῳ προσήρμοσε. [6] περιπτύσσομαί σου τὴν χεῖρα, γραφεῦ· ἀσπάζομαι τὴν γραφίδα· χάριν ὁμολογῶ σοὶ πρὸς γε τοῖς ἄλλοις ὅτι μὴ τῷ στεφάνῳ τῆς ὄντως παρθένου τὸ ῥόδον συνέπλεξας. οὐδὲν κοινὸν σωφροσύνη καὶ ῥόδῳ <τῷ> αἰσχυρῶς βαφέντι κάκ τῆς αἰδοῦς ἐρυθραινομένῳ τὸ πρόσωπον.

[7] Τῆς τετάρτης τὸ διακύπτον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, τὸ αἰθέριον, τὸ ἀπερικάλυπτον, τὸ λαμπρὸν τοῦ προσώπου, τὰ τῆς δίκης ζυγὰ καὶ τᾶλλ' ὅποσα προσφόρως ὁ τεχνίτης τῇ Θέμιδι προσεφῆρμοσε· δικαιοσύνη γὰρ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ διακύπτει καὶ ταλαντεύει τὰς κρίσεις καὶ πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἀπευθύνει τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ οὐδὲν ἀνθρώπινον ἔχει.

[7.1] Μετάγομεν τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐπὶ τὴν μετὰ τὰς παρθέτους γραφὴν καὶ δίφρον³ ὀρῶμεν ὑψηλὸν καὶ λαμπρὸν καὶ ὄντος βασιλικόν. Κροίσου δίφρος³ ἐκεῖνος ἢ πολυχρύσου Μυκῆνης τυράννου τινός. [2] τῷ δ' ἐπεκάθητο μειράκιον τερατῶδες, γύμνωσιν παντελεῖ κατ' ὅλου φέρον τοῦ σώματος· πρὸς ὃ δὴ βλέπων ἡσυχνόμην αὐτὸς καὶ τοῦ ἔπους ἐμνήσθη ὡς

τὸ μὴ φρονεῖν κάρτ' ἀνώδυνον κακόν.

[3] Τόξον καὶ πῦρ περὶ τῷ χεῖρι τοῦ μεираκίου, φαρέτρα περὶ τὴν ὄσφυν καὶ σπάθη ἀμφικόπος· τὼ πόδε μὴ κατ' ἀνθρώπων ἦν τῷ μεираκίῳ, ἀλλ' ὅλον πετερόν· τὰ δὲ γε περὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν οὕτω τετεπνόν τὸ μεираκίον, ὑπὲρ μεираκίον πᾶν, ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν παρθένον, θεῶν ἄγαλμα, εἰδῶλον Διός, ὅλος κεστός Ἀφροδίτης, Χαρίτων ὅλος λειμών, ὅλος ἡδονή.

could not be spied through the light tunic. She had black sandals on her feet, very sturdily made and not at all appropriate to a young girl.

[5.1] The fourth and last maiden seems to be falling from a cloud that had just been rent apart, and she looks as if she is peering down from heaven.³⁴ She was entirely aethereal, stately in appearance, yet with a charming face. Her tunic is red but with a touch of white; if it is the white of her body that appears through the tunic, the craftsman did not allow this to be glimpsed.³⁵ [2] The girl's hair was all tied elegantly at her back; her eyes are completely turned to heaven. She has a set of scales and a flame in her hands,³⁶ the one in her right hand, the other in the left. Her tunic left both her legs visible as far as the knees.

[6.1] So this is what the women looked like; what their role was and who they were we sought rather diligently to discover. Then we notice some writing above the maidens' heads, an iambic line divided into four and giving the maidens' names; it went like this: "Prudence, Fortitude, Chastity and Justice."³⁷

[2] Then we discussed the women's appearance and we comprehended what till then had been incomprehensible to us: the first maiden's brilliant crown, the gems around the crown, the pearls, the gold around her throat, the silver, the aquamarine, [3] the girl's appearance, the gesture of her right hand which seemed to say that "I have my wealth here on my head," the sphere in her left hand which indicated that she encompassed the universe, and the tunic's lack of decoration, showed that Prudence is unadorned except for her head.³⁸

As for the soldierly appearance of the next girl, the maiden in guise of a soldier and the reverse, she who was entirely a soldier and yet entirely a maiden – bravery is by nature a soldier, but by name a maiden – as a result wherever she is not protected by armor, she appears to be entirely a maiden, both in name and in body; in the aspects which hint at strength, the maiden is entirely a soldier, and as the painter had preserved the name in the nature, so even in the name he depicted that nature as a whole.

[5] As for the next, the third girl – the crown of flowers, of unfading leaves, the braiding of her locks, the veil over her head, the covering of her chest, the protection of her breasts, the placing of thigh over thigh, the chastity before the wind,³⁹ all this the craftsman had adapted most harmoniously to my own dear maiden.⁴⁰ [6] I embrace your hand, painter; I kiss your brush; I thank you in addition that you did not weave a rose into the crown of this true maiden, for chastity has nothing in common with a rose, which is dyed most disgracefully and whose countenance blushes red with shame.⁴¹

[7] As for the fourth girl, there was the peering out of heaven, her aethereal appearance, her lack of veiling, the brilliance of her face, the balances of justice and all the other things which the craftsman had adapted appropriately to Themis; for justice peers down from heaven and weighs her judgments and directs eyes to heaven and has nothing human about her.⁴²

[7.1] We turn our eyes to the picture that came after the maidens, and we see a lofty throne, that is brilliant and truly imperial – the throne of Kroisos or of some lord of Mykenai rich in gold.⁴³ [2] On this was seated an awesome young lad, with every part of his body naked.⁴⁴ Looking at him I was abashed and remembered the saying: "To be

[4] Ἄν Θέτιδος γάμος, ἂν Ἥρα περὶ τὸν γάμον, ἂν Ἀφροδίτη, ἂν Ἀθηνᾶ, ἂν καὶ τοῦτὶ τὸ μεράκιον, ἂν Ἔρις κυκᾶ τὸ συμπόσιον, ἂν μήλον πλάττη, ἂν τὸ μήλον ζητῆ λαβεῖν τὴν καλὴν, ἂν Πάρις κριτῆς, ἂν τὸ μήλον ἄθλον τοῦ κάλλους, ἔχεις, ὦ μεράκιον, τοῦτο. [5] καὶ πρὸς τὸν Κρατισθένην εἶπον· «Ὡς ἄρα καινόν τι χρῆμα ζωγράφου χεῖρ· τὰ ὑπὲρ τὴν φύσιν τερατουργεῖ καὶ πλάττει τῷ λογισμῷ καὶ τὰ πλάσματα τεχνουργεῖ. εἰ δέ γε βούλει, φιλοσοφήσωμεν τὸ μεράκιον».

[8.1] «Ἀγχίθυροι ταῖς ἀρεταῖς αἰ κακίαι, καὶ ταύταις παραπεπήγασι.» πρὸς τοῦτο δὴ τὸ γνωμάτευμα τὸ μεράκιον ἀναπέπλασται, καὶ τέχνη τὸ πλάσμα πρὸς φύσιν μετήγαγεν. [2] ἔχω σου, τεχνῖτα, τὸ αἰνίγμα, ἔχω σου τὸ δράμα· εἰς αὐτὸν σου βάπτω τὸν νοῦν· κἂν Σφίγξ γένη, Οἰδίπους ἐγώ· κἂν ὡς ἐκ Πυθικῆς ἐσχάρας καὶ τρίποδος αἰνιγματωδῶς ἀποφοιβάζης λοξά, πρόσπολος ἐγώ σοι, καὶ διασαφῶ τὰ αἰνίγματα».

[9.1] Τὰ δ' ἐφεξῆς ὅποια· ὅλος στρατὸς παρειστῆκει τῷ μερακίῳ, ὅλοι πόλεις, χορὸς σύμμικτος ἀνδρῶν, γυναικῶν, πρεσβυτῶν, γραῶν, μερακίων, παρθένων. βασιλεῖς, τύραννοι, δυνάσται, κρατοῦντες γῆς ὡς δοῦλοι παρίστανται οὐκ ἴσα καὶ βασιλεῖ ἄλλ' ἴσα θεῶ· καὶ γυναῖκες δύο ταῖς χερσὶν ἀλλήλαις συνδούμεναι, τὸ μήκος ὑπὲρ γυναῖκας, ὑπὲρ τὸν Ἰαπετὸν τὸν χρόνον, καιναὶ τὴν ὄψιν, καιναὶ τὴν ῥυτίδα, καιναὶ τὸ σχῆμα, καιναὶ τὴν χροιάν.

[2] Ἡ μὲν ἡλιοειδῆς καὶ ὅλη λευκὴ· λευκὴ τὴν τρίχα, λευκὴ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς, λευκὴ τὸ χιτώνιον, τὸ πρόσωπον, τὴν χεῖρα, τὴν πόδε, τὰ πάντα λευκὴ· ἡ δ' ἑτέρα τὰ πάντα μέλαινα, καὶ τρίχα καὶ κεφαλὴν καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον καὶ χεῖρας καὶ πόδας καὶ τὸ χιτώνιον. [3] ἴσαι τὴν ἡλικίαν, διάφοροι τὴν χροιάν· ἴσαι τὴν ῥυτίδα, τὸ γένος διάφοροι· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ὡς ἐξ Ἀχαιῖδος καλλιγύναικος, ἡ δ' ὡς ἐκ κεκαυμένης Αἰθιοπίας.

Παρίσταται καὶ πλῆθος πτηνῶν· κἂν φέρον ἐλεύθερον τὸ πτερόν ὡς δοῦλον παρίσταται. ὅλον γένος Ἀμφιτρίτης νεπόδων δουλογραφεῖται τῷ μεράκι· καὶ θῆρ βασιλεὺς θηρίων μετὰ παντὸς θηρὸς ὁμόδουλος παρίσταται.

[10.1] Ἐγὼ δὲ πρὸς τὸν Κρατισθένην· «πῶς δ' οὐ πτερούσεται τὸ πτηνὸν ἀνέτω πτερῶ, ἀλλὰ δουλαγωγεῖται καινῶς οὕτω καὶ ὑπὲρ τὴν φύσιν; θῆρ λέων ὠμηστής, βασιλεὺς θηρίων, δοῦλος τῷ μεράκι καὶ ταῦτα γυμνῶ, ὃν φρίσσει καὶ θῆρ καὶ ὅλος ὀπλίτης. [2] ὄνυξ δὲ ποῦ καὶ βλοσυρὸν ὄμμα καὶ λάσιον στέρνον καὶ πρὸ πάντων τὸ φρικτὸν καὶ ἄγριον βρύχημα; φρακτὸν γένος (παρίστατο γὰρ καὶ τοῦτο) καὶ πᾶς βασιλεὺς, πᾶς δυνάστης, πᾶς τύραννος οὐκ ἀρκεῖ πρὸς μόνον μεράκιον ὅλον γυμνόν; [3] ἰχθύς ἢ πᾶς θαλάσσιος θῆρ τί μοι φρίσσει τοῦ μερακίου; τὸ πῦρ; ἀλλὰ πάλιν ὅλας ἔχει θαλάσσας, ὅλον βυθόν, πολέμιον πυρός. τὸ τόξον, τὸ πτερόν; εἴτ' οὐκ ἀμβλύνονται τῷ βυθῶ;

[4] Βαβαί μοι τῶν γυναικῶν, βαβαί μοι τοῦ θαύματος, βαβαί τῆς ἡλικίας, βαβαί τῶν ῥυτίδων, βαβαί τοῦ σχήματος, τῆς δουλοπρεπείας. ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ θεοί, ὡς ἀληθῶς τέρας ἢ γραφή, νοῦ πλάσμα, καὶ χειρὸς ζωγράφου τεχνούργημα. ἀλλ' ἴδωμεν, εἰ δοκεῖ, καὶ τὰ ὑπὲρ τὴν τοῦ μερακίου κεφαλὴν γεγραμμένα». Ἰαμβεῖα <δ' ἦν> οὕτως ἔχοντα·

Ἔρωσ τὸ μεράκιον ὄπλα, πῦρ φέρον,
τόξον, πτερόν, γύμνωσιν, ἰχθύων βέλος.

[11.1] Καὶ ὁ Κρατισθένης· «οὐκέτι σοι τὰ τῶν ἐμῶν ἀμάρτυρα λόγων. τίς ἔρωσ ἠρώτας· ἰδοὺ μοι, βλέπεις αὐτόν· ἀλλ' εὐμενῆς σοι τὰ εἰς πεῖραν ἴκοιτο». [2] ἐγὼ δὲ πρὸς αὐτόν·

unaware is a painless evil.”⁴⁵ [3] There was a bow and a torch in the lad’s hands, a quiver at his loins and a two-edged sword;⁴⁶ the lad’s feet were not human but were entirely winged;⁴⁷ as for his head, the lad was so charming that he outdid every other lad, every maiden, he was an image of the gods, a statue of Zeus,⁴⁸ he was entirely Aphrodite’s girdle,⁴⁹ entirely the garden of the Graces,⁵⁰ entirely pleasure.

[4] If Thetis’ marriage were to take place, if Hera were to make her fuss about the wedding, if Aphrodite, if Athena, if this lad, if Eris were to disturb the symposium, if she were to make the apple, if she were to ask a beauty to take the apple, if Paris were the judge, if the apple were the prize for beauty, you, my lad, would have it.⁵¹ [5] And I said to Kratisthenes, “What a clever thing is the painter’s hand. It creates wonders that surpass nature, it devises imaginary objects with its intelligence and then brings them into being with its art. If you like, let us discuss the lad.

[8.1] “The vices are neighbours to the virtues and are annexed to them.”⁵² The lad was devised to exemplify this maxim, and art brought what had been devised to life. [2] I can grasp, craftsman, your riddle, I can grasp what you have done, I can immerse my mind in yours; even if you are Sphinx, I am Oidipous;⁵³ even if you utter riddling prophecies from the Pythia’s hearth and tripod,⁵⁴ I am your priestly attendant and I can interpret your riddles.”⁵⁵

[9.1] But what about what came next? An entire army surrounded the lad, whole cities, a mixed crowd of men, women, old men, old women, young lads, maidens. Emperors, usurpers, lordlings, masters of the earth, stand like slaves around him, not as if he were an emperor but a god;⁵⁶ and there were two women with linked hands, of more than female stature⁵⁷ and older than Iapetos,⁵⁸ with unusual faces, unusual wrinkles, unusual appearance and unusual coloring.

[2] One was like the sun and entirely white, with white hair, white eyes, white tunic, face, hands, legs – everything white; the other was entirely black – hair, head, face and hands and feet, and tunic.⁵⁹ [3] They were identical in age but different in coloring, identical in wrinkles but different in race, the one was as if she came from Achaia fair in women, the other as if from scorched Ethiopia.

A host of birds is present, their wings free yet they are present as slaves. The whole race of Amphitrite’s footless creatures⁶⁰ are recruited as the lad’s slaves, and the savage emperor of beasts is present as a fellow slave with all other savage animals.

[10.1] I said to Kratisthenes, “Why do the birds not spread their wings in unfettered flight but instead are so strangely and unnaturally recruited as slaves? The savage lion, emperor of beasts, is slave to the lad, who is moreover stripped naked, yet the wild beast although fully armed is terrified of him. [2] Where are his claws, his beetling gaze, his shaggy chest and above all his fearsome and angry roar? The race of armed warriors (for they are present too) and every emperor, every lordling, every usurper – are they not strong enough against this quite naked youth who is on his own? [3] But why do the fishes or every sea monster tremble before the lad? Is it the fire? But indeed they control every sea, every deep, and these are hostile to fire. The bow, the wings? Are these not blunted by the deep?

«σύ μοι τὰ περὶ τὴν γραφὴν φιλοσόφει καὶ τῇ γραφῇ προσάρμοττε τὸ ἐπίγραμμα». ὁ δὲ Κραστισιθένης· «ὁ Ἔρωσ γυμνός, ὄπλοφόρος, πυρφόρος, τοξότης, πτερωτός· [3] ὄπλα φέρει κατ' ἀνδρῶν, πῦρ κατὰ γυναικῶν, τόξα κατὰ θηρῶν, κατὰ πτηνῶν τὸ πτερόν, τὴν γύμνωσιν κατὰ τῶν ἐν θαλάσσῃ καὶ καθ' ὅλης αὐτῆς· ἡμέρα καὶ νύξ, ὡς ὄρῃς, δουλεύει τῷ Ἔρωτι· αὐτὰ γὰρ αἱ γυναῖκες, ἃς σύ θαυμάζεις ὀρών». ἐγὼ δὲ πρὸς τὸν Κρατισιθένην· «μηδὲ γινώσκoiτό μοι».

[IV.4.3]

Καὶ δὴ περὶ τὸν κῆπον γενόμενος τὴν Ὑσμίνην ἐζήτουν καὶ πάλιν ἰδεῖν· ὡς δ' οὐκ εἶχον ὄραν (ᾧχετο γάρ), ἐνεκαρτέρου τῷ κήπῳ, τὴν παρθένον ἐνοπτριζόμενος. ὁ δὲ γε Κρατισιθένης μετὰγει μου τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐπὶ τὰς ἐν τῷ κήπῳ γραφάς, καὶ μετὰ τὸν ἐμὸν Ἔρωτα τὸν ἐφ' ὑψηλοῦ τοῦ δίφρου καθήμενον ἄνδρα ὀρώμεν ἄλλοφύλου, ἄλλογλώσσου, ἀλλήλοισι ἄλλογενεῖς, ὅλους ἄλλους ἐξ ἄλλων καὶ τὸ σχῆμα καὶ τὸ πολίτευμα.

[5.1] Ὁ μὲν γὰρ στρατιώτης ἦν· στρατιώτης τὸ σχῆμα, στρατιώτης τὸ βλέμμα, στρατιώτης τὸ μέγεθος· ὅλος στρατιωτικῶς κετεπέφρακτο· τὴν κεφαλὴν, τὴν χεῖρα, τὸ μετάρρενον, τὸ μέτωπον, τὸ στέρνον, τὴν ὀσφύν καὶ μέχρι ποδῶν· [2] οὕτως ὁ τεχνίτης τὸν σίδηρον εἰς πέπλον ἐξύφανεν ἢ μᾶλλον ταῖς βαφαῖς τὸν σίδηρον ἐμιμήσατο· οὕτω καὶ μέχρις ὀνύχων αὐτῶν τὸν στρατιώτην κατέφραξε. [3] φαρέτρα περὶ τὴν ὀσφύν καὶ σπάθη ἀμφικόπος· δολιχὸν ἔγχος περὶ τὴν δεξιάν· ἀσπίς ἐξήρητο τῆς λαιᾶς· τοῖν δὲ γε ποδοῖν οὕτως εὐφυῶς εἶχε καὶ τεχνικῶς, ὡς εἴποισι ἰδὼν κινεῖσθαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον.

[6.1] Ὁ μετ' αὐτὸν ὅλος ἦν ἀγροικικῶς ἐσταλμένος καὶ ὅλος ποιμῆν. ἀπερικάλυπτον εἶχε τὴν κεφαλὴν, ἀκόσμητον τὴν τρίχα καὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς καὶ τοῦ πώγωνος· τὴν χεῖρα μέχρις ἀγκῶνος γυμνῶ· μέχρι γονάτων ὁ ζωγράφος τὸν χιτῶνα κατέχουσε· τὰ δ' ἐφεξῆς ἀφῆκεν ἀπερικάλυπτα. [2] λάσιον τὸ στέρνον τάνδρῃ καὶ ὅσα τῶν μελῶν οὐκ ἐπεκαλύφθησαν ὡς ἐν χιτῶνι τοῖς χρώμασι· τὸ σκέλος παχὺ καὶ ὄντως κατ' ἄνδρα ἄδρόν· διδυμοτόκος αἶξ πρὸ τῶν ποδῶν τοῦ ποιμένος ὠδίνουσα γέγραπται· [3] ὁ δὲ γίγας οὗτος ποιμῆν μαιεύει τὴν αἶγα, καὶ τὸν μὲν πρωτότοκον ἔχει, τὸ δ' ὑποδέχεται· καὶ τὴν σύριγγα ποιμεικῶς ἀρμουςάμενος ἐπιτόκιον οἶον ᾄδει καὶ οἶον καταδυσωπεῖ τὸν Πᾶνα τὰς αἶγας πυκνῶς εὐτοκεῖν.

[7.1] Εἶτα λειμῶν κατάκομος ἄνθεσι, καὶ τις ἀνὴρ κατὰ μέλιτταν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἄνθεσιν ἐμετάλλευεν. οὐ κατὰ φυτηκόμον ἐγγέγραπτο, κατ' ἄνδρα δὲ μᾶλλον πολυτελεῖ καὶ πολυόλβον καὶ ὅλον βλάκα καὶ ὅλον χαρίεντα· ἢ γὰρ τοι περὶ τὸ πρόσωπον χάρις αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὸ τοῦ λειμῶνος κάλλος ἀντήριζεν. [2] ἢ θριξὶ περὶ τοὺς ὦμους ἐξήπλωτο, φιλοτίμως καταβοστρυχουμένη καὶ λίαν ἐπιμελῶς· ἄνθεσι τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐστεφάνωτο, καὶ ῥόδα κατεπεχεῖτο τῷ βοστρυχώματι· ποδήρης ὁ χιτῶν τουτωῖ καὶ οἶον κατάχρυσος καὶ ὡς ἐξ ἀνθέων κατάστικτος καὶ ὅλος ἠνέμωτο. [3] πλήρεις εἶχε τὰς χεῖρας καὶ ῥόδων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων φυτῶν, ὅσα καθηδύνει τὴν ὄσφρησιν· ἐσανδαλοῦτο τοὺς πόδας· οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδὲ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος εἶχεν ἀπερικόσμητον· καὶ ἦν ὁ λειμῶν τοῖς ἐν ποσὶ σανδαλοῖς ὡς ἐν κατόπτροις παραδεικνύμενος· οὕτως ὁ ζωγράφος καὶ μέχρι ποδῶν καὶ πεδίου τὸν ἄνδρα κατεχαρίτωσε.

[8.1] Πεδίον χλοηφόρον μετὰ τὸν κῆπον ὁ τεχνίτης ἐξήπλωσεν, ἄνδρα δ' ἐν μέσῳ κατεζωγράφησε τὰ πάντα κατ' ἀγρότην ἐσκευασμένον, ἐστεφανωμένον τὴν κεφαλὴν οὐκ ἐκ ῥόδων, οὐκ ἐξ ἀνθέων, ἀλλ' ἐκ λίνου λεπτοῦ, ὃν χεῖρ ὑφαίνει καὶ τέχνη πλέκει καὶ

[4] Oh the women, the wonder, their great age, their wrinkles, their appearance, their slavish garb! Zeus and the gods, how truly portentous is the painting, the mind's contrivance, the artist's masterpiece. [5] But let us look, if you like, at what is written about the lad's head." There were iambic verses, which went as follows:

This lad is Eros, with his sword, torch,
bow, arrows, nudity, a dart aimed at fishes.

[11.1] And Kratisthenes said, "My words to you will no longer lack support. You were asking me who is Eros; now look – you can see him. [2] But may your experience of him be kindly." I replied to him, "Explain the meaning of the picture to me then and show how the epigram is relevant to it." Kratisthenes responded, "Eros is naked, he carries a sword, he carries fire, he is an archer, he is winged. [3] He wields his sword against men, fire against women, bows against wild beasts, wings against birds, his nudity against the denizens of the sea and against it in its entirety. Day and night, as you see, serve Eros, for these are the women by the sight of whom you were amazed." I said to Kratisthenes, "May I never know him!"

[IV.4.3]⁶¹

And then I went into the garden, and tried to catch sight of Hysmine again; when I could not see her (for she had left), I continued to linger in the garden, imagining the maiden. Kratisthenes leads my eyes to the paintings in the garden, and next to my Eros, who was seated on a lofty throne, we see men of foreign races, foreign tongues, foreign birth, all differing from each other in their appearance and conduct.⁶²

[5.1] One was a soldier, a soldier in appearance, a soldier in gaze, a soldier in stature, armed entirely as a soldier – his head, his hands, his back, his brow his chest, his loins, right down to his feet; [2] thus had the craftsman worked the iron into a covering, or rather had imitated iron with his colors; thus had he armed the soldier as far as his fingernails.⁶³ [3] He had a quiver round his loins, and a two-edged sword, a long spear in his right hand, a shield was slung from his left. So excellently and artistically were his feet depicted that on looking at him you might declare the man was walking.⁶⁴

[6.1] The figure after him was dressed entirely in peasant fashion and entirely as a shepherd.⁶⁵ He had his head uncovered, with the hair of his head and beard unadorned, his arms bare to the elbow. The painter had drawn his tunic as far as his knees, his legs below that were left uncovered. [2] The man's chest was hairy, as were all his limbs that had not been covered with paint like a tunic. His legs were sturdy and full of manly muscularity.⁶⁶ A goat pregnant with two kids was painted in labor at the shepherd's feet; [3] this giant of a shepherd was acting as midwife to the goat, and was holding the first-born and catching the second. He was preparing his shepherd's flute to pipe a melody for the kid's birth, and seemed to be beseeching Pan for his goats to give birth often and successfully.⁶⁷

[7.1] Next there was a meadow with a profusion of flowers, and a man busy about the flowers like a bee.⁶⁸ He was not depicted as a gardener but rather like someone wealthy and prosperous, very cheerful and very jovial.⁶⁹ The charm of his face had a rival in the beauty of the meadow. [2] His hair flowed over his shoulders, braided elaborately and

κόσμον ὁ ἀγρότης ἔχει. [2] τὸν βόστρυχον οὐδὲ μέχρις ὤμων ὁ τεχνίτης ἐξήπλωσεν, οὐδ' αὐτὸν ὄλον περικαλύπτειν ἀφῆκε τὸν τράχηλον. τὸ χιτῶνιον ἀκαλλῶς κατ' ἀγρότην ἐσκεύασε καὶ ὄλον ἀγροικικόν. [3] τῷ πόδε κατ' ἄμφω μέχρι γονάτων ἐγύμνωσε καὶ ἄμφω τῷ χεῖρι πρὸς ἓν ἀφώρισε δρέπανον, ὃ τι καὶ τὸ σχῆμα καὶ τὸ μῆκος ὑπὲρ τὸ δρέπανον. χόρτον τίλλειν ὁ γεγραμμένος ἀγρότης ἔργον εἶχεν ἐπιμελέστατον· τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐπεπήγει τῷ χόρτῳ καὶ ὄλος ἦν πρὸς τῷ λειτουργήματι.

[9.1] Γηπόνος ὁ μετ' αὐτὸν περὶ μέσους κεκυφῶς τοὺς ἀστάχιας δρέπανον ἔχει τῇ δεξιᾷ, τῇ δὲ γε λαῖα συλλέγει τὰ δράγματα· ἀπέχει τοὺς καρπούς τῶν πόνων, θερίζει τὰς ἀμοιβὰς τῶν καμάτων καὶ τῶν σπερμάτων τρυγᾷ τὰ γεώργια. [2] ἐπικάλυμμα φέρει τῇ κεφαλῇ πῖλον ἀσκητὸν καθ' Ἡσίοδον· οὐ γὰρ γυμνῇ ταύτῃ δοκεῖ τὴν θέρμην ἀνέχεσθαι. τὸν πάντα χιτῶνα περὶ τὴν ὀσφύν διεζώσατο καὶ τὸ πᾶν τοῦ σώματος πλὴν τῆς αἰδοῦς ἐξεγύμνωσεν.

[10.1] Ὁ μετ' αὐτὸν ἤδη λελουμένος ἐγγράπτο. ἀνὴρ πρὸ τῶν πυλῶν εἰστήκει τοῦ βαλανείου, ὀθόνη τὴν αἰδῶ περιπέλλων, τὰ δ' ἄλλα φέρων ἀπερικάλυπτα. πᾶνθ' ὡς ἐξ ἰδρωτὸς κατερρεῖτο καὶ κατεβρέχετο. [2] εἴποις ἰδῶν ἀσθμαίνειν τὸν ἄνθρωπον καὶ οἶον ἐκλελῦσθαι τῷ καύματι· οὕτως ὁ τεχνίτης καὶ τὰς φύσεις αὐτὰς ἀπεμιμείτο τοῖς χρώμασι. [3] τῇ δεξιᾷ τῶν χειρῶν ἔκπωμά τι κατεῖχε κωνοειδές, ὃ τῷ στόματι φέρων τῆς ὀπῆς ἀνερρόφει τοῦ πόματος· τῇ δ' αὖ γε λαῖα τὴν ὀθόνην ἀνεῖχε περὶ τὸν ὀμφαλόν, μὴ πως ἐκρυσσα τὸ πᾶν ἐκκαλύψει τοῦ σώματος.

[11.1] Μετὰ δὴ τοῦτον τὸν ἐκ βαλανείου, τὸν λελουμένον, τὸν καυματούμενον ἀνὴρ τις ἐγγράπτο ὄλον ἀνεζωσμένος περὶ τὴν ὀσφύν τὸ χιτῶνιον, ὄλω τῷ πόδε γυμνός, καὶ ὄλην οἴνου πηγὴν ἀναστομῶν πρὸ ποδῶν. τὴν τρίχα πᾶσαν εὐφυῶς συνήκται πρὸς τὸ μετάφρενον. [2] ἄμπελον ἢ λαῖα τῶν χειρῶν ἐμιμείτο, καὶ βότρυν εἶχε τοῖς δακτύλοις ὡς κλάδοις ἀπαιωρούμενον· ἢ δεξιὰ τὸν βότρυν ἐτρύγα, καὶ τῷ στόματι κατὰ ληνὸν παρετίθετο, καὶ τοῖς ὀδοῦσιν ὡς ποσὶν ἐναπέθλιβε· καὶ ἦν ὁ γεγραμμένος ἀνὴρ ἄμπελος καὶ τρυγητὴς καὶ ληνός καὶ οἴνου πηγὴ.

[12.1] Ὁ μετ' αὐτὸν νεανίσκος νῦν πρῶτως ἦνθει τὸν ἴουλον, τὴν κεφαλὴν μὴ φέρων ἀπερικάλυπτον, ἀλλ' ἔκ τινος ἀραχνώδους λίνου περικαλύπτων, ἀλλ' ἔκ τινος ἀραχνώδους λίνου περικαλύπτων καὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ τὸν βόστρυχον. [2] λευκὸν αὐτῷ τὸ χιτῶνιον, ὃ τὰς χεῖρας συνέχει καὶ ταύταις κεκόλληται καὶ μέχρι δακτύλων ἐκκεχυμένον αὐτῶν. στενοῦται μὲν περὶ τὴν ὀσφύν, τὸ δ' ἐφεξῆς ἀνέτως ἐκχεῖται καὶ οἶον ἠνέμωται. [3] μέχρι γονάτων τοὺς πόδας ὁ τεχνίτης τῷ νεανίσκῳ κατεπέδλωσεν. ὁ δ' οἰκίσκος φέρει στρουθῶν, πλάττει φυτόν, δόλον πλέκει κατὰ πτηνῶν καὶ περιεργάζεται τὸ πτερόν· ὄλον λειμῶνα φυτεύει, στρουθοὺς τῷ λειμῶνι παραπετάννυσι, λεπτῇ μηρίνθῳ τούτους ἀντικαθέλκων πυκνά. [4] τὸν δόλον οὐ συνορᾷ τὸ πτηνόν, τὴν μηχανὴν οὐκ οἶδε· βλέπει τὸν λειμῶνα τερπνόν, τοὺς ἐν μηρίνθῳ παραπετομένους στρουθοὺς, τοὺς ἐν οἰκίσκοις ἡδὺ μελιζομένους καὶ χάριεν· γίνεται πρὸς τῷ λειμῶνι, πρὸς τοῖς στρουθοῖς, καὶ τῷ δόλῳ συνέχεται· ὁ δὲ τὸν δόλον συσκευασάμενος ἰξευτῆς συνέχει καὶ φράττει καὶ τῆς εὐθείας καταγελά.

[13.1] Μετὰ δὴ ταῦτα ζευγὸς βοῶν ἄροτρον φέρον ἐγγράπτο καὶ τις ἀνὴρ ἄροτρεὺς, ᾧ φαῦλα μὲν ὁ τεχνίτης ὑπέρραψε πέδιλα, φαῦλα δὲ καὶ τᾶλλα τὰ περὶ τὸ σῶμα κατεζωγράφησε, φαῦλον χιτῶνα καὶ ὄλον διερωγότα (καὶ τοῦτο γὰρ ἐτεχνουργήθη τοῖς χρώμασι), φαῦλον τὸ τῆς κεφαλῆς περικάλυμμα, ἐξ ἐρίου τάχα συμπληθέν. [2] μέλαν οὐ

very carefully. His head was garlanded with flowers, and roses were twined in his braids. His tunic reached to his feet, and looked to be of gold; it was bestrewn with flowers and billowed out. [3] His hands were full of roses and all other plants that delight the nostrils. His feet were clad in sandals, for not even that part of his body was unadorned. And the meadow was reflected in the sandals on his feet as though in a mirror – such charm had the painter bestowed on this figure, even down to his feet and sandals.

[8.1] Next to the garden the craftsman had laid out a grassy plain; in the middle of this he painted a man who was equipped entirely as a farmer, his head garlanded not with roses or flowers but with the light flax which the hand weaves and the craft contrives and the farmer uses as an ornament.⁷⁰ The craftsman did not let his hair flow down to his shoulders, nor did he leave him to cover his neck completely. He drew the tunic inelegantly in rustic fashion, completely like a farmer. [3] Both legs were bare to the knees and both hands were taken up with a sickle whose shape and size was exceptional.⁷¹ The farmer depicted here was deeply preoccupied with cutting grass, his eyes were fixed on the grass and he was completely engrossed in his task.⁷²

[9.1] The laborer who follows him is bent over in the middle of the corn; he has a sickle in his right hand, and with his left he collects the ears.⁷³ He is receiving the fruit of his toil, he harvests the rewards of his labors, he gathers the crops from his seeds. [2] He has a covering on his head, a close-fitting cap, in Hesiod's words;⁷⁴ he cannot expect to withstand the heat bareheaded. His entire tunic was hitched up around his waist and his entire body was naked, apart from his loins.⁷⁵

[10.1] The figure after him was depicted after he had bathed; he was standing at the doors of the bath-house, with a towel wrapped around his loins, but with every other part of his body uncovered; he appeared to be dripping with sweat and quite drenched. [2] On seeing him you might say that the man was panting and had, as it were, collapsed in the heat, so well had the craftsman delineated his form in paint. [3] In his right hand he held a conical vessel which he was conveying to his mouth and from which he was quaffing;⁷⁶ in his left hand he held the towel around his navel, so that it should not fall and reveal his entire body.⁷⁷

[11.1] After this man from the bath-house who had bathed and was being consumed by the heat, a man was depicted whose tunic was girded up around his loins but whose legs were entirely bare and who was pouring out an entire fountain of wine before his feet.⁷⁸ All his hair was neatly tied behind his back. [2] His left hand mimicked a grape vine and he held a cluster of grapes that hung from his fingers as if they were twigs; his right hand picked at the bunch and pressed them into his mouth as if into a vat and crushed them with his teeth as though they were feet; and the man that was depicted was vine and harvester, and wine press and fountain of wine.

[12.1] The youth that came after him was just growing his first beard, his head was not uncovered but was covered by a gossamer-fine linen over both his head and his braids.⁷⁹ [2] He has a white tunic, which covers his arms and clings to them, and goes down right to his fingertips. It narrows at the waist and thereafter flows down comfortably and as it were billows out. [3] The craftsman put boots on the youth's legs as far as his knees. He is

κατ' Αἰθίοπα κατεχρώσθη τὸ πρόσωπον, ἀλλ' οἷον ἥλιος μεταχρώννυσι. θριξὶ ὀλίγη πρὸς τὸ μετάφρενον· τὴν γὰρ πᾶσαν τὸ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἐπεκάλυπτε κάλυμμα· πώγων καθειμένος καὶ ὄλος βαθύς. [3] ἡ δεξιὰ τῶν χειρῶν ὄλη κατέχει καὶ πρὸς γῆν ἐμβάλλει τὸ ἄροτρον, ἡ δέ γε λαιὰ βουπλήγα φέρει, γηπόνων ἀνδρῶν γραφεῖον, ὃ βάπτεται μὲν βοῶν αἵματι, καλλιγραφεῖ δὲ πληγῆν.

[14.1] Ὁ μετ' αὐτὸν κατ' αὐτὸν τὸ σχῆμα, τὸν χιτῶνα, τὸ πέδιλον καὶ τὸ τῆς κεφαλῆς περικάλυμμα καὶ ὅσα περὶ τὸ σῶμα· τὸ γὰρ τοι σῶμα διήλλακται· τὸ χρῶμα τοῦ προσώπου μέλαν μὲν, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ κατ' ἐκείνον, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ κατὰ τὸν ἐν τῷ κήπῳ γεγραμμένον λευκόν· ἀλλ' ὅσον ἐκείνου μελάντερον, τοσοῦτον τούτου λευκότερον. ἡ θριξὶ ἀτάκτως πλην μέχρις ὤμων ἐξήπλωτο· ὁ πώγων μὴ κατ' ἐκείνον ἐκκεχυμένος, ἀλλὰ συνῆκται καὶ οἷον συνέσταλται. [3] τῆς μὲν τῶν χειρῶν, τῆς λαιᾶς ἐξήπται κανοῦν· ἡ δ' αὖ ἑτέρα τὸν ἐν τούτῳ σῖτον ἐξῆγε καὶ περὶ τὴν γῆν κατεσκόρπιζεν· εἰ δὲ κεκρυμμένοι πένητες τοῖς περὶ τὴν γῆν ἐκάθητο χάσμασι καὶ τούτοις ἐσκόρπιζεν, ὁ τεχνίτης οὐκ ἀφῆκεν ὄραν.

[15.1] Μετὰ δὴ τούτους νεανίσκος ἐγγέγραπτο σφριγῶν τὸ σῶμα καὶ τὸ βλέμμα θρασύς, ὄλος περὶ θήρας ἐπτοημένος καὶ κυνηγῆσια, ἡμαγμένος τὰς χεῖρας καὶ οἷον θωύσων κυσί· χεῖρ γὰρ ζωγράφου καὶ τέχνη τᾶλλα σοφῆ, φωνῆς ἥτῃται καὶ ταύτην οὐκ οἶδε μιμεῖσθαι τοῖς χρώμασι. [2] τὸν πάντα βόστρυχον πρὸς ἕν συνῆγε καὶ συνεδέδετο· ὄλον τὸ χιτῶνιον εὐφυῶς συγκεκόλληται τῇ σαρκὶ καὶ οἷον ταύτη συνέρραπται, ὃ μέχρι γονάτων ὁ τεχνίτης ἐξέχυσε. [3] τὰ δ' ἐφεξῆς μέχρι δακτύλων αὐτῶν διερωγῶς τις πέπλος συνέσφιγγε, καὶ μήρινθος κατὰ κιττὸν συνεπλέκετο. λαγῶς τῆς λαιᾶς ἀπηώρητο τῶν χειρῶν· τῇ γὰρ τοι δεξιᾷ τοὺς κύνας ὑπέσαιεν· οἱ δ' ὄλοι πρὸ ποδῶν ἐκυλινδοῦντο τοῦ νεανίσκου καὶ οἷον συνέπαιζον.

[16.1] Τέλος κρατῆρες πυρὸς ἐγεγράφατο καὶ φλόξ ὡς ἀπὸ γῆς μέχρις ἐς αὐτὸν οὐρανόν, ὡς μηδ' ἔχειν μαθεῖν εἶτ' ἐξ αἰθέρος εἰς γῆν ἐκχεῖται τὸ πῦρ εἶτ' ἀπὸ γῆς ἐξήπται πρὸς οὐρανόν. [2] καὶ τις ἀνὴρ ἑκατονταπέμπελος παρακάθηται τῇ φλογί, ὄλος ῥυτίς, ὄλος πολιά καὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ τὸν πώγωνα, διφθέραν ἐνδεδυμένος ἐκ κεφαλῆς εἰς ὀσφύν, τὰ δ' ἄλλα γυμνός, τὴν χεῖρε, τὴν πόδε καὶ τὸ πολὺ τῆς γαστρός. [3] ἐκτεταμένος εἶχε τὰς χεῖρας καὶ οἷον μεθεῖλκε τὴν φλόγα καὶ μετερρίπιζε καὶ ὄλην μετῆγε πρὸς ἑαυτὸν.

[17.1] Ταῦθ' ὁρῶμεν καὶ τοῖς παραδόξοις ἐξεπληττόμεθα καὶ τί βούλεται τὰ γεγραμμένα καὶ σφόδρα μαθεῖν ἐβουλόμεθα, καὶ μᾶλλον ὁ Κρατισθένης· ἐμὲ γὰρ ὁ τῆς Ὑσμίνης ἔρωσ ὄλον μεθεῖλκε πρὸς ἑαυτὸν· τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντα καὶ τὰ περὶ τὸν κῆπον τερπνὰ τερπνὰ μοι πρὶν Ὑσμίνην ἰδεῖν ἢ μᾶλλον πρὶν Ὑσμίνης ἐκκεκαῦσθαι τῷ ἔρωτι. [2] τοῖνον ἐγὼ μὲν τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς μετὰ γω περὶ τὸν κῆπον, τὴν Ὑσμίνην ἐνοπτριζόμενος· ὁ δέ γε Κρατισθένης ὑπὲρ τὰς κεφαλὰς τῶν γεγραμμένων ἀνδρῶν ἰαμβεῖον ἐν γεγραμμένον ὄρα· τὸ δ' εἶχεν οὕτως·

Τοὺς ἀνδρας ἀθρῶν τὸν χρόνον βλέπεις ὄλον.

[18.1] Ἐντεῦθεν κατεφιλοσοφοῦμεν τὰ σχήματα τῶν γεγραμμένων ἀνδρῶν.

[2] Ὁ στρατιώτης ὁ πρῶτος τὸν καιρὸν τοῦ χρόνου παραδεικνύει, ὅτε πᾶς ἐκστρατεύει στρατιώτης ἀνὴρ ὄπλοις ὄλοις καταφραζάμενος.

[3] Ὁ μετ' αὐτὸν αἰπόλος, αἶξ ἢ παρὰ τοῖς ποσὶ τίκτουσα καὶ σύριγξ οἷον αὐλοῦσα τὸν καιρὸν ἐμφαίνει, καθ' ὃν ποιμὴν ἐκ χειμῶνος ἐξάγει τὸ ποιμνιον καὶ καθ' ὃν τίκτουσιν αἶγες καὶ σύριγξ ἀρμόζεται.

carrying cages for sparrows and is twisting cords, making traps for birds and keeping a close watch on their flight; he plants an entire meadow, and lets his sparrows out in the meadow but pulls them back often with a light line. [4] The birds do not perceive the trap, they do not understand the trick; they see a pleasant meadow, with sparrows flying round on their line and others chirruping sweetly and delightfully in their cages; they come into the meadow, to the sparrows and are caught in the trap. The fowler who had set the trap catches and kills the birds and mocks their gullibility.⁸⁰

[13.1] After this a pair of oxen were depicted with their plough, and a ploughman for whom the craftsman had devised mean sandals, and had painted mean garments on the rest of his body, a mean tunic that was totally ragged (even this he contrived in paint); there was a mean covering on his head, perhaps of felted wool.⁸¹ [2] His face was black, not like an Ethiopian but deeply tanned by the sun. A little of his hair appeared at his back, but his head covering concealed most of it; his beard was long and very thick. [3] His right hand grasped the plough firmly and thrust it into the earth, his left hand held an ox-goad, the farmer's pen⁸² which is dipped in ox-blood and inscribes the earth.⁸³

[14.1] The figure next to him was similar in appearance, in tunic, sandals, head covering and bodily adornments but was different in body; the color of his face was black, but not like the last figure, just as the whiteness was not that of the man painted in the garden; but as he was blacker than the one, so he was also more white than the other. [2] His hair came in unruly fashion down to his shoulders; his beard was not disorderly like his neighbour's, but smoothed together and groomed. [3] In his left hand he held a container, and his other hand took corn from it and scattered it over the earth; if the poor were concealed in cracks in the earth and if he scattered seed for them, the craftsman did not let this appear.⁸⁴

[15.1] Following these there was depicted a youth with a vigorous body and a bold look, completely mad for hunting and the pursuit of game, with blood-stained hands and seeming to shout to his dogs;⁸⁵ for the painter's hand and art, however skillful in other respects, is defeated by sound and is incapable of expressing this with colors.⁸⁶ [2] He had gathered all his hair up and tied it back; his tunic was clinging tightly to his upper body and was as if sewn to it but the craftsman had then let it flow to his knees. [3] A tattered cloak covered the rest of him down to his toes, with a cord twined around like ivy. A hare dangled from his left hand and with his right he was fondling the dogs, who were all rolling around at the youth's feet as though playing with him.

[16.1] At the end were painted bowls of fire and a flame reaching up from the earth to the sky itself, so that it could not be understood whether the fire came pouring out of the aither to earth or whether it came up from earth to the sky. [2] And an extraordinarily aged man was seated by the flame, completely wrinkled, with completely grey hair and beard, clad in leather from head to loins, the rest of him naked – his hands, his feet and most of his belly. [3] His hands were stretched out and he seemed to draw the flame to him and to fan it and completely attract it to himself.⁸⁷

[17.1] We look at this spectacle and are amazed by its extraordinary nature, and we were very eager to discover the meaning of the paintings, especially Kratisthenes. For love for

[4] Ὁ γεγραμμένος λειμών, ὁ ῥόδοις κομῶν καὶ θάλλων τοῖς ἄνθεσιν, ὁ μέσον κατηνθισμένος ἀνὴρ τὸν καιρὸν εἰκονίζει τοῦ ἔαρος.

[5] Τὸ χλοηφόρον γεγραμμένον πεδίον, ὁ τὸν χόρτον τίλλων ἀγρότης τὸν καιρὸν παρίστησιν ἐμφανῶς, καθ' ὃν ὁ χόρτος πεπαινέται καὶ τὴν ἐκτομὴν ἀπαιτεῖ.

[6] Ὁ μέσον ἀσταχύων ἀνὴρ, ὁ τὸ δρέπανον ἔχων καὶ θερίζων τὸν ἀσταχυν τὸν καιρὸν τοῦ θέρους σοι καταζωγραφεῖ.

[7] Ὁ λελουμένος ἀνὴρ, ὁ γυμνός, ὁ πίνων, ὁ καυματούμενος τὴν θερμὴν ἐμφαίνει σοι τοῦ καιροῦ, τὴν ἐπιτολὴν τοῦ κυνός, ὅθεν τὸ σῶμα καταξηραίνεται.

[8] Ὁ τὸν βότρυν ἐκθλίβων, ὁ τὸν βότρυν τρυγῶν τὸν καιρὸν τῆς τρύγης σοι παριστᾷ καὶ τὸ καταπεπάνθαι τοὺς βότρυας.

[9] Ὁ μετ' αὐτὸν ἱξευτῆς ὑπαινίττεται σοι τὸν χρόνον, καθ' ὃν τὰ πτηνὰ τὸν χειμῶνα φρίσσει καὶ μεταίρει πρὸς τὸ θερμότερον.

[10] Ὁρᾷς τὸν γηπόνον ἐπ' ἄροτρον; οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ καιρός, ὃν καὶ τις σοφὸς ἐκ τῶν Πληιάδων εἰς ἄροτον ἠκριβώσατο.

[11] Ὁ μετ' αὐτὸν σκορπιζὼν τὸν σῖτον σπορεύς ἐστι καὶ τὸν τοῦ σπόρου καιρὸν καθυπεμφαίνει τῷ ζωγραφῆματι.

[12] Ὁρᾷς τὸν ἐν μέσῳ κυνῶν νεανίσκον, τὸν τὸν λαγῶν φέροντα, τὸν τοὺς κύνας καθυποσαίνοντα; τὸν τῆς θήρας καιρὸν σοι παρίστησιν· ἐπεὶ γὰρ συνήκται ταῖς ἀποθήκαις καὶ σῖτος καὶ οἶνος καὶ τᾶλλ' ὅποσα συναγαγεῖν ἀγαθόν, ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ τὰ περὶ τὸ μέλλον εὔδιετέθη καὶ γεωργικῶς καὶ γηπονικῶς, ἀνέσει καὶ θήραις καὶ κυνηγεσίσις καιρὸς ἀφωσίωται.

[13] Ὁ πολὺς οὗτος ἀνὴρ, ὁ ῥυτίς, ὁ τῇ ἰστίῃ ἐμπελαδὸν παρακαθήμενος τὸ δριμύ τοῦ χειμῶνος καθυπεμφαίνει σοι, οὐχ ἦττον δὲ καὶ τὸ τοῦ γήρωος ψυχρόν· ὁ γὰρ τοι χειμῶν διὰ κόρης ἀπαλόχρους οὐ διάησι, τροχαλὸν δὲ γέροντα τίθησιν.

[19.1] Οὕτω τοῖνυν καταφιλοσοφῆσαντες τὴν γραφὴν περὶ τὸ δωμάτιον ἀνεχωροῦμεν· ὕπνου γὰρ ἐκάλει καιρός. καὶ ὁ μὲν Κρατισθένης περὶ τὴν κλίνην ἐγένετο, ἐγὼ δ' ἐνεκαρτέρου τῷ κήπῳ, τὴν Ὑσμίνην θέλων ἰδεῖν, καὶ ὅλους πρὸς τὴν πύλην εἶχον τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς· [2] νοῦς γὰρ ἔρωτι τρωθεὶς ὄλον καθ' αὐτὸν ἀναπλάττει τὸν ἔρωτα καὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς μετὰγει περὶ τὸ πλάσμα καὶ ὄλον ὄραν δοκεῖ τὸ πλαττόμενον· οὕτω πῦρ ἔρωτος πεσὸν εἰς ψυχὴν καὶ τὰς φύσεις αὐτὰς μεταπλάττει καὶ μεθαρμόζεται. καὶ ὁ Κρατισθένης τῆς κλίνης ἀναστάς μεθεῖλκέ με περὶ τὸ δωμάτιον, «νὺξ δ' ἤδη τελέθει» λέγων, «ἀγαθὸν καὶ νυκτὶ πιθέσθαι».

[20.1] Ἐγὼ δὲ πρὸς αὐτόν· «νῦν τὰς γραφὰς ὅλας ἀνεμετροῦμεν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς, τὰς ἐπιγραφὰς ἐωρῶμεν καὶ ταύτας ταῖς γραφαῖς προσηρμόττομεν, καὶ θέρει μὲν καὶ ψύχει καὶ ἔαρι καὶ τοῖς πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς καιρὸς ἀφωσίωται, Ἔρωτος δ' οὐ περιγέγραπται τῇ γραφῇ, οὐ πρὸς καιρὸν τῇ τέχνῃ μετεχρωμάτισται· πάντως, ὅτι παντὶ καιρῷ μεθαρμόζεται».

[2] Ὁ δὲ Κρατισθένης· «ἰσχυρῶς σε καταπαγιδεύω τοῖς χεῖλεσι καὶ τοῖς σοῖς τὴν νικῶσαν ἔχω προβλήμασιν· ἐγγὺς γὰρ ἡ γραφὴ καὶ ἀπαράγραπτος ὁ γραφεύς· θέρει γὰρ καὶ ψύχει καὶ ἔαρι καιρὸς ἀφωσίωται κατὰ γε τὴν γραφὴν καὶ τὸν λόγον τὸν σόν, ἔρωτι δ' οὐδαμῶς· [3] ἂν δ' ὑπὲρ τὰ ἐσκαμμένα πηδᾷ, τυραννὶς τὸ πρᾶγμα· ἂν καταδυναστεύσας πολλὰκίς ἐκράτησε παρ' ἡμῖν, οὐ νόμος τὸ σπάνιον· ἡ γὰρ τοι τοῦ ζωγράφου γραφὴς Ἑρμοῦ μοι ἀκόντιον, ὅλην κατεστομωμένη τοῖς ἐκ τῶν γεγραμμένων προβλήμασιν».

Hysmine had me totally in its thrall; and everything else and all the delights of the garden I had found delightful before I had seen Hysmine, or rather, before I was enflamed with love for Hysmine. [2] So I let my eyes wander around the garden, imagining Hysmine, but Kratisthenes saw that there was an iambic line written above the heads of the men painted there. It went as follows:

“When you contemplate these men, you see the whole year.”

[18.1] Then we debated the appearance of the men in the paintings.

[2] The first, the soldier, indicates the season of the year when every soldier sets out on campaign, armed with all his weapons.⁸⁸

[3] The goatherd after him, the goat giving birth at his feet, the pipes that seem to play, show the season when the herdsman brings his flock after winter, when the goats give birth and the pipes are made ready.⁸⁹

[4] The meadow that was painted full of roses and blooming with flowers, and the man in its midst strewn with flowers, depicts the season of spring.⁹⁰

[5] The plain that was shown covered with grass and the farmer cutting the hay clearly reveals the season in which the hay matures and is ready to be reaped.⁹¹

[6] The man surrounded by corn who had a sickle and was harvesting the corn delineates the season for harvest.⁹²

[7] The man who had bathed, and was naked, drinking and sweating, shows you the hot season, the season of the Dog Star,⁹³ when the body becomes parched.⁹⁴

[8] The man crushing grapes and gathering them presents to you the season of the vintage and the ripening of the grape clusters.⁹⁵

[9] The fowler who comes after him hints to you of the season in which the birds shiver in the cold and make for warmer climates.⁹⁶

[10] Do you see the laborer with the plough? This is the season when a wise man follows the Pleiades and hones the plough.⁹⁷

[11] The man next to him scattering corn is the sower and reveals through the painting the season for sowing.⁹⁸

[12] Do you see the youth surrounded by dogs, carrying the hare and fondling the dogs? He presents to you the season for hunting; for when the corn and wine and all other things that it is good to collect are gathered into the store-rooms and everything pertaining to agriculture and husbandry for the next season is in good order, then it is the season for relaxation and hunting and the chase.⁹⁹

[13] The greyhaired and wrinkled man who sits hard up to the fire reveals to you the harshness of winter no less than the chill of old age; for winter does not pierce a tender-skinned girl but makes the old man bent.¹⁰⁰

[19.1] Having thus discussed the painting, we made our way back to our chamber, for the time for sleep summoned us. Kratisthenes lay on the couch, but I lingered in the garden, wishing to see Hysmine, and kept my eyes completely on the doorway. [2] For the mind that has been wounded by love constantly creates in itself the beloved object and transfers the eyes to the figure, and seems always to see what it has invented; such is the effect of the fire of love when it attacks the soul and transforms and reconfigures its

Ἐγὼ δὲ πρὸς τὸν Κρατισθένην· «ἀλλ' αὐταῖς σοι ταῖς τῶν χρωμάτων βαφαῖς ἐκθηλυθήσεται τὸ ἀκόντιον· Ἔρωσ γὰρ προγέγραπται βασιλεύς, καὶ πᾶσα φύσις ἀνδρῶν ὡς δούλη παρίστατο, ἄνδρες δὲ πάντως καὶ οἷς ὁ γραφεὺς τοὺς καιροὺς μεθηρμόσατο· εἰ γοῦν τὸ πᾶν καὶ καθόλου δουλοῦται τῷ Ἔρωτι, πῶς τὸ μερικὸν ἐκφύγη τὴν δούλωσιν; [5] εἰ δὲ καὶ πᾶν τμήμα καιροῦ καὶ διάστημα ἐξ ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ὡς ἐξ ὕλης τὴν σύστασιν ἔσχηκεν, αὐταὶ δὲ δοῦλαι κατὰ τὴν γραφὴν καὶ τὸ σὸν μυσταγώγημα, εὐδηλον ὡς καὶ τὸ ἐκ τούτων καὶ δι' αὐτῶν [καὶ] ὄλον ἐν ὅλαις αὐταῖς οὐκ ἀποφύγη τὴν δούλωσιν, ἀλλ' ἄκον συνδουλαγωγηθήσεται».

[6] Ταῦτ' εἶπον, καὶ τὸν Κρατισθένην εὐθύς κατεφίλησα, «νικῶ σε» λέγων «Κρατίσθενης»· ὁ δ' «ἔστω, νενίκηκας· γενώμεθα περὶ τὸ δωμάτιον».

[21.1] Καὶ γεγονότες ἀνακεκλίμεθα. καὶ τις ψόφος περὶ τὸν κῆπον γενόμενος τῆς κλίνης μ' ἀνέσπασε· καὶ περὶ τὸ φρέαρ τὴν Ὑσμίνην ὄρῳ, πρὸς ἣν κατεπέτασα, καὶ τοῦ ποδοῦ ἐμνήσθην τοῦ Ἔρωτος ὅτι μὴ κατ' ἀνθρώπων ἦν, ἀλλ' ὄλον πτερόν· καὶ τὸν ζωγράφον τῆς γραφῆς ἐμακάρισα· Ἔρωσ γὰρ καὶ τοὺς ἐμοὺς πόδας ἐπτέρωσε.

nature. Kratisthenes got up from the couch and led me to the chamber, saying, “Night has come on, it is good to obey the night.”

[20.1] I said to him, “We have now examined the paintings with our eyes, we have looked at their inscriptions and we have considered their appropriateness to the paintings, and a season was straightforwardly dedicated to heat and cold and spring and all the rest. But Eros is not circumscribed by painting, nor can his colors be changed by art to fit a season; indeed he is appropriate to every season.”

[2] Kratisthenes said, “I can ensnare you tightly through my lips, and I have the solution to your queries; for the painting is close by and the painter is not to be ignored. According to the painting and according to you, a season is dedicated to heat and cold and spring, but not in the least to Eros. [3] But if he oversteps the limits, that is the action of a tyrant; if he becomes overbearing and often has control over us, the exception does not prove the rule, for the painter’s brush, completely whetted by the paintings’ queries, becomes Hermes’ javelin for me.”¹⁰¹

[4] I said to Kratisthenes, “But the javelin will be emasculated by the colors’ hues. Eros has previously been painted as emperor, and all types of men were enslaved to him, especially those men for whom the painter found appropriate seasons. If then everything is in complete servitude to Eros, how can one part escape that servitude? [5] And if every segment of time and space is composed from day or night as its primary matter, and these are in servitude according to the painting and your mystic interpretation, it is quite clear that what is derived from them and through them and everything that is present in them cannot escape servitude but will be brought into servitude against their will.”

[6] As I said this I promptly embraced Kratisthenes, saying, “I have defeated you, Kratisthenes.”¹⁰² He said, “Very well, you have won; now let us go to our chamber.”

[21.1] And having done so, we lay down. But a noise in the garden caused me to jump up from my couch, and I see Hysmine by the well; I flew over to her and I called to mind the foot of Eros, which was not like that of men but was altogether winged;¹⁰³ [2] and I blessed whoever was responsible for the painting, for Eros put wings on my feet.

Commentary

1. Jeffreys translates κλῖναι as “seats” rather than “couches” noting that by the middle Byzantine era, meals were rarely eaten in a reclined position.³¹
2. Roilos emphasizes the importance of the term δρόμα here and elsewhere in the text as a “marked word” within the language of *Hysmine and Hysminias*. He understands the term to operate in a metanarrative fashion at this juncture, simultaneously calling upon the protagonist to interpret the riddle presented by the painting as well as highlighting the essential role the virtues play in the development of the story, the character’s own maturation across the narrative, and the allegory that his tale encodes.³²
3. Jeffreys notes that although δίφρος is typically translated as “chariot,” it also connotes a seat of authority. She translates it as “throne,” a decision supported by the subsequent reference to Eros as sitting on a θρόνος.³³ Whether understood as a throne or chariot, the attribute connotes imperial status.³⁴
4. The translation provided here is excerpted from Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 179–81, 185–90, 201–08, used with the permission of Liverpool University Press.
5. Cf. Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 179–81.
6. The description of multicolored marble resonates with the appearance of a fountain in the roughly contemporaneous wall mosaic of the twelfth-century church of the Koimesis at Daphni near Athens. In the scene of the Annunciation to Joachim and Anna, which transpires in a garden, the fountain is composed of three tiers of basins, with a pine-cone shaped feature at the top from which flows water in several streams.³⁵
7. Thessalian marble, also known as *verde antico*, was quarried at Larissa in Thessaly (Greece). It is a predominately green breccia with white and black flecks and was among the most valuable and prized marbles in Roman and Byzantine times.³⁶
8. The eagle is a prominent feature of the fountain. Rendered in gold, it is distinguished from the other sculptures. Térèse Nilsson suggests that the eagle may be intended to function as a surrogate for Eros, paralleling the portrait of the god enthroned that appears subsequently in the wall paintings of the garden.³⁷ The water spewing forth from the bird would then operate literally and symbolically as a vehicle for Eros’ influence on the garden as well as on Hysmine, who soon after washes her hands in the fountain and fills a drinking vessel from its spouts (I.8.1–2). This interpretation

31 Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 180 n. 16.

32 Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 38–39, 146–48.

33 See Jeffreys 2011: 188 n. 39; Magdalino 1992: 199 n. 16; for the opposing view see Agapitos 1990: 257–73, at 270 n. 54.

34 Cf. the chariot in which Prodomos encouraged Manuel to ride with the personified virtues; see Ševčenko 2006: 339.

35 Dolezal and Mavroudi 2002, fig. 1.

36 See Melfos 2008: 388, 395–97; Sodini 2002: 131–33, 137–38; Pensabene and Bruno 1998: 5 nos. 1–4; Gnoli 1988: 87–90, 162–65, 184, figs. 14, 38, 118, 137, 181–83. See also the Corsi Collection of Decorative Stones, Oxford University: www.oum.ox.ac.uk/corsi/stones/view/565 (accessed September 21, 2016).

37 Nilsson 2016; I thank Térèse Nilsson for making this article available to me in advance of its publication.

may account also for Hysmine's unusually forward behavior immediately after she washes her hands and fills her pitcher. As if possessed by Eros, she makes amorous advances on Hysminias in a manner that is entirely uncharacteristic of a chaste maiden and is inconsistent with Hysmine's comportment throughout the rest of the novel.

9. The fountain in an illustration from a late eleventh- or early twelfth-century manuscript of *Barlaam and Joasaph* (MS. Athos, Iveron 463, f. 100r) is constructed of an eagle with spread wings standing on a column over a round basin, providing a close parallel to the fountain in Sosthenes' garden.³⁸ In another of the Komnenian romances, Niketas Eugenianos' *Drosilla and Charikles*, the protagonists meet in a garden that is graced by a similar fountain with a sculpture of an eagle at its top.³⁹
10. The pastoral scene composed of the goat and goatherd echoes that depicted in the sixth-century Great Palace mosaic in Constantinople, which represents a goatherd milking his goat and using a similar rustic, wooden vessel to collect the milk.⁴⁰
11. Examples of fountains with frolicking animals and birds are found in middle Byzantine manuscript illuminations, especially at the top of frames for Canon Tables and headpieces.⁴¹
12. Makrembolites' reference to Hephaistos, the Greco-Roman god of the forge, is appropriate given that the fountain sculpture was fabricated from bronze and gold. Hephaistos was also said to have fabricated automata.⁴² Makrembolites' mention of the renowned craftsman Daedalus suggests the life-likeness of the statues, a quality for which Daedalus' work was celebrated.⁴³
13. The reference to singing birds indicates that the fountain is an automaton. Automata with singing birds are documented at the imperial palace in Constantinople during the reigns of Theophilos (r.829–842) and Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos (r.913–959), and they likely drew from the late antique tradition of mechanical devices designed, for instance, by the first-century CE engineer, Heron of Alexandria.⁴⁴
14. When wet, the marble would have appeared more brilliant and saturated in color, an effect enhanced when sunlight refracted through the water. The play of light would have also contributed to the dynamic effects that Makrembolites extols here and below.
15. "Island marble" may refer to Prokonnesian marble (from the island of Prokonnesos in the Sea of Marmara off the coast of Constantinople), which was a common construction material in Byzantine luxury buildings. It is a white marble characterized by dark – to pale – gray striations.⁴⁵

38 Pelekanides 1975: 79, fig. 106.

39 Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 354, I.97–101.

40 See Jobst *et al.* 1997: 51, fig. 40; 66, fig. 72; on pastoral themes and models in Makrembolites' novel see Burton 2006: 571–77, esp. discussion of the fountain and its pastoral allusions: 572–74.

41 See Pelekanides 1975: 140–41, figs. 268–71; 150–51, figs. 272–73; 268–69, figs. 416–17.

42 *Iliad* 18.373–77, 417–21.

43 See Trilling 1997: 222–23.

44 See Littlewood 1997; Trilling 1997; Brett 1954.

45 Sodini 2002: 132–35; Gnoli 1988: 184, 263–64. See also the Corsi Collection of Decorative Stones, Oxford University: www.oum.ox.ac.uk/corsi/stones/view/4 (accessed 21 September 2016).

16. Makrembolites seems to suggest the movement of the water created the illusion that the dark striations were like brushstrokes in the process of being painted onto its surface.
17. This stone is likely the so-called *portasanta* marble, a limestone breccia quarried near Chora on the Island of Chios. *Portasanta* is characterized by a hue ranging from deep red to orange to pale pink with black and/or white fleck inclusions or veining in red or white.⁴⁶
18. The author may refer to *rosso antico* (Cape Taenarian marble), which was quarried at Akra Tainaron in Lakonia (Peloponnese, Greece). This fine-grained calcite marble has a rusty red hue with fine black veining.⁴⁷ Alternatively, he may have in mind *porfido serpentino antico*, also known as *serpentino* or green porphyry, which was quarried at Krokees (Levetsova) also in Lakonia.⁴⁸
19. Makrembolites' emphasis on the way the marble pieces fit together may refer to simple marble paneling or perhaps to a more complex *opus sectile* design.
20. The structure and decoration of the fountain echoes that which Basil I (r.867–886) constructed as part of the Mesokepion in the Great Palace in Constantinople. As described by his grandson, Constantine VII, in the *Vita Basilii*: ἡ δὲ [Φιάλη] πρὸς βορρᾶν ἐκ τοῦ Σαγαρίου λεγομένου λίθου. . . ὕπερθεν δὲ κατὰ τὴν περιτρέχουσαν στεφάνην τῆ φιάλης ἐκ χαλκοῦ τῶ τεχνίτη διετυπώθησαν ἀλεκτρυόνες τράγοι τε καὶ κριοί, διὰ τινων συρίγγων καὶ αὐτοὶ κρουνοὺς ὕδάτων ἐξερευγόμενοι καὶ οἷον ἐξεμοῦντες κατὰ τὸ τῆς φιάλης ὑποκείμενον ἔδαφος (“The northern basin has been fashioned from the stone called Sagarios . . . Above, along the entablature that runs around the basin, the artist has fashioned roosters, goats, and rams out of bronze; these, too, emit, streams of water through pipes, vomiting them forth, as it were, toward the basin’s base”).⁴⁹ The resonance between the descriptions of the actual fountain at the Mesokepion and the fictional water works in *Hysmine and Hysminias* suggests that Makrembolites based his imagined fountain to some degree on actual water features found in elite spaces of middle Byzantine Constantinople.⁵⁰
21. Also known as *fior di pesco*, it was quarried near Eritrea in Euboea (Greece), about 20 kilometers south of the town of Chalcis (Chalkida). It shows diffuse veining in irregular patterns in colors ranging from pink to brown against a white ground.⁵¹

46 Sodini 2002: 131; Pensabene and Bruno 1998: 7 nos. 21–24; Gnoli 1988: 172–73, 184–5, figs. 129–30. See also the Corsi Collection of Decorative Stones, Oxford University: www.oum.ox.ac.uk/corsi/stones/view/87 (accessed May 17, 2016).

47 Pensabene and Bruno 1998: 6 nos. 19–20. See also the Corsi Collection of Decorative Stones, Oxford University: www.oum.ox.ac.uk/corsi/stones/view/61 (accessed May 17, 2016).

48 As suggested by Gnoli 1988: 184–85; see Pensabene and Bruno 1998: 6 nos. 13–16. See also the Corsi Collection of Decorative Stones, Oxford University: www.oum.ox.ac.uk/corsi/stones/view/797 (accessed September 21, 2016).

49 *Vita Basilii*, ed. and transl. I. Ševčenko, CFHB 42, p. 278, par. 85. 15–22.

50 For a discussion of the Mesokepion, Basil I’s fountain, and its connection to other fountains in Byzantine art, literature, and reality see Dolezal and Mavroudi 2002: 121–23; H. Maguire 2000: 258–59.

51 Pensabene and Bruno 1998: 5 nos. 9–10; Gnoli 1988: 184–86, fig. 127.

22. This is a gleaming-white, fine-grain calcite marble quarried at Mount Pentelikon near Athens.⁵²
23. Cf. Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 185–90.
24. In a subsequent section (II.6.1), the figure is identified as Sophrosyne (Σωφροσύνη), the personification of Chastity. Roilos identifies the mixing of fire and water in the gems of Sophrosyne’s necklace to reflect the larger theme of the reconciliation of opposites, which he understands to be a core concept of the novel as a whole. It is through the modulation of erotic desire (Eros) with Temperance that the protagonists are ultimately able to gain their union at the story’s end.⁵³
25. The effect of brightly colored stones outlined by pearls is illustrated by the crowns of John II Komnenos (r.1118–43) and his family in the imperial mosaics at Hagia Sophia.⁵⁴
26. Ps. 17 (18): 12–13.
27. Jeffreys explains the humor of Hysminias’ exclamation; in the Psalm, “Hail and coals of fire” refers to God’s wrathful power.⁵⁵
28. White skin is a celebrated aspect of feminine beauty in middle Byzantine sources. For instance, Anna Komnene describes her mother’s hand “was ivory turned by some craftsman into the form of fingers and hand” (καὶ εἶπες ἄν ἐλέφαντα ἐκτετορεῦσθαι παρὰ τεχνίτου τινὸς εἰς δακτύλων καὶ χειρῶν διάθεσιν).⁵⁶
29. This gesture is a standard aspect of the iconography of Phronesis (Φρόνησις) or Prudence in Byzantine art.⁵⁷
30. Makrembolites breaks from the generic hyperbole that usually characterizes Byzantine authors’ descriptions of artists’ skill. Although the wall painting is initially described as the work “of a skilled painter” (II.1.2), here Makrembolites is critical of the artist’s craft and demonstrates his capacity for discernment of variations in artistic quality. This observation does not detract from his initial estimation, however, as subsequently we are told that the less finished quality of this part of the figure was intentional, serving as a means for the artist to express the idea that “Prudence is unadorned except for her head” (II.6.3).
31. She personifies Ischus (Ἴσχυς) or Fortitude. A personification identified by the same name appears in the scenes of David defending his flock from wild beasts in the tenth-century Paris Psalter (Paris, BnF, graecus 139, f. 2v), but that figure is not dressed in military attire.⁵⁸
32. The reference to “Ares’ Pen” contributes to the novel’s ongoing concern with the distinct nature of different art forms. Ares is a master of war and expresses himself with

52 Gnoli 1988: 184, 263. See also the Corsi Collection of Decorative Stones, Oxford University: www.oum.ox.ac.uk/corsi/stones/view/3 (accessed December 2020).

53 See Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 173–74, 182–83, 188–89; see also Alexiou 2002.

54 See Evans in Evans and Wixom 1997: 187.

55 Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 185 n.28.

56 Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, 3.3.4, ed. Reinsch, p. 94, transl. Sewter, 110–11.

57 See Ševčenko 2006: 338–40.

58 See Buchthal 1968: 17, fig. 2.

- his sword much as a poet displays his skill with a pen. Here, the author implicitly contrasts Ares with Hermes, the god of rhetoric, whose tools included the stylus.⁵⁹
33. The figure is Sophrosyne, the personification of Chastity.
 34. The figure is Themis (Θέμις), the personification of Justice.
 35. Makrembolites' description of the garment as rendered in "red but with a touch of white" may indicate the use of highlights to model the figure's form under the garment: at the places where the figure's body extends forward and touches the red cloth, the artist would have indicated the reflection of light off the raised surface by applying white highlights.
 36. The scales are common attributes of Justice in Byzantine art. For instance, the personification of Justice accompanying Nikephoros III Botaneiates (r.1078–81) holds a pair (MS. Paris, BnF, Coislin 79, f. 2r).⁶⁰
 37. Hysminias' and Kratisthenes' attention to the inscriptions may parallel Middle Byzantine viewers' interest in epigrams, which commonly accompanied twelfth-century works of art.⁶¹
 38. Phronesis (Φρόνησις), the personification of Prudence appears in several works of twelfth-century Byzantine art. She is one of twelve personifications of the virtues depicted in two gospel books associated with the Komnenian courtly elite: Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, Felton 710–5, f. 4r;⁶² and Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, gr. 540 [coll. 557], f. 4v. Each figure in the gospel books shows a similar gesture, pointing with an extended finger toward her head.⁶³ Phronesis also appears on the well-known silver censer now in the Treasury of San Marco, where she is depicted in the company of Courage (Andreia).⁶⁴
 39. The depiction of this personification is unusual, but in keeping with the erotic interests of the novel. The term used by Makrembolites is Sophrosyne (Σωφροσύνη), which Jeffreys translates as "Chastity," an interpretation consistent with the figure's struggle to maintain her modesty.⁶⁵ Yet the iconography described by Makrembolites does not parallel other middle Byzantine depictions of this virtue, which present her instead in a fashion akin to Phronesis (Prudence), attired in conventional garments, posed frontally in a relaxed stance, with her hand raised and her finger pointed toward her mouth.⁶⁶ In scholarship on the depiction of Sophrosyne in the Komnenian

59 See Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 186, n. 31; Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 197.

60 For discussion of the iconography of Justice in twelfth-century Byzantine art and literature see Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 154 and 166 n. 204.

61 Regarding epigrams on works of middle Byzantine art see Maguire, *Image and Imagination*; Nunn, "Encheirion," 73–102; see also F. Spingou, Introduction, II.4.

62 See Manion 2005: 57, 60–61, pl. 7.

63 For discussion of the type see Ševčenko 2006: 338–40.

64 Regarding connections between the iconography of the censer and the Komnenian romances see Walker 2011; Trahoulia 2008.

65 Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 187.

66 For example, see Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, MS Felton 710-5, f. 4r.; see Manion 2005: 57, 61, pl. 7.

gospel books, the word is translated variously as “Temperance,”⁶⁷ “Thoughtfulness,”⁶⁸ or “Prudence,”⁶⁹ all terms more in keeping with the concept conveyed by the iconography found in sacred manuscripts.

40. Here Hysminias compares the personification to Hysmine. Presumably the eroticized description of Sophrosyne’s body, as well as her modesty, brought to mind his beloved.
41. Elsewhere in the novel, however, Hysmine is compared directly to a rose.⁷⁰
42. Personifications of Justice are prevalent in Komnenian era art and appear commonly in conjunction with the emperor, but in these other instances she is depicted without scales and is inscribed Dikaiosyne (Δικαιοσύνη) – not Themis. See the Canon Tables of the twelfth-century gospel book Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, gr. 540 [coll. 557], f. 6v,⁷¹ as well as the imperial portraits of Nikephoros III Botaneiates (r.1078–1081) in the *Eklogai* of John Chrysostom (Paris, BnF, Coislin 79, f. 2r)⁷² and the Gospels of John II Komnenos (r.1118–1143) (Vatican, BAV, Urb. gr. 2, f. 19v).⁷³
43. Kroisos (Croesus), the legendary king of Lydia, was renowned for his wealth. Mykenai (Mycenae) was a center of ancient Greek culture and the domain of Agamemnon (brother of Helen’s husband, Menelaus), who led the Greek army against Troy.⁷⁴
44. The depiction of Eros enthroned borrows directly from Byzantine imperial iconography.⁷⁵
45. Sophocles, *Ajax*, 554b.⁷⁶ Ajax utters these words to his son, Eurysaces, as he remarks on the child’s innocence regarding the horrors of war. In the subsequent line, Ajax tells Eurysaces that once he matures and comes to understand the joys and pains of life, he must prove his worthiness in battle. Within the context of Makrembolites’ narrative, Hysminias here recognizes his own loss of innocence at the sight of Eros, although his coming of age is of a sexual – not militaristic – nature. Shortly after this episode, Hysminias begins to reach maturity by realizing his desire for Hysmine and to demonstrate his worthiness by acting upon these feelings.
46. Eros is described as more mature and commanding than is typically the case, and more heavily armed; usually his attributes include only his bow and arrows.
47. Scholars have debated the description of Eros’ feet, specifically whether they were replaced by or conjoined with wings, an argument that Roilos has resolved. He understands Makrembolites to describe Eros’ feet as combined with wings in the

67 Ševčenko 2006: 336; Buchthal 1961: 4.

68 Manion 2005: 61; Buchthal 1961: 4.

69 Jeffreys 2005: 316.

70 See Nilsson 2001: 114–17.

71 See Furlan 1979: 13–14 n. 3; Buchthal 1961: 4.

72 See Omont 1929: pl. LXIII.

73 See Evans 1997: 209, cat. 144.

74 See Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 188 n. 39.

75 On this image and its imperial associations in the Komnenian era see Magdalino 1992; for further discussion on the political significance of Eros and his literary and visual representation in the Komnenian era see Christoforatu 2001: 321–59.

76 As noted by Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 188 n. 41.

- fashion that Kairos, the personification of Time, is often shown.⁷⁷ Roilos further interprets this conflation to reflect Makrembolites' effort to evoke the notion of Eros' all-encompassing powers.⁷⁸
48. As leader of the gods, Zeus is usually depicted as a mature and powerful figure. Comparison of Eros to Zeus is atypical, emphasizing the unusually mature, commanding character of Eros in the wall painting.
 49. Aphrodite's girdle was a magical belt that made the wearer irresistible.⁷⁹
 50. The Graces were the embodiment of beauty, poise, and pleasure, and their garden abode was a place of pure enjoyment.
 51. Thetis was a nereid and mother of the hero Achilles. She married the mortal king Peleus, but they neglected to invite Eris (Discord) to their wedding. In revenge, the slighted goddess appeared at the feast and produced the golden apple that eventually instigated the Trojan War. Hysminias extols Eros' beauty by claiming that he would have garnered the prize had he been present for Paris' judgment.⁸⁰
 52. An aphorism found in the writings of the Church Fathers, but with Aristotelian roots.⁸¹
 53. The Sphinx was the mythical beast that devoured any man who could not solve her riddle. Oedipus famously bested her.⁸²
 54. The Pythian was the oracle of Apollo at Delphi, who sat atop the tripod when she delivered the prophecies of the god.
 55. Although Hysminias boasts of his interpretive skills in hyperbolic terms, he is quickly shown to be in error and turns to Kratisthenes for guidance in the correct interpretation of the wall painting. In this respect he serves as an example to the reader, cautioning against too hasty a decipherment of visual or verbal symbols. Ultimately he comes to realize that Eros and the Virtues are not in opposition or combat, but must instead be reconciled, an idea to which Makrembolites alludes at the beginning of the ekphrasis, in the description of Sophrosyne's jewel that mixes fire (Eros) and water (Prudence). Roilos sees this series of statements as marking a key stage in the initiation of Hysminias in the mysteries of both love and allegorical interpretation.⁸³
 56. This list demonstrates Eros' total power over all of humankind, regardless of gender, age, or social status.
 57. The personifications' larger than normal size sets them apart from the human women depicted in the scene and alerts the viewer to their exceptional status. A similar strategy is found in the depiction of female personifications in the tenth-century Paris

77 See also N. Zagklas, II.3.4 in this volume.

78 See Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 163–65.

79 See Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 188 n. 43.

80 See Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 188 n. 44.

81 See Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 189 n. 45; Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 160 n. 194; Nilsson 2001: 104–5, 130–31.

82 See Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 189 n. 47; Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 147–48.

83 Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 147–48.

- Psalter (Paris, BnF, gr. 139), which are consistently rendered in a scale larger than the human figures in each scene.⁸⁴
58. Iapetus is one of the titans; the offspring of Gaia (Earth) and Ouranos (Heavens).⁸⁵
 59. These women, personifications of Day and Night, contribute to the articulation of the totality of Eros' power, encompassing not only all people, but all time.⁸⁶ In the tenth-century Paris Psalter (Paris, BnF, gr. 139, ff. 419v and 155v), the personification of Night is depicted with darkened skin and garments, bespeaking an iconography similar to that described by Makrembolites.⁸⁷
 60. Amphitrite was the goddess of the sea, wife of Poseidon; her "footless creatures" are the animals of the ocean.⁸⁸
 61. Cf. Jeffreys 2012: 201–08.
 62. Subsequently, an inscription reveals these images to be depictions of the seasons. Although Makrembolites does not identify the figures by name, their iconography conforms to medieval conventions for the labors of the months.⁸⁹
 63. The first figure represents March, which is the month that begins the Orthodox calendar.⁹⁰ The mid-twelfth-century gospel book, Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, graecus 540 [coll. 537], f. 3v, also depicts March as a soldier equipped with a helmet, armor, shield, spear, and cape.⁹¹
 64. Makrembolites characterizes life-likeness, specifically the ability to depict figures in motion, as a mark of artistic excellence, thereby noting a possible criterion for twelfth-century Byzantine aesthetic standards.
 65. This figure personifies April and employs a pastoral tradition of iconography. The mid twelfth-century gospel book, Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, gr. 540 [coll. 537], f. 3v, depicts April instead as a shepherd with a sheep on his shoulders,⁹² a motif commonly identified as a symbol of Christ as the Good Shepherd. Makrembolites' avoidance of this Christological sign may indicate an intention to preclude a Christian allegorical reading for the program.
 66. This figure resembles the goatherd in the Great Palace mosaic in Constantinople, who is similarly bearded, has bare, muscular arms and legs, and is depicted with chest hair.⁹³

84 See Buchthal 1968: esp. figs. 3, 5, 6.

85 See Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 189 n. 51.

86 See Nilsson 2001: 105.

87 Omont 1929: color pl. XIII.

88 See Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 189 n. 53.

89 On the labors of the months in Byzantine literature and iconography, and discussion of the passage in *Hysmine and Hysminias* within this tradition see Jeffreys 2005: esp. 316–19; Nilsson 2001: 126–31; Polyakova 1971.

90 Alexiou 2002: 125.

91 See Manion 2005: 29, fig. 2; see also Jeffreys 2005: 312.

92 See Manion 2005: 29, 32, fig. 2.

93 See Jobst *et al.* 1997: 51, fig. 40; 66, fig. 72.

67. This pastoral scene echoes depictions of the seasons in an eleventh-century manuscript of the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos (MS. Paris, BnF, Graecus 533, f. 34v), which shows a shepherd sitting on a rock near his flock and playing a flute.⁹⁴
68. The figure is the personification of May. The mid twelfth-century gospel book, Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, gr. 540 [coll. 537], f. 3v,⁹⁵ depicts May in similar terms as a stylishly dressed man holding blossoms in both hands.
69. A comparable image of a wealthy, elegant man enjoying the pleasures of nature is found in an eleventh-century manuscript of the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos (MS. Paris, BnF, Graecus 533, f. 34v).⁹⁶
70. Presumably Makrembolites means that the figure wears a straw hat.
71. The figure represents June. The mid twelfth-century gospel book, MS. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 540 [coll. 537], f. 4r,⁹⁷ depicts for this month a comparable figure with a sickle.
72. Middle Byzantine illustrations of peasants at work in the fields portray laborers with similar clothing and physical characteristics. For example, see the scene of men harvesting in an eleventh-century *menologion* (MS. Athos, Moni Esphigmenou 14, f. 386v).⁹⁸
73. The figure personifies July. The mid twelfth-century gospel book, MS. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 540 [coll. 537], f. 4r,⁹⁹ depicts the personification of this month in similar terms.
74. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 546.¹⁰⁰
75. Fieldworkers depicted in Byzantine agricultural scenes commonly are shown with their tunics drawn up around their loins, as in an eleventh-century *menologion* (MS. Athos, Esphigmenou 14, f. 386v).¹⁰¹
76. He represents August. The mid twelfth-century gospel book, MS. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 540 [coll. 537], f. 4r,¹⁰² shows an analogous figure, who raises a vessel to drink and is clothed in a loose, towel-like garment that stretches over his right shoulder. The figure carries over his left shoulder another object, possibly a fan.
77. Depictions of the Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia typically show figures with small towels gathered around their waists as they huddle outside the bath, presenting an image similar to that described here.¹⁰³

94 See Omont 1929: pl. CIV.

95 See Manion 2005: 29, fig. 2.

96 See Omont 1929: pl. CIV.

97 See Manion 2005: 29, fig. 3.

98 See Pelekanidis 1975: 225, pl. 347.

99 See Manion 2005: 29, fig. 3.

100 As cited in Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 203 n. 110.

101 See Pelekanidis 1975: 225, pl. 347.

102 See Manion 2005: 29, fig. 3.

103 See Goldschmidt and Weitzmann 1930–34: 2, pl. III, figs. 9–10.

78. The personification is September. The twelfth-century gospel book MS. Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, Felton 710–5, f. 3r¹⁰⁴ also depicts September according to the theme of the grape harvest, but in different terms, with a laborer carrying a basket on his back.
79. This figure represents October. The twelfth-century gospel book MS. Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, Felton 710–5, f. 3r¹⁰⁵ also represents October with the theme of bird-catching, but in different terms, with a figure holding a decoy in his left hand and a stick over his right shoulder.
80. This technique for catching birds is depicted in at least two middle Byzantine manuscripts: an eleventh-century copy of the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos (MS. Paris, BnF, Graecus 533, f. 34v),¹⁰⁶ and a twelfth-century copy of the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos (MS. Athos, Moni Panteleimonos 6, f. 37v).¹⁰⁷
81. Together, this and the next figure represent December.
82. This reference to “the farmer’s pen” recalls earlier mention of “Ares’ pen” (par. II.3.3). Here the goad is the means by which the farmer makes his impact in the world and realizes his art.
83. A scene of a farmer operating an ox plough is found in an eleventh-century menologion (MS. Athos, Moni Esphigmenou 14, f. 386v).¹⁰⁸
84. A similar figure scattering corn illustrates the personification of December in the twelfth-century gospel book MS. Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, Felton 710–5, f. 3v.¹⁰⁹
85. This figure represents January.
86. With respect to the broader theme in *Hysmine and Hysminias* of competition (and equation) between the verbal and visual arts (see n. 25), it is noteworthy that Makrembolites here implies the superiority of rhetoric because of its ability to represent sound.
87. He personifies February. A similar figure represents February in the twelfth-century gospel book MS. Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, MS Felton 710–15, f. 3v.¹¹⁰
88. I.e. March.
89. I.e. April.
90. I.e. May.
91. I.e. June.
92. I.e. July.

104 See Manion 2005: 32–33, 53, 55, pl. 5.

105 See Manion 2005: 32–33, 53, 55, pl. 5.

106 See Omont 1929: pl. CIV.

107 See Pelekandidis 1975: 175, pl. 300.

108 See Pelekanidis 1975: 225, pl. 347.

109 See Manion 2005: 32–33, 56, 58, pl. 6.

110 See Manion 2005: 32–33, 56, 58, pl. 6.

93. Sirius, the so-called Dog Star, rises in the morning during the hot season from late July to early September. Ancient astronomers believed the star caused this period of intense weather.
94. I.e. August.
95. I.e. September.
96. I.e. October.
97. I.e. November. In this month, the constellation of stars known as the Pleiades reaches its greatest visibility.
98. I.e. December.
99. I.e. January.
100. I.e. February.
101. “Hermes’ javelin” is a metaphor for the rhetorical arts, that is to say, for the ability to make a persuasive verbal argument. Here Makrembolites accords such power to the artist, who convinces by means of the images he creates with his brush. It continues the theme – evinced previously by “Ares’ pen” (par. II.3.3) and the “farmer’s pen” (par. IV.13.3) – of assigning incongruous tools to the user. The javelin would be more typically associated with a warrior, such as Ares.¹¹¹
102. Hysminias achieves his triumph over Kratisthenes through his superior reading of the painting.¹¹²
103. The reference to Hysminias’ winged feet evokes the painting of Eros described earlier in the romance (II.7.3), in which the god is described as having winged feet.

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I.3.12 Manganeios Prodromos (c.1100-after c.1162)

To the Sebastokratorissa, On Her Tent Which Has Various Animals Depicted on It

MICHAEL JEFFREYS

Ed.: E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems*, forthcoming no. 145; previous edition: J. C. Anderson and M. Jeffreys, "The Decoration of the Sebastokratorissa's Tent," *Byzantion* 64 (1994), 8–18

MS.: Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Graecus O 94 sup. (s. XV), ff. 27v–28v

Translation: The translation below will also appear in E. and M. Jeffreys, Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems*, as above; other translations: J. C. Anderson and M. Jeffreys, as above

Significance

This is an example of an *ekphrasis* that blends a laudatory description of an object and a person, in this case an elaborately decorated tent and its owner, a sister-in-law of the emperor Manuel. It is of particular interest since descriptions of Byzantine tents are rare. It is also an extreme example of the loss of pagan significance in the use of ancient Greek religion in the twelfth century: a woman known for her Christian piety is directly equated with ancient goddesses.

The Author

See E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, 1.3.15 in this volume.

Text and Context

This poem describes a tent, using its mythological decoration to imagine the beauty of its owner, the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene. This is one of the four poems not found in the manuscript Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus XI. 22, that contains the collection of Manganeios' poems, but preserved in Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Graecus O 94 sup., which is written less accurately than Manganeios' main manuscript.

Text

Εἰς τὴν σεβαστοκρατόρισσαν, ἐπὶ τῇ σκηνῇ αὐτῆς ζῶα διάφορα ἐχούση ἐντετυπωμένα

Δέσποινα, μοῦσα τῶν μουσῶν, ἀκρόπολις τοῦ κάλλους,
 τὰ πρόθυρά σου τῆς σκηνῆς πεπλήρωνται χαρίτων.
 ἔρωτες πλήττουσιν χορδὰς, σιγῇ κιθαρωδοῦσιν,
 δοκοῦσι παίζειν σάτυροι, σκιρτῶσιν ἵπποκράται,
 5 αἱ μοῦσαι συγχορεύουσι, πηδῶσι νηρηίδες
 ὄρνιθες ὑπερίπτανται, κυνηγετοῦσιν ἄλλοι,
 τῆς Ἰνδικῆς τὰ χρύσεια πτηνὰ συναναπτάντα.
 ὁ χρυσοπτέρυξ ψιττακός, τοῦ κάλλους ὁ λυχνίτης,
 πρὸς τὴν χρυσεάν σμάραγδον ἐρίζει τῶν ταῶνων,
 10 καὶ πρὸς τοὺς γαύρους ὄρνιθας καὶ τῶν πετρῶν τὸν κύκλον
 τὴν τοῦ χρυσοῦ χλωρότητα τὴν ἐν τοῖς μεταφρένοις
 συναντιπαρατίθησι καὶ συμπαραδεικνύει.
 ἀλώπεκες αἱ πονηραὶ τοὺς δόλους ἐκλιποῦσαι
 τῇ λύρᾳ προσανέχουσιν, ὄρχοῦνται πρὸς κιθάραν.
 15 τίς οὖν εἰς τὸ προτείχισμα καὶ τὴν αὐλαίαν ταύτην
 οὐκ ἀπιδῶν καταπλαγῆ καὶ μᾶλλον ἀπορήσει;
 ἂν γὰρ εἰς τὸ προσκῆνιον αἱ χάριτες τοσαῦται,
 πόσον λοιπὸν ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ τῆς χάριτος τὸ θαῦμα,
 τῆς ἀπολύτως καὶ μιᾶς καὶ πρώτης τῶν Χαρίτων;
 20 ἔρωτες ἔξω παίζουσιν, ἔρωτες ἔνδον ἄλλοι,
 αὐχένας ὑποκλίνουσι καὶ γόνυ τῇ δεσποίνῃ,
 ἐπὶ τὸ δουλικώτερον ὑποσχηματισθέντες.
 καὶ χάρις σου ταῖς χάρισι καὶ ταῖς ὑπεροχαῖς σου
 καὶ δόξα ταῖς λαμπρότησι καὶ τοῖς κοσμήμασί σου·
 25 ἔρωτες ἐρώτων πέφηνας, χάρις χαρίτων ἔφυς,
 σειρὴν σειρήνων γέγονας, μοῦσα μουσῶν ἐφάνης·
 οὐκ ἔχεις ἀντεξέτασιν μετὰ θνητῶν γυναιῶν.
 μετὰ μουσῶν σε προσκυνῶ, τιμῶ μετὰ σειρήνων,
 μετὰ Χαρίτων σέβομαι, ταῖς Ὠραῖς σε συνάπτω,
 30 μεθ' Ἡρας, μετὰ Θέτιδος, μετὰ τῶν οὐρανίων·
 ἔρρωσο, Χάρις καὶ Σειρὴν καὶ Μοῦσα Καλλιόπη.

Translation

To the Sebastokratorissa, on her tent which has various animals depicted on it¹

My lady, Muse of Muses, akropolis of beauty,
 the porch² of your tent is filled with delights.
 Erotes are plucking strings and quietly strumming the kithara³
 satyrs seem to play, the horse-tamers gambol,
 5 the Muses join in the dance, the nereids are leaping,
 birds are flying above, while others are hunting
 the golden birds of India which fly together.
 The gold-feathered parrot, jewel of beauty,
 vies with the golden emerald of the peacocks,
 10 and with those proud birds and the circle of their wings
 contrasts and makes comparisons together
 of the freshness of the gold upon their backs.
 Cunning foxes, abandoning their wives,
 devote themselves to the lyre, dance to the kithara.
 15 Who then could look at this porch and curtain
 and not be amazed, in fact dumbfounded?
 For if the delights in the entrance are so great,⁴
 how great must be the marvel of delight inside the tent,
 she who is absolutely unique and first of the Graces?
 20 Erotes play outside while inside there are other Erotes
 submitting with bent necks on bended knee to their mistress,
 taking on a more servile aspect.
 And thanks be to your graces and your supremacy,
 and glory to your brilliance and the virtues that adorn you.
 25 You were born Eros of Erotes and Grace of Graces,
 you became Siren of Sirens, you proved Muse of Muses.
 You cannot be compared with mortal women.
 I revere you with the Muses, I honour you with the Sirens,
 I do reverence to you with the Graces, I link you with the Hours,
 30 With Hera, with Thetis, with the immortals;
 Greetings, Grace, Siren and Muse Kalliope.⁵

Commentary

1. Manuel Komnenos spent a good deal of his time in army camps, including the winters, in the decade around 1150.¹ The camps seem often to have housed women of the imperial family, presumably in tents like that described here. One striking episode places Eudokia, the widowed daughter of Eirene the sebastokratorissa, in a tent with the future emperor Andronikos I soon after Eirene's death, raising the intriguing possibility that it was the same tent. Several illustrations of middle Byzantine tents survive, including some which seem to have comparable decorations, while a similar decorated tent is part of the dowry of Digenis Akritis (*Digenis Akritis*, G 4.704–23, E 992–6).²
2. Porch: It is uncertain what architectural shape is referred to. The tent was probably of regular ground-plan, perhaps rectangular or circular. The porch was probably a raised end or corner, with a curtain (v. 15) for privacy, both decorated in the manner described.
3. Kithara: the ancient Greek term for the lyre, a stringed instrument that was plucked; it is not clear what form such instruments had in the Byzantine period.
4. Horse-tamers: ἵπποκράται does not appear in the *TLG*; in *LBG* the sole reference is to this text. It is possible that Manganeios had in mind ἵπποκάμποι, sea monsters, with a horse's body and a fish's tail.

The decorative programme in vv. 3–14 includes many of the animals and supernatural figures found frequently in Manganeios Prodomos' poetry. The overall appearance of the program is hard to work out: the relationship between the different groups is not specified, apart from the birds flying above dancing supernatural figures at v. 6. The only obvious comparators to the tent and its decoration, though their scale is much smaller, are a number of ivory caskets dated to the eleventh and twelfth century whose decoration is populated with the same animals and figures described here. Single or multiple figures are carved on separate plaques, which are set on the boxes with broad frames which prevent them forming a unified scene.³

5. The description of the tent at vv. 17–31 is elegantly transposed into a eulogy of the tent's beautiful owner, the sebastokratorissa. Many other poems of Manganeios addressed to her repeat the same imagery, likening her to beautiful mythical females like those listed here.

1 See Jeffreys 2000.

2 See Anderson and Jeffreys 1994: 8–9, 13–15.

3 See Anderson and Jeffreys 1994: 8–9, 15–18.

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I.3.13 Theodore Balsamon (c.1130–40–after 1195)

Classicizing Imagery in the Decorative Programs of Elite Domestic Architecture: Scholion on Canon 100 of the Quinisext Council of 692

ALICIA WALKER

Ed.: Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, vol. 2, 545–46

MS.:¹ Trebizond, Manuscript of 1311 (now lost)²

Other Translations: Mango, *Art*, 234 (partial)

Significance

The art historical interest of this passage is twofold. On the one hand, Balsamon offers a rare, first-hand account of secular architectural decoration, a form of Byzantine art that is almost completely absent in the archaeological record.³ On the other hand, he offers an intriguing statement regarding the power of sight and the importance of visual culture in the Byzantine spiritual economy, affirming and expanding upon the concerns expressed in the original seventh-century Canon.

The Author

Theodore Balsamon was born to a prominent Constantinopolitan family and entered the clergy as a young man. He became a high-ranking member of the church administration and held the office of *nomophylax* (“guardian of the law,” a post occupied in the twelfth century by influential canonists who mediated between the ecclesiastical and state hierarchy) and later *chartophylax* (first secretary to the patriarch).⁴ He served as *hegoumenos* of the Hodegon Monastery in Constantinople.⁵ Passed over by Isaac II Angelos for the patriarchate of Constantinople, the zenith of Balsamon’s ecclesiastical career was realized instead in his appointment as titular patriarch of Antioch (1185–91). Balsamon is best known today for his work as a canonist. He wrote important commentaries on earlier church rulings, which aimed at assessing and asserting the relevance of ancient ecclesiastical laws in his own day.⁶

1 Not consulted.

2 For further discussion of the production process for Rhalles’ and Potles’ edition based on this manuscript see N. Leidholm, I.1.2 in this volume.

3 Ousterhout 1997: 193–99, esp. 197–98.

4 A. Kazhdan, “Nomophylax,” *ODB* 3: 1491–92; R. J. Macrides, “Chartophylax,” *ODB* 1: 415–16; Gallagher 2002: 154; on Balsamon’s atypical interpretation of the office of *chartophylax* see Hussey 1986: 317.

5 Spingou 2016: 188–90.

6 Cf. N. Leidholm, I.1.2 in this volume. Gallagher 2002, 153–55; Troianos 2012: 180–81; Petkoff 2013: 258–59.

Text and Context

Balsamon's commentary on the Quinisext Council (691–92) was part of his larger exegesis on ecclesiastical law, which he probably began in the late 1170s.⁷ The original Canon 100 from the Council in Trullo addressed decorations that were improper for Christian homes. It was one of several rules that censured habits of everyday life that contravened Orthodox Christian values.⁸ In addition, Canon 100 was one of several rulings that clarified the nature of orthodox imagery.⁹ But while other Canons focused on the correct way to render Christian representations, Canon 100 considered the threat of corrupting images, which could assault the mind and soul through the eyes, introducing impure thoughts and inciting shameful acts.¹⁰ The implication is that Canon 100 censured erotic imagery that appeared in the decorations of peoples' homes.¹¹

As Peter Petkoff has noted, Balsamon distinguished Canon Law from Civic Law on the grounds that while Civic Law was aimed at punishing offenders, Canon Law was intended to purify and heal those who have gone astray, bringing them back into communion with the Church.¹² It is with the intent of guarding the eyes from impurity and maintaining the cleanliness of mind and soul that Balsamon elaborates on Canon 100. He expands on the original rule by implicating the faculty of sight in the Fall of Adam and Eve. Evoking Gen. 3, Balsamon emphasizes that Adam's betrayal began with his beholding a ripe and pleasing apple, the sight of which stimulated his desire to eat it.¹³ Balsamon then explains the context of the original Canon and the behaviors that prompted it, elaborating on the content of that ruling by specifying that it pertains to erotic imagery. He states that these threatening representations were inspired by the lustful cravings of the people responsible for their creation, and that gazing upon them fed carnal desires. In both the original ruling and Balsamon's commentary on it, it is clear that a person's moral quality is judged from the decoration of their home.¹⁴ Balsamon again names sight as a pathway to sin

7 Troianos 2012: 181; on the commentary see also N. Leidholm, I.1.2 in this volume.

8 *The Council in Trullo Revisited*, 180–81. In the seventh-century Canons, such rulings addressed the persistence of pagan and other popular traditions, the competition that Orthodoxy faced from a variety of heretical movements, and the irregular practices that thrived in the provinces, far from the control of the Church; see Trombley 1978.

9 Brubaker 2009: 37–55, esp. 44–47.

10 The belief that sight could lead a person to temptation and sin was prominent in the writings of the Early Church Fathers and appears elsewhere in the Quinisext Council rulings and the commentaries on them. For instance, Canon 96 forbids the elaborate arrangement of hair because those who are so coiffed could entice and thereby corrupt the people who gazed at them: Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, 533–36; *The Council in Trullo Revisited*, 177–78. On the vulnerability of the soul to seduction through sight see Webb 1997: 119–48, esp. 131–35.

11 Trombley 1978: 7–8; Browning 1989: 426; Maguire 1999: 189–205, esp. 199–200.

12 Petkoff 2013: 267, 269; on this point, also see Gallagher 2002: 158–59.

13 Gen. 3 surfaced in Balsamon's other commentaries. For instance, in analyzing Canon 70 from the Council in Trullo – which prohibits women from speaking during the liturgy – Balsamon notes that the subjugation of women to men results from God's judgment against Eve; see Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, 468–69.

14 Regarding the aristocratic *oikos* in middle Byzantine society as a symbol of an individual or family and their social standing, see Magdalino 1984: esp. 95–96. For additional examples of a person's character being judged from the decoration of his home, see the discussion of Alexios Axouch's purportedly treasonous decorative program in his suburban palace, which the historian Kinnamos interpreted as a celebration of the

because it impresses the mind with impure thoughts that in turn spur a person toward corrupt actions. In this way, he makes a strong argument for the power of images and expresses a persistent concern for distinguishing between licit and illicit representations.

In a final comment, Balsamon attests to the continuing relevance of the Canon, noting that wealthy people of his day decorated their homes with erotic scenes in the form of both paintings and sculptures. Magdalino has observed that Balsamon's writings reveal only minimal familiarity with areas of the Byzantine Empire outside of Constantinople.¹⁵ With this in mind, the canonist's reference to luxury domestic decoration of his own time can be interpreted as a reflection of practices among the social elite of the capital. His reference to the antics of erotes (ἔρωτίδια) suggests that the scenes were classicizing in character, employing themes from Greco-Roman myth in domestic ornamental programs of elite residences. Similar decorative themes are described as adorning the fictional homes of elite characters in secular literature of the middle Byzantine era.¹⁶ Balsamon's comments raise the possibility that these fictional accounts reflect actual practices of the time. The effort expended to distinguish between good and bad images – both in the original Canon 100 and in Balsamon's commentary on it – attests to the powerful effects that visual representations were believed to assert in Byzantium.

Seljuq sultan's military victories; cf. A. Walker, I.5.12 in this volume; and John Apokaukos' characterization of Constantine Doukas' construction of a "Persian" *soufa* in the episcopal palace at Nafpaktos as evidence of the latter's corruption; cf. F. Spingou and A. Walker, I.5.15 in this volume.

¹⁵ Magdalino 1991: 179–97.

¹⁶ For instance, in the twelfth-century Byzantine romance *Hysmine and Hysminias*, wall reliefs in the garden of the estate of Hysmine's father include depictions of Eros that exert great influence over the characters who view them, lending credence to Balsamon's warnings about the power of images. See Makrembolites, *Hysmine and Hysminias*, I.1.1–3, transl. Jeffreys, p. 190; cf. A. Walker, I.3.11 in this volume.

Text

[545] Πρώτη τῶν αἰσθήσεων ἡ ὄρασις ἐστὶ, καὶ ὀφείλομεν διὰ ταύτης ἐπὶ πᾶν ἀγαθὸν ὀδηγεῖσθαι· οὐ μὴν δὲ αὐτῆς κατὰ [546] τὸν προπάτορα¹ προδιδόναι τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ Θεοῦ. Εἶδε γάρ, φησι κἀκεῖνος, τὸ φυτὸν ὡς ὠραῖον, καὶ ἠπατήθη, καὶ ἔφαγε, καὶ τῷ θανάτῳ ὑπόδικος γέγονεν.² Ἐπεὶ τοίνυν τινὲς ἐρωτομανοῦντες, καὶ περὶ τὴν βιοτὴν ἀδιάφοροι,³ ἐν πίναξιν, ἢ καὶ ἐν τοίχοις, ἢ καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις τισὶν εἴδεσιν εἰκόνιζον ἐρωτίδια, ἢ καὶ τινα ἕτερα μυσάρᾳ, ὅπως τὰς σαρκικὰς αὐτῶν ἐπιθυμίας διὰ τῆς πρὸς ταῦτα ὀράσεως ἐκπεραίνωσιν, ὥρισαν οἱ ἅγιοι Πατέρες, χρησάμενοι καὶ μαρτυρίαις γραφικαῖς, σχολάσαι ταῦτα παντάπασιν, ὡς καταγοητεύοντα,⁴ ἢτοι ἀπατῶντα τὴν ὄρασιν, καὶ εἰσκρίνοντα,⁵ ἢτοι εἰσβάλλοντα, εἰς τὴν ψυχὴν πᾶν εἴ τι κακὸν, καὶ παραίτια ὄντα αἰσχρῶν καὶ ἀσέμνων τολμημάτων, καὶ διαφθειρόντων τὸ κατ' εἰκόνα Θεοῦ.⁶ Τοὺς δὲ τοιοῦτόν τι τολμήσαντας, καθ' οἷονδῆτινα τρόπον, ὑπευθύνους εἶναι ἀφορισμῷ. Σημείωσαι τοῦτο· παρὰ γὰρ οἴκοις πλουσίων τινῶν, οὐ μόνον γραφαὶ τοιαῦται, καὶ ταῦτα χρυσόπαστοι, μετὰ πάσης ἀσχημοσύνης ἐξεικονίζονται, ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ γυψίνων κατασκευασμάτων στηλογραφοῦνται ἀνθρωπόμορφα εἰκονίσματα.

Translation¹⁷

[545] Sight is the foremost of the senses, and we ought to be guided by it towards everything that is good; and not to be led by it [546] to betray God's commandments, as was the forefather.¹ For He [God] declared, "He [Adam] saw the tree in full fruit, he was deceived and ate [from it], and he came to be liable for death."² In view of the fact that certain persons who were consumed by erotic desires and were uncaring about their manner of life³ represented cupids and also other abominable things on panels and even on the walls of their houses and in other media, so that they might satisfy their carnal desires by the sight of them, the holy Fathers ordained – using indeed evidence from holy scripture – that such things should cease altogether because they [the images] "enchant,"⁴ that is they deceive the sight, and "penetrate"⁵ the soul, that is they impress on it all that is evil, and are the cause of shameful and indecent acts that corrupt that which is "in the image of God."⁶ Any persons who dare such an act in any way are liable to be excommunicated. Note this also: in the houses of some of the rich, not only are such paintings, even gilded ones indecorously represented, but human forms made of stucco are put on display as well.

¹⁷ I thank Pagona Papadopoulou for her perceptive observations and generous advice, which greatly improved the translation of this passage.

Commentary

1. I.e. Adam.
2. Balsamon paraphrases Gen. 3:6–7. In the biblical story, sight plays an important role. Eve is attracted to the apple because it is pleasing to the eye, and eating the apple opens Adam’s and Eve’s eyes to forbidden knowledge.
3. Balsamon’s reference to the choices people make in their “manner of life” reflects the overriding concern of the Canon to regulate orthodox practices in both public and private domains.
4. Balsamon is defining the verb used in the original Canon 100: καταγοητεύων.¹⁸
5. Balsamon is defining the verb used in the original Canon 100: εἰσκρίνω.¹⁹
6. Balsamon quotes Gen. 1:27, which recounts the creation of Adam and Eve, who were made “in the image of God” (κατ’ εἰκόνα Θεοῦ). His point is that lewd images and indecent acts corrupt humankind’s likeness to the divine.

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¹⁸ See *The Council in Trullo Revisited*, 181 (2).

¹⁹ See *The Council in Trullo Revisited*, 181 (1).

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I.3.14 Niketas Eugenianos (c.1110–80)

On a Depicted Maiden

NIKOS ZAGKLAS

Ed.: S. P. Lambros, “Ἐπιγράμματα ἀνέκδοτα,” *NE* 11.4 (1914), 357 no. 15

MS.: Vatican City, BAV, Urbinus Graecus 134 (s. XV), ff. 121v–122r¹

Other Translations: None

Significance

An example of an epigram for a depiction of a maiden found on an unspecified object that makes use of the *topos* of the “animated image.”

The Author

See E. Jeffreys, I.8.11.

Text and Context

The epigram was written for the image of a maiden, but without any further details regarding the nature of this representation and the circumstances of its composition. Thus, the iconography of the subject which was meant to accompany this epigram could be either religious or secular.² Eugenianos makes use of the well-known *topos* of “animated image.”³ In the very first verse the poet claims that the girl is alive, albeit she is not able to talk. Her silence is a fault of the colors, not the painter. This contrast between the vivid depiction and the lack of voice is a very popular *topos* stretching back to Antiquity and can be encountered in many epigrams composed before Eugenianos’ times.⁴ For example, in an epigram from the Greek Anthology,⁵ the painter stole the form but not the voice:⁶

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1 Stornajolo 1895: 248–55.

2 In the twelfth century there are many texts dealing with representations of Pagan art; see Nilsson 2011: 123–36.

3 Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 36–47.

4 On this issue see Gutzwiller 2002: 104–09; Kaldellis 2007: 367–72; Männlein-Robert 2007.

5 In fact, Eugenianos’ epigram is part of a group of epigrams for which the author draws his inspiration from the *Greek Anthology*; for this issue see p. 303–04.

6 Paton 1927: IV 276–77.

Ζωγράφε, τὰς μορφὰς κλέπτεις μόνον· οὐ δύνασαι δὲ
φωνὴν συλῆσαι χρώματι πειθόμενο.

Painter, you stole the form only, and cannot, trusting in your colors, capture the voice.

Moreover, in a tenth-century poem written for a depiction of Constantine Porphyrogenetos with Christ and the Mother of God, the poet, the so-called Anonymous Patrician, explicitly says: “But if you do not hear (his plea), do not blame the art, for it is beyond the capacity of painters to give soul (to inanimate objects).”⁷

In terms of metrics, the prosody of all verses is handled correctly. Three verses have the “Binnenschluß” after the fifth syllable (vv. 1, 3, and 4) and a single verse after the seventh one (v. 2).

7 ὡσπερ καταλλάττουσαν αὐτὸν προσφέρων.
<ε>ὶ δ' οὐκ ἀκούσεις, τὴν τέχνην μὴ φαυλίσσης.
ψυχοῦν γὰρ οὐ δίδωσιν αὕτη ζωγράφοις.

Ed. Vassis 2015: 334, vv. 4–6; transl. Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 169.

Text

Εἰς κόρην ἐζωγραφημένην

Ἐμψυχος ἢ παῖς· ἄν δὲ μὴ λαλεῖν ἔχη,
τὰ χρώματα σφάλλουσιν, οὐχ ὁ τεχνίτης.
σῶζοιο, γραφεῦ, ἔμπνοον γράψας κόρην
ὡς μὴ Προμηθεὺς βρενθῆται καὶ πάλιν.

Translation

On a Depicted Maiden

The maiden is alive! If she is not able to talk, this is a mistake of the colors, not of the painter. You may save¹ the maiden, painter, by painting her alive, so that Prometheus do not boast again.²

Commentary

1. Σῶζοιο: Σῶζοιο prints Lambros.
2. The same idea occurs in a prose monody by Eugenianos for his teacher Theodore Prodromos.⁸ Hence, the meaning of this verse is that the creator of the depicted maiden is not Prometheus, the creator of mankind, but the painter.

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8 “μηκέτι Προμηθεὺς ὑψαυχενεῖτω τῇ γυναικείᾳ πλάσει μηδ’ ἐπιβρενθυσέσθω τῶ ἐφευρέματι,” ed. Petit 1902: 462, ll. 5–6.

I.3.15 Manganeios Prodromos (c.1100–after c.1162)

On Life and the World

ELIZABETH JEFFREYS AND MICHAEL JEFFREYS

Ed.: E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems*, no. 44
MSS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus XI.22 (s. XIV), ff. 51v–52r
Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Graecus O 94 sup. (s. XV), ff. 14v–16v
Translation: The translation below will also appear in E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems*, no. 44.

Significance

The poet's speaker refers to the shapes which the personification of Life assumes in vv. 39–58; it is not clear whether these are actual or imaginary images.



Fig. I.3.15 Vatican, BAV, Graecus 394 f. 47, 11th-century, detail
© Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

The Author

Manganeios Prodromos is an otherwise anonymous poet who has been given this name in modern scholarship to distinguish him from his famous contemporary Theodore Prodromos. It derives from his requests to his chief patrons, the emperor Manuel I (r.1143–81) and the sebastokratorissa Eirene,² for entry to the *adelphaton* (hospice) attached to

¹ Consulted.

² On the activities of the sebastokratorissa, see Jeffreys 2011/12.

the Mangana monastery in Constantinople. He was one of several men of letters who in the middle years of the twelfth century sought patronage from the imperial court and aristocratic houses of Constantinople for speeches in prose and verse written for many kinds of ceremonial, and many varieties of epigram.³ All but four of Manganeios' 148 surviving poems form part of the ms. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus XI. 22, a thirteenth-century compendium of Komnenian court rhetoric, one of the collections made to preserve Constantinopolitan culture after its catastrophic dispersal in 1204.⁴ Manganeios' poems offer insights into matters of immediate concern to the addressees of his verse. For Manuel, Manganeios writes flattering encomia reporting recent campaigns and celebrating births, marriages and deaths in the imperial family. In the case of the sebastokratorissa the issues are the fluctuating fortunes of her five children and her own fractured relationship to the emperor. Manganeios' verse is usually written in encomiastic genres, and must be read accordingly.⁵

Text and Context

Manganeios Prodromos *Poem* no. 44 is a grim statement of disenchantment with life, expressed by an unnamed female speaker. The most likely candidate is Manganeios Prodromos' most consistent patron, the sebastokratorissa Eirene; the last decade of her life was a switchback course of disaster and recovery. References to Cyrus as a comparandum occur in poems from 1147/8–51 (MP 4, 20, 55), which leads to a tentative suggestion that this poem dates from those years also.

3 On the intellectual environment of the period, see Magdalino, *Manuel*, 316–412.

4 Manganeios' work has not yet been fully published, although a modern edition is in preparation. A convenient list of his poems in Marc. Gr. XI 22 is available in Magdalino, *Manuel*, 494–500. This, together with the catalogue entry Mioni 1970: 116–31, provides an overview of the material edited to 1993.

5 A good discussion of how encomiastic texts can be approached is Magdalino, *Manuel*, 413–70.

Text

Εἰς τὸν βίον καὶ εἰς τὸν κόσμον

- Τοῦ ξύλου τῆς παρακοῆς ὁ πρῶτος ἐν ἀνθρώποις
γευσάμενος καὶ γλυκανθεὶς, μετὰ τὴν γεῦσιν ἔγνω
ὅτι γυμνός, ὅτι φθαρτός, ὅτι θνητός ὑπάρχει,
ὅτι τὸ ξύλον τὸ γλυκὺ κρυπτήν εἶχε πικρίαν·
- 5 καὶ γὰρ τῆς ματαιότητος τοῦ κόσμου γευσαμένη,
ἄρτι καὶ βλέπω καὶ νοῶ, κόσμε, τὰς σὰς ἀπάτας.
- ἔσοπτρον κατενόησα τὸν γόητα τὸν βίον,
πρόσωπον ἔχοντα λαμπρόν, ζοφώδη δὲ τὰ νῶτα·
ὄψιν γὰρ ἔχει τὰ τερπινά, τὰ λυπηρὰ δὲ νῶτα,
- 10 προβάλλει τε τὰ θέλγοντα καὶ τοὺς ὀρώντας ἔλκει.
πλὴν οὖν ἐξαίφνης στρέφεται καὶ παρὰ προσδοκίαν,
καὶ καταπτᾶ πρὸς δυσειδῆς καὶ φαῦλον προσωπεῖον.
- ἔγνω σοῦ, κόσμε, τὰ στρεπτά καὶ βλέπω τὰ τρεπτά σοῦ,
βλέπω τὰς ἀνισότητας καὶ τὰς ἀνωμαλίας,
- 15 ὀρῶ καὶ τὴν φενάκην σοῦ καὶ τοὺς κρυπτοὺς σοῦ λόχους·
καμπύλον ἔχεις ἄγκιστρον τὴν ἡδονὴν τοῦ βίου,
ὡς δὲ τροφήν προβάλλῃ μοι καὶ σκώληκα τὸ κάλλος,
καὶ περιπέριεις ὡς νηκτὸν τὸν λογισμὸν μου, πλάνε·
ἀλλ' ἄρτι καταπτύω σε, διπρόσωπε, πανοῦργε.
- 20 παίζεις καὶ παίζῃ, σκηνικέ, μῖμε γελοῖε, βίε,
καὶ γίνῃ γέρων καὶ σαπρὸς ἐξ εὐειδοῦς καὶ νέου,
ἐκ περιβλέπτου καὶ λαμπροῦ πτωχὸς καὶ ῥακενδύτης,
χωλὸς καὶ σκάζων καὶ βραδὺς ἀπὸ πτηνοῦ δρομέως,
ἀπὸ περιποθήτου δὲ καταπεφρονημένος
- 25 καὶ στυγητὸς τοῖς ἔχουσι τὰς φρένας ἐρρωμένως.
- καὶ τὰς πλοκάς καὶ τὰς σειράς καὶ τὰς συναρμογὰς σοῦ,
καὶ τοὺς ἀλύτους σοῦ δεσμοὺς κατεπληττόμην, κόσμε,
ἀλλὰ μαθοῦσα τὰς στροφὰς καὶ τὰς μεταβολὰς σοῦ,
καὶ γνοῦσα τὰς ἐλίξεις σοῦ καὶ τὰς περιπλοκάς σοῦ,
- 30 μισῶ τοὺς λαβυρίνθους σοῦ καὶ τὰς περιστροφὰς σοῦ,
καὶ ταύτας εὔχομαι φυγεῖν καὶ τοῦ δεσμοῦ λυθῆναι.
- τὴν ψευδομένην δόξαν σοῦ καὶ τὴν εὐημερίαν
καὶ τὸ κενὸν δοξάριον καὶ τὴν ματαίαν τέρψιν
καὶ τὴν ἐπίπλαστον μορφήν καὶ τὴν ὑπογραφὴν σοῦ
- 35 σαφῶς ἀνθυπογράφουσιν ἀντίθετα τῶσαῦτα —
ἀτμὶς καὶ κόνις καὶ σκιά, τέφρα, καπνὸς καὶ ὄναρ.

Translation

On Life and the World

The first of humankind, having tasted the tree of disobedience¹
 and found it sweet, after the tasting realized
 that he was naked, perishable, and mortal,
 because the sweet tree had a hidden bitterness;
 5 and I, having tasted the world's vanity,²
 now see and understand, world, your deceits.

I have realized that life, the cheat, is a mirror³
 having a brilliant face but a gloomy back;
 for its charming features are at the front, but the grievous are at the back,
 10 it puts forward its seductive side and attracts those who see it.
 But it twists suddenly and unexpectedly
 and turns into a disagreeable and shocking mask.⁴

I know your twists, world, and I see your turns,
 I see the unevenness and the inequalities,
 15 I see your falsity and your hidden traps;
 you make life's pleasures a bent hook,
 you dangle beauty before me like bait and a worm,
 and you tangle my reason as it flounders, deceiver;
 but now I spit on you, two-faced, villain.

20 You jest and are made a jest, actor, silly clown, life,
 and become old and decayed instead of handsome and young,
 from an eminent and brilliant figure becoming a poor beggar,
 lame, limping and slow instead of winged progress,
 from being much desired becoming utterly despised
 25 and hated by all who have their wits about them.

And I am astounded at your weaving and twining and combining
 and your unbreakable bonds, world,
 but discovering your turns and alterations
 and recognizing your tergiversations and entanglements,
 30 I hate your labyrinths and your turnings,
 and I pray to escape them and be freed from their bonds.

Your deceitful glory and prosperity,
 your meaningless pomp and futile joyfulness,
 your false loveliness and your affirmation
 35 are clearly undermined by their opposites –
 steam and dust and shadow, ashes, smoke and dream.

ταῦτα δηλοῖ τὸ ψεῦδος σου καὶ τὸ μηθέν σου, κόσμε,
ταῦτα τὸ νόθον παριστᾷ σχηματογράφημά σου.

40 τί τὰς μορφὰς παράγεις μοι; τί τὰς εἰκόνας γράφεις;
οὐκ ἔτι σοῦ τοῖς χρώμασιν, ἀπατεῶν, πιστεύω,
οὐκ ἔτι σοῦ, πολύμορφε, θαυμάζω τὸ ποικίλον·
καὶ γὰρ τὸ μεταλλάττεσθαι ποιεῖ καὶ χαμαιλέων,
καὶ σκηνικός ὑποκριτής ἀλλάττεται πολλάκις.

45 λοιπὸν μὴ μεταμείβου μοι, μηδὲ μορφὰς ἀλλάσσης·
κἂν γὰρ ποικίλος φαίνη μοι, κἂν καὶ δοκῆς ὠραῖος,
ἀλλ' ὅμως ἔχεις ἄμορφον τὴν ἀληθῆ μορφήν σου.

50 ἐπίθετα τὰ σχήματα καὶ τὰ μορφώματά σου,
ψευδῆ τὰ καλλωπίσματα, μάτην ἢ ποικιλία·
ἔπνευσε νότος καὶ βορρᾶς, ὡς κόνις ἐρριπίσθη,
καὶ τούτων ἴχνος οὐδαμῶς· καταγελῶ σου, κόσμε.

τί μεταμείβῃ συνεχῶς, ὡς ψυχοφθόρος δράκων;
τὴν μηχανὴν ἐπέγνων σου, συνεῖδον τὴν αἰτίαν
καὶ τῶν εἰδῶν καὶ τῶν μορφῶν καὶ τῶν μεταλλαγῶν σου·
καὶ γὰρ τὸ μὴ γνωσθῆναι σε φοβούμενος, ὦ πλάνε,
55 τὸ δυσειδές σου πρόσωπον ποικίλως ὑπογράφεις,
καὶ πράττεις ἔργον δαίμονος πανούργου καὶ δολίου,
ὃς ὑποκρίνεται τὸ φῶς, ὡς μὴ γνωσθῆ τὸ σκότος;
ἀλλὰ σὺν τούτῳ καταργῶ τὰ μηχανήματά σου.

60 ἀνθεῖς ὡς ἄνθος τρυφερόν, πλὴν πρὸς καιρὸν ὀλίγον·
ἔδειξας ἄνθος εἰς αὐγήν, ἐσπέρας ἐξηράνθης·
ἦλθεν ἡλίου φλόγωσις, ὡς χόρτος ἀπεφρύγης,
ἄνεμος καύσων ἔπνευσεν, ὡς λάχανον ἐκαύθης,
ὄμβρος ἐχύθη περισσός, ἐσάπτης ὡσπερ σπόρος·
οὐκ ἔστι τι σοι ζηλωτόν, οὐ παραμένον, κόσμε,
65 δακρῶν μόνων ἄξιος καὶ στεναγμῶν ὑπάρχεις.

κρατεῖ σωμάτων θάνατος, κρατεῖς καὶ σὺ τῶν ζώντων·
ἐκεῖνος φθείρει σώματα, σὺ δὲ τὸν νοῦν τῶν ζώντων,
ψυχῶν ἐκεῖνος οὐ κρατεῖ, σὺ δὲ καὶ ταύτας ἄγεις,
Κκαὶ τυραννεῖς καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς ὡς Ἄδης ψυχοκράτωρ,
70 καὶ μάτην ὀνομάζεσαι χώρα τῶν ζώντων, κόσμε.

γλυκύ σου τὸ συγκέρασμα, μελίκρατον ἢ πόσις,
ἀλλ' ὕστερον εἰς ἔμετον χολώδη καταστρέφει.
οὐκ ἔχεις βότρυν ἠδονῆς, ἀλλὰ θυμὸν ἐχίδνης
καὶ κληματίδα συμφορᾶς καὶ σταφυλὴν πικρίας.

These reveal your falsity and your nullity, world,
these show that your design is corrupt.

Why do you make these shapes for me? Why do you paint these images?⁵
40 Deceiver, I no longer believe in your colors,
shape-changer, I no longer admire your variability;
the chameleon also transforms itself
and an actor on the stage is often changing.
So please do not alter for me, change from shape to shape,
45 even if you seem variable to me, even if you seem lovely,
but still keep your true shape unaltered.

Your forms and shapes are assumed,
your beautifications are false, your variation in vain;
when the wind blows, north or south, it is blown away like dust
50 and no trace of them remains at all; I deride you, world.

Why do you alter constantly, like a soul-destroying dragon?⁶
I have comprehended your trick, I have understood the reason
for your forms and shapes and transformations;
for fearing that you would not be recognized, deceitful one,
55 you disguise your disagreeable countenance in various ways
and you do the work of the evil and treacherous demon
who pretends to be the light so that darkness may be unknown;
but by this means I can foil your devices.

You bloom like a delicate flower, yet for a brief time;
60 you revealed the flower at dawn, but by evening you have withered;
the sun's blaze came, you shriveled like grass,⁷
a hot wind blew, you burned like a herb,
much rain fell, you rotted like a seed;
nothing about you, world, is enviable or permanent,
65 you are only worth tears and laments.

Death has power over bodies, you⁸ too have power over the living;
it wastes bodies, and you the mind of the living,
death does not have power over souls, but you carry them off also,
and you rule souls like Hades emperor of souls⁹
70 and in vain, world, are you called the land of the living.

Your potion is sweet, your drink is honeyed,¹⁰
but afterwards it turns to bilious vomit.
You do not possess the grape-cluster of pleasure but the wrath of a viper
and a tendril of disaster and a grape of bitterness.

- 75 μὴ σχηματίζου τὸ λοιπόν, μηδὲ μορφάζου, κόσμε·
ἐπίπλαστα τὰ κάλλη σου, νόθα τὰ χρώματά σου,
οὐκ ἔχουσιν ὑπόστασιν, οὐ στάσιν τὰ τερπνὰ σου,
ψευδῆ τὰ πάντα καὶ σαθρὰ καὶ σφαλερὰ καὶ κοῦφα.
οὐκ ἔστι βάσις ἐν αὐτοῖς, οὐ στήριξις, οὐ βάσις·
- 80 οἷχονται, παραρρέουσιν, ἀλλάττονται, κινοῦνται,
μιμοῦνται ῥεῦμα ποταμοῦ, πνοὴν οὐχ ἴσταμένην,
ἀπάτην ἀνυπόστατον, σκιὰν παρερχομένην.
πολύμορφε, πολύτρεπτε καὶ χαμαιλέον κόσμε,
ὑποκριτά, φενაკιστά, σχηματιστὰ καὶ πλάνε,
- 85 μάτην μιμῆ τὸν Ἡρακλεῖ, Ψευδηρακλεῖς ὑπάρχεις·
κἂν γὰρ φορῆς τὴν λεοντήν, κἂν ῥόπαλον κατέχης,
ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ πυγμαῖον σου δηλή τὸν ἔλεγχόν σου·
κἂν Ἀχιλλέως πρόσωπον ἐπίθετον ἐνδύη,
ἀλλ' οὐ ζηλωσαὶ δυνηθῆς καὶ τὴν ἰσχὺν ἐκείνου·
- 90 οὐ τῶν νεκρῶν τοῖς αἵμασι τὸν Σκάμανδρον φοινίζεις,
οὐδὲ πηδῆσεις πῆδημα, καὶ ῥοῦς ἀθρόον βλύσει,
οὐδὲ φονεύσεις Ἔκτορα καὶ σύρεις ἐκ τοῦ δίφρου·
ἀλλ' ἔλεγχθῆς ἀνδράριον πρὸς γίγαντας καὶ πίθηξ,
καὶ δόξεις μῖμος σκηνικός καὶ παίκτης καὶ γελοῖος
- 95 τοῖς οὔσιν ἐπιγνώμοσι τῶν σῶν φενაკισμάτων,
ὅσοι τὰς φρένας ἔχουσι στερρὰς καὶ γιγαντώδεις.
καὶ τὴν οὐδαμινότητα καὶ ματαιότητά σου
κατάπτυστον νομίζουσι καὶ σκύβαλον καὶ κόπρον·
καὶ τὴν φορὰν σου τὴν σφοδρὰν καὶ τὴν θερμὴν ἀκμὴν σου,
- 100 καὶ τοῦ τροχοῦ τὴν κίνησιν καὶ τὴν εὐημερίαν,
καὶ τὴν ὀλιγοχρόνιον περιφορὰν τοῦ κύκλου,
ὡς μυρμηκίζοντα σφυγμὸν καὶ παρακμὴν ἡγοῦνται.
τί καλλωπίζεις τὴν μορφήν καὶ κρύπτεις τὰς ῥυτίδας;
τοῦτο καὶ πόρνοι πράττουσιν· οὐκ ἐπαινῶ τὴν πράξιν.
- 105 τί τὸ σαπρὸν οὐκ ἀποσπᾶς, ἀλλὰ τὸ δέρμα γράφεις,
ἀλλ' ὑπογράφεις καὶ δεσμεῖς τοῖς ἐπιτρίμμασί σου;
τί τὸ σαθρὸν οὐ βελτιοῖς, ἀλλὰ τὸν χοῦν φαιδρύνεις;
τί μοι παράγεις τὸν χρυσόν, τὸν ἄργυρον δεικνύεις
καὶ τὴν τρυφήν καὶ τὴν ῥοήν καὶ τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν;
- 110 ἅπαντα ταῦτα μάταια, ψεῦδος καὶ φαντασία.
καὶ Κῦρος πρὶν ἐκάθητο τρυφῶν ἐν συμποσίῳ,
καὶ πλῆθος οὐ μετρούμενον ἐκείνῳ συνετρώφα,
καὶ παλλακαὶ περικαλλεῖς τὸν πότον συνεπλήρου,

75 Do not hereafter change your shape, do not alter your form, world;
 your beauty is fictitious, your complexion feigned,
 your charming features have no substance nor permanence,
 all is false and rotten and slippery and insubstantial.
 These things provide no base, no support, no base;
 80 they depart, they flow past, they are transformed, they move off,
 they imitate the flow of a river, a breath that is not held,
 an insubstantial deceit, a passing shadow.
 Shape-changing, chameleon world of many twists,
 actor, cheat, conspirator and deceiver,
 85 in vain you imitate Heracles, you are a false Heracles;
 for though you wear the lionskin, though you carry the club,
 yet your puny nature refutes you;
 though you put on as well the face of Achilles
 yet you are not able to achieve his strength;
 90 you will not make the Skamander¹¹ red with the blood of corpses,
 nor will you leap the leap, and the flood will peak in fullness
 nor will you kill Hector, and drag him behind your chariot;
 but may you be convicted as a manikin and an ape compared with giants,
 and you will seem a pantomime actor, a dancer and jester
 95 to those who are well aware of your deceits,
 all who have sturdy minds like those of giants.
 And your nullity and futility
 they think despicable, rubbish and dung;
 and your energetic motion and heated energy
 100 and the movement of the wheel¹² and the prosperity
 and the brief rotation of the cycle
 they consider a feeble pulse and debility.
 Why do you beautify your appearance and hide your wrinkles?¹³
 This is what prostitutes do too; I do not commend it.
 105 Why do you not remove the decay, but instead paint your skin,
 and decorate it and play tricks with your cosmetics?
 Why do you not improve the corruption, but instead brighten the clay?
 Why do you parade the gold before me, display the silver
 and the delight and the flux and the prosperity?
 110 All of this is vain, false and imaginary.
 And Cyrus was once sitting at a luxurious banquet,¹⁴
 and an immeasurable number were reveling with him,
 and the most beautiful concubines were pouring drinks,

115 καὶ πότος ἦν βασιλικὸς καὶ πλῆθος ἦν χρυσοῦ,
 καὶ χρύσεια τὰ κύπελλα καὶ χρύσεια τὰ σκεύη,
 καὶ πᾶσα τέρψις μουσικὴ καὶ δόναξ καὶ κιθάρα,
 καὶ τύμπανα καὶ κύμβαλα καὶ πᾶν ὀργάνων μέλος
 τῶν ὠτων τὸν λαβύρινθον εὐκρότως ἐθυραύλει·
 ἀλλὰ χειρὸς ἀστράγαλος ἀναφανεὶς ἐξαίφνης
 120 ἐφαίνετο κινούμενος καὶ γράφων ἐπὶ τοίχου·
 καὶ παρευθὺς ἔλυετο καὶ τράπεζα καὶ πότος,
 καὶ τὰ χρυσᾶ τὰ κύπελλα καὶ τὰ χρυσᾶ τὰ σκεύη
 ὡς κόνις ἀπερρίπτετο καταπεπατημένη·
 ἐκεῖνος ἐνεκροῦτο δὲ τῷ φόβῳ τοῦ θανάτου,
 125 ὄσφύς ἐξεχαυνοῦτο γάρ, ἐξέπιπτε καὶ ζώνη,
 τὸν νοῦν κατεῖχεν ἕκστασις, ἔκλυσις τὸ σαρκίον,
 καὶ σκότος κατελάμβανε τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τοῦ Κύρου·
 καὶ ταραχὴ καὶ σύγχυσις καὶ θροῦς μετὰ δακρύων
 τὴν τότε διεδέχετο χρυσοσκευοφορίαν.
 130 καὶ πάντα γέγονεν οὐδὲν ἐν ἀκαρεῖ καὶ φροῦδα·
 ρόπη δὲ χρόνου καὶ στιγμή κατέλυσεν ἀθρόως
 ἐκείνην τὴν ἀκόρεστον τοῦ Κύρου πανδαισίαν·
 καὶ τὴν μεγαλοπρέπειαν καὶ τὴν λαμπροφορίαν
 καὶ τὸν ἀργυροχρύσωτον τοῦ βασιλέως κόσμον
 135 θανάτου φόβος ἔσβεσεν, ὥσπερ μικρὸν σπινθῆρα,
 καὶ φόβου νέφος ἔκρυσεν τὰς αἴγλας τῶν χρυσίων
 καὶ πᾶσαν κατεκάλυπεν ἀργύρου στιλβηδόνα·
 ὄντως, ὡς χοῦς ἐκ λαίλαπος ἀναρριπίζη, κόσμη,
 ὡς ὄναρ ἔχεις τὸ τερπνόν, ὡς ὕδωρ παραρρέεις,
 140 ὥσπερ ἀτιμὶς ἀποδημεῖς, ὥσπερ καπνὸς ἐκλείπεις,
 ὡς τέφρα πίπτεις ἐκ πυρός, ὡς κόνις ὑπορρέεις.
 ἄστατα πάντα καὶ ψευδῆ· μισῶ σου τὴν φενάκην,
 καὶ τὸ σαπρὸν καὶ τὸ σαθρὸν καὶ τὸ σεσαλευμένον.

and the drink was imperial and there was abundance of gold,
115 the cups were gold and the table-setting was gold,
and every musical delight, pipe, and kithara,
drums, cymbals and every instrumental melody
was rhythmically near the labyrinth of their ears;
but suddenly the knuckles of a hand appeared
120 and were seen moving and writing on the wall;
and immediately both feast and drinking came to an end,
and the golden cups and the golden vessels
were trampled and scattered like dust;
[Cyrus] became rigid in his fear of death;
125 for his loins were enfeebled, the belt fell off,
astonishment took hold of his mind, dissolution his flesh
and darkness seized Cyrus' eyes;
and disturbance and confusion and commotion with tears,
succeeded to the procession of gold vessels.
130 And everything disappeared in a flash and was gone;
a moment of time and a second totally destroyed
that insatiable banquet of Cyrus;
and the magnificence and brilliance
and the gilded silver world of the emperor
135 was extinguished, like a tiny spark, by fear of death,
and a cloud of fear concealed the splendour of gold
and hid every gleam of silver;
truly, as dust scatters in a storm, world,
what is charming you hold like a dream, you ebb away like water,
140 you depart like steam, you disappear like smoke,
you fall like ash from fire, you blow away like dust.
All is unstable and false; I hate your deceit,
and what is rotten and corrupt and tempest-tossed.

Commentary

1. Adam was the “first of humankind”; for the “tree of disobedience” and the illicit tasting, see Gen. 3:1–21.
2. “Having tasted”: note the feminine participle, and again at vv. 28 and 29.
3. “Mirror”: mirrors appear quite frequently in Manganeios Prodromos’ work (cf. Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems*, 4.535), often straightforwardly reflecting personal qualities or physical attributes (unlike the mirror imagery found in the contemporary novels).⁶
4. “Mask”: note the thread of imagery from theatre; cf. vv. 43, 83, 94.
5. Manganeios Prodromos introduces concepts drawn from painting and sketching.
6. “Dragon”: or “serpent”; an evil shape-changing figure in what can be glimpsed of Byzantine folk-lore⁷ and which arguably morphed into the monstrous jaws of Hell of Veneto-Cretan frescoes.
7. The addressee is contrasted with death, so Life rather than the World is confronted here: however the two are conflated throughout the poem.
8. Vv. 62–63. Cf. Ps. 36 (37):2.
9. Life/the World, having carried off souls, rules them like Hades; ψυχοκράτωρ is emphatic. Is the implication that life among the living on earth can be as grim as existence for the dead in Hades; or that the earthly emperor rules as grimly as the ruler of the underworld?
10. “Honeyed”: μελικράτος refers to a libation of milk and honey or honeyed water to the ancient gods of the underworld.
11. During the Trojan War the river Skamander on the plain at Troy was frequently the scene of fierce fighting; e.g. *Iliad* 21.
12. “Wheel”: i.e. the wheel of life, or fortune; although this developed extensively in the Latin West (e.g. in Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy*) this motif was current in the Greek twelfth-century, notably in Constantine Manasses’ *Synopsis Chronike*.
13. Cosmetics are here viewed as a negative, unlike elsewhere in Prodromos’ rhetoric where the be-rouged New Rome is a positive sign of vigour.
14. This is a distortion of Belshazzar’s Feast (Dan. 5:1–31), which is set on the night when Cyrus (the Great, r. c.557–530 BC) captured Babylon (Herodotus, 1. 189–92). The banquet which historically is in Cyrus’ background is that at which Astyages fed Harpagus the butchered remains of his son in vengeance for Harpagus having saved the infant Cyrus from the death decreed by Astyages (Herodotus, 1.120); Harpagus subsequently defected to Cyrus and enabled his defeat of Astyages.

Cyrus in Manganeios Prodromos’ vocabulary came to refer to bloodthirsty excess, with reference to Western leaders: Conrad (20.31, 33, 37; insatiable for blood) and Conrad or Heinrich (55.75, 76); or he can be a symbol of a blood-gorged victor (4.489); here Cyrus symbolizes the fallibility of gold-drenched power.

6 On the complexities which this imagery can develop see Papaioannou 2010: 81–101; see also Theodore Prodromos’ epigram on the sun image on the reverse of a mirror, Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, no. 55.

7 Cf. *Barlaam and Joasaph* (ed. Volk), 12; Kekaumenos, *Strategikon* (ed. Wassiliewsky), 81; *Digenis Akritis* (ed. Jeffreys), G 6.98.

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I.3.16 Manganeios Prodromos (c.1100–after c.1162)

Eros as a Painter

ELIZABETH JEFFREYS AND MICHAEL JEFFREYS

Ed.: Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems*, no. 45, vv. 55–61, eds. E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys.

Other editions: M. Petta, “Άγνωστο βυζαντινό έρωτικό ποίημα του 12ου αιώνα,” in *Origini della letteratura neograeca. Atti del secondo congresso internazionale “neograeca medii aevi,”* ed. N. Panayotakis (vol. 2, Venice, 1993), 77–88; I. Polemis, “Κριτικές και έρμηνευτικές παρατηρήσεις σε βυζαντινά και μεταβυζαντινά ποιήματα,” *Hellenika* 44 (1994), 357–67; see also M. Jeffreys, “Manganeios Prodromos Poem 45, and the Hazards of Editing texts,” *Hellenika* 45 (1995), 357–59.

MS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus XI.22 (s. XIV), ff. 52v–53r, at 52v.

Translation: The translation below will also appear in E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, *Manganeios Prodromos, Poems*.

Significance

This is an instance of the imagery that developed around an actively personified Eros in the mid twelfth century. The imagery was developed in *epithalamia* (celebrating a marriage) and *encomia* (praising individuals) composed for members of the aristocracy by writers seeking patronage; passages in this style also appear in the novels written at this time. The movement has close connections with the literary circle associated with the sebastokratorissa Eirene.

The Author

See E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, I.3.15.

Text and Context

Manganeios Prodromos, *Poem* no. 45 is ostensibly addressed to Eros as the personification of sexual desire. Eros is depicted conventionally (as in the Komnenian novels) as a plump winged youth armed with bow, arrows, and a torch, who takes aim at his victims. Manganeios Prodromos suggests that although sexual desire is stimulated through the sense of sight, by gazing at the beloved, mental processes are also involved. It is at

¹ Consulted.

this point that the passage given here occurs: Manganeios Prodromos wonders how Eros enables his victims' minds to create images of the beloved's face. The poem is disjointed, with an apparently authorial "I" appearing in the final sections and expressing gratitude for support from an addressee who is syntactically Eros; this may refer to the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene, Manganeios Prodromos' most consistent patron. The poem, which appears in the manuscript as a companion piece to a poem "On Life,"² was written in the second half of the 1140s when similar imagery involving Eros was circulating, e.g. in Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems* nos. 46 and 52, which are associated with the marriage of John Kantakouzenos to Eirene's daughter Maria,³ or in Makrembolites' *Hysmine and Hysminias*.⁴

2 Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems* no. 44; cf. E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, I.3.15 in this volume.

3 On Maria see Varzos, *Γενεαλογία* no. 129 (vol. 2, 155–61); the marriage, whose date is disputed, is discussed at p. 157.

4 *Hysmine and Hysminias* 2.10–11 and 3.1; see Magdalino 1992: 200 n. 23 on this passage.

Text

- 55 Πῶς εἰκονίζεις πρόσωπα, πῶς χαρακτηῖρας γράφεις,
 πῶς τὰς μορφὰς εἰδοποιεῖς, πῶς ζωγραφεῖς ἀγράφως,
 καὶ πῶς χαράττεις τὰς γραφὰς καὶ δίχα τῆς γραφίδος;
 ὕλης χωρὶς καὶ χρώματος οὐδὲ ζωγράφος γράφει.
 τίς Ἀπελλῆς διδάσκει σε τὸ γράφειν ἄνευ ὕλης;
- 60 οὐ σὺ τυγχάνεις ὁ γραφεύς, ὁ νοῦς δὲ τοῦ τρωθέντος·
 ἐκεῖνος γίνεται γραφεύς, ἐκεῖνος καὶ ζωγράφος,
 ἐκεῖνος καὶ χρωματιστὴς καὶ γράφει τὴν εἰκόνα,
 καὶ τὴν μορφήν χρωματουργεῖ καὶ τὴν φιλότατην ὄψιν.

Translation

- 55 How do you draw faces, how do you sketch appearances,
 how do you give form to the shapes, how do you paint without painting,
 and how do you depict the drawings without even a brush?
 No painter paints without material and color.
 Which Apelles' is teaching you to paint without matter?
- 60 It is not you who are the painter, but the mind of your wounded victim;
 it is he who becomes the painter, he also becomes an artist,
 he is the colorist and draws the picture,
 and gives color to the form and the beloved face.

Commentary

1. Apelles (third century BCE), the best-known painter from the Greek classical world; see *OCD*, under “Apelles.”

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I.4 Materials

Introduction

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Later Byzantium is remarkably uninterested in discussing the materials and techniques of making objects of art. There is no comparable work to the practical treatises coming from the Classical World, Late Antiquity, the Western Medieval Europe, or the Renaissance composed during the period covered in this volume.¹ Like in other pre-modern cultures, Byzantine technicians (that is, artists) learnt their craft while practicing. There is no evidence that they tried to access scholarly writings on art making (if these were ever composed). Some Byzantine scholars were (possibly) also artists, but they saw their crafts as two distinct occupations: in their writings they do not hint at their “other” skills and, even more so, they do not discuss the methods they had used.² Making what is nowadays considered art was then categorized as a “craft,” a lesser occupation, and thus not worth mentioning. For this reason and in addition to the elitist nature of the manuscript evidence that is discussed in the general introduction to this volume, techniques for painting, making gold, or working with metals, as well as the methods for acquiring primary materials were not recorded in a way comparable to the twelfth-century treatise *On Various Arts* compiled in Latin by “Theophilus,” a possibly Benedictine monk living near Cologne.³ Only fragmentary recipes for making artistic materials can be found in manuscripts. The earliest known ink recipes in medieval Greek survive only because the scribe decided to fill a blank space in a manuscript devoted to Classical and Late Antique texts that betray no interest in art-making (translated by Foteini Spingou in I.4.4 in this volume). These recipes offer rare information, not only on how to make different colors of ink, but also on the trade in some of the primary materials. Other recipes, for example those for making gold, are considered relevant to the craft of the alchemist, and they have been recorded in the context of the prominent *chrysopoieia*. Shannon Steiner presents Nikephoros Blemmydes’ treatise on gold making using eggs (I.4.5 in this volume). The thirteenth-century scholar explores theories of natural philosophy and offers rather incomplete instructions for using egg to make gold shine and gleam “to the limits of the known world.”

The lack of practical treatises concerning the use and preparation of the materials in art does not make the Byzantines unresponsive to the physical properties of objects

1 For an overview see Lapatin 2014: 203–08; for goldsmithing in particular see Wolters 2008.

2 See for example the case of John Pediasimos, Kalopissi-Verti 2000: 148.

3 For a comparison of goldsmiths’ techniques described in Theophilus’ manual and those used or discussed in the Byzantine world see Bosselmann-Ruickbie 2014.



Fig. I.4 Fragment of an Eikon with Crucifixion, 10.6 x 7.7 x 1.1 cm, twelfth century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 57.40
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of art. Epigrams on works of art, such as those composed by Manuel Philes (discussed here by Marina Bazzani, I.4.2 in this volume), reveal an appreciation of the raw materials used and an understanding of their symbolic nature. For the prolific poet, each stone has exceptional properties. For instance, rock crystal is akin to water that has hardened in order to contain a depiction of Christ; and jasper, with its red and green veins, can present an impossible impression of two incompatible elements (fire and water) thanks to the depiction of the Prophet Daniel. Other epigrams from later Byzantium demonstrate the suitability of materials like gold and steatite for containing and expressing the spiritual qualities of the Holy.⁴ The anonymous twelfth-century poet of the epigram in the *Anthologia Marciana* (Foteini Spingou, I.4.3 in this volume) invites the viewer to see how the adornment of an icon with precious materials symbolizes nature. As with epigrams, *ekphraseis* manipulated the perception of materials to create literary

⁴ See Maguire, *Nectar and Illusion*, 130–32; Kalarezou-Maxeimer 1985: 131.

impressions; but unlike epigrams, they sought to deliver a “public” response to materials that may differ from the “private” view of a poet.⁵ Furthermore, theoretical treatises on the perception of materials are rare. The treatise by Theodore Prodromos offers an exceptional example of a text considering color theory, while the texts that Eric Cullhed discusses in I.4.1 in this volume offer a snapshot of the reception of ancient color theories in Byzantium.

In more practical terms, the monetary value of an object of art was directly related to the financial value of the materials used. In a famous article from 1991, Nicolas Oikonomides demonstrated that ordinary icons (i.e. icons that were not connected with a special miracle or appellation of, especially, the Virgin or Christ), when not invested with gold or precious materials, were of small market value.⁶ What made an icon expensive was its precious adornment rather than the skill of the artist. A similar point can be made regarding the trade in relics. In a unique twelfth-century text, Michael Italikos reports on a greedy sacristan who sells a box with the relics of a saint to a Venetian. The treatise, which is discussed by Emmanuel Bourbouhakis (I.4.6 in this volume), reveals (almost ironically) great esteem for the luxurious reliquary, rather than the relics (St. Stephen’s tongue?) *per se*.

Michael Italikos’ text highlights a further aspect of materials: their mobility, thanks to the trade in or gift-giving of objects. From the little we know, valuable materials, such as precious stones, ivory, and silver, were arriving in the Constantinopolitan markets from all corners of Europe, Asia, and Africa thanks to Byzantine and Italian merchants.⁷ But taste is created with objects and not by the import of exotic materials alone. The demand for a material is increased when its abilities are displayed in an artwork. At the time of the Crusaders – that is, the time of Italikos – gold became readily available in Western Europe for the first time. A reliable supply of materials would allow objects like the reliquary of St. Stephen to establish a new fashion. The last text in this chapter is about an object made from a rather humble material. The prolific twelfth-century author John Tzetzes speaks about a Russian-made inkwell carved out of fish bone that was given to him as a gift. Whether that inkwell could ever create a fashion in Byzantium is rather questionable, since even in his letter – presented here by Michael Grünbart (I.4.7 in this volume) – Tzetzes questions its utility in his always amusing way.

5 On *ekphraseis* see I. Nilsson, Introduction, II.2 in this volume. The classic reading for the difference in the registration of the viewer’s response in epigrams on works of art and *ekphraseis* has been discussed in Maguire, *Image and Imagination*.

6 Oikonomides 1991, discussed also in Cutler 2002: 565–67.

7 Laiou 2002: 749–54 for until the end of the twelfth century and Matschke 2002 for the later period. The guild of the *argyropatai* was responsible for trading valuable material such as gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls until at least the twelfth century; see the *Book of the Eparch*, ch. 2. On the role of the guilds in the Byzantine commerce inside and outside the capital city see Maniatis 2001, for the role of the legal relation between guilds and individuals related to the supply of primary material and the creation of art see p. 348–49, and for the effect of the expansion of the Latin merchandise activity on Byzantine guilds see p. 363–66.

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I.4.1 Theodore Prodromos (c.1100–after 1155)

To the Caesar or For the Color Green

ERIC CULLHED

Ed.: E. Cullhed; previous editions: J. Iriarte, *Regiae bibliothecae matritensis codices graeci mss* (Madrid, 1769), 429–31 (from M); J. A. Cramer, *Anecdota graeca e codd. manuscriptis bibliothecarum oxoniensium*, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1835), 216–21 (from B and b)

MSS.:¹ V = Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 305, ff. 40v–43r (s. XIII)

Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 2363 (s. XVII)

B = Oxford, Bodleian Library, Barocci 165 (s. XV)

b = Oxford, Bodleian Library, Barocci 187 (s. XVI)

M = Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, 4630 (a. 1464)

Other Translations: None

Significance

The text offers a glimpse into a philosophically eclectic and imprecise but rhetorically playful and competitive textual culture, in which ancient color theories, natural observations, and ancient poetry could be brought together to produce discourses of viewing and negotiate the meanings and values attached to colors and esthetic experiences.

The Author

See E. Jeffreys, I.7.6 in this volume.

Text and Context

The text is a sophistic encomium on the color green, or rather a critical response to a previous work written by an unnamed contemporary writer who has invoked ancient color theory, etymologies, and Hesiodic verses rather eclectically in order to praise white and black as the superior colors.² Compared to Prodromos' other works, the tone is most reminiscent of *The Ignorant or the Grammarian in his own eyes*.³ In this imitation of Lucian's *The Uneducated Book Collector*, Prodromos assails a self-proclaimed *grammatikos* for

¹ I have consulted V and the two previous editions.

² *To the Caesar or For the Color Green* has previously been discussed by Tannery 1887: 107, who dates the text to Late Antiquity, based on an improbable hypothesis that it refers to the blue and green circus factions as well as the fact that it is attributed to Geminus of Rhodes in the manuscript M.

³ Ed. Migliorini 2010: 29–34.; the title alludes to the biblical imperative in Prov. 3:7.

feigning *paideia* and asserting the self-sufficiency of his elementary discipline. Most of the arguments leveled at the grammarian in *The Ignorant* are lifted from the late Roman author Sextus Empiricus' *Against the Grammarians* (esp. 1.60–72). The result is a kind of Lucianic dramatization of this ancient philosophical treatise, making it difficult to tell whether or not the critique had a specific target when re-stated by Prodromos. The present text, on the other hand, evidently addresses a contemporary opponent. It is an example of Prodromos practicing an activity that he often credits himself for excelling in: exposing the quacks who pretend to be philosophers.⁴

Just like Prodromos' novel *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, the present text is dedicated to an unnamed Caesar, in all probability Nikephoros Bryennios, the general, historian and husband of Anna Komnene.⁵ The subject matter suggests that it was produced in connection with the philosophical circle active around 1130 under the patronage of Anna and Bryennios with obvious ties to the *theatron* of Eirene Doukaina.⁶ We should probably place Prodromos' dialogs *Xenedemus* and *Concerning the Great and the Small*,⁷ as well as the commentary on the second book of Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, in the same context.⁸

The opening section defines the work not as a general investigation on color theory but as a specific comparison of white and black to purple and green in response to a previous writer who had praised the former two colors. This writer invoked the theory found in the pseudo-Aristotelian *On Colors* that states that all colors are mixtures of white and black.⁹ Prodromos begins by arguing that if white is a color like the others – a species belonging to the same genus as the other colors – it cannot be their cause. And even if this were the case, Prodromos continues, it does not necessarily follow that they are superior. Temperate and well proportioned rather than extreme sensory stimuli are most pleasing to us: for example, we prefer mild odors over strong ones. Hence, Prodromos suggests that the colors farthest from white and black, the ones at the middle of his spectrum, which are green closely followed by purple, are superior. The previous writer also appears to have mentioned that white and black are the colors of the elements: heaven is dark/blue, earth is black, and water is white. Prodromos dismisses this argument and answers that the elements are in fact colorless in their pure form. While in the realm of natural observation and color metaphor, Prodromos goes on to argue that red and green are tokens of youthfulness in human beings and vegetation, respectively, whereas white characterizes decline and death. Moreover, the previous writer had invoked the etymological connection of the word for “red,” *phoinikoun* (φοινικοῦν), to “murder,” *phonos* (φόνος), but Prodromos counters that it could also be traced to “shine,” *phaino* (φαίνω). Finally, the writer had quoted Hesiod's account of the Ages of Man and focused on the Silver Race in

4 See Cullhed 2017.

5 For the dedicatee of the novel see Agapitos 2000 and Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 4–5 and 7–10; for the identification with the Caesar of the present work see Hörandner 1974: 49.

6 See Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 5, with further references.

7 See Tannery 1887; Charalampopoulos 2005.

8 See the inventory in Hörandner 1974 nos. 134–36.

9 See Kuehni and Schwarz 2008: 32.

order to praise white. Prodrornos answers that this maneuver ought to have resulted in the praise of yellow, as the golden race was the blessed one. He also criticizes the writer for suppressing the misery of the iron age, which would make black inferior by this line of reasoning.

Prodrornos' rejection of the extremes of white and black and praise of the colors in between is in some sense congruent with his often polemic endorsement of the golden mean in other works, such as *On Those who Condemn Providence because of Poverty*,¹⁰ or *Amarantos or the Erotic Desires of an Old Man*:¹¹ he often stresses that one should succumb neither to strict asceticism nor to hedonism, but should enjoy moderately the fruits of creation in order to thereby experience its Creator.¹² It has also been suggested that the praise of green might acquire specific connotations in relation to the ceremonial attire of a Caesar, as he did not wear this color;¹³ yet, it is not clear what the comparison to white and black would signify from this perspective. Since the Caesar wore a purple *chlamys*, just like the emperor,¹⁴ Prodrornos' inclusion of purple as the second-best color appears to be a nod towards this. In any case, it is no coincidence that "To the Caesar" is the main title of this piece, whereas "For the Color Green" comes after. Prodrornos repeatedly stresses that he fights "on behalf of the truth" and fears that his dedicatee will disagree with him. The last lines of the piece allude to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (1096a) on the philosopher's primary allegiance to truth rather than personal ties. The piece's *raison d'être* is to thematize, implicitly and explicitly, verbal competition and the dilemma of intellectual autonomy for philosophers writing and performing under patronage.

10 Ed. PG 133: 1291–1302.

11 Ed. Migliorini, *Amarantos or the Erotic Desires of an Old Man*.

12 See Prodrornos' epigram *On a Garden* 3, ed. Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 398; cf. Cullhed 2017.

13 Hörandner 1974: 49.

14 Constantine Porphyrogenetos, *The Book of the Ceremonies*, 1.36.5–6 Vogt (see transl. by Moffatt and Tall).

Text

Εἰς τὸν Καίσαρα, ἢ ὑπὲρ πρασίνων

Χρωμάτων περὶ καὶ φύσεων αὐτῶν καὶ γενέσεων πολλοὶ πολλάκις, σοφώτατε Καίσαρ, ἐπραγματεύσαντο, ἡμῖν δὲ καὶ αὐτοῖς περὶ χρωμάτων μέλλουσι λέγειν, οὐ κατὰ ταῦτὸν ἐκείνοις τὸν λόγον ἐφοδευτέον – ἄλις γὰρ τοῖς ἀνδράσι τὰ τῆς τοιαύτης φιλοσοφίας – ἀλλὰ παραθετέον χρώμασι χρώματα, οὐ τοῖς πᾶσι τὰ πάντα, δυοῖν δὲ τῷ λευκῷ καὶ τῷ κυανῷ δύο τὸ φοινικοῦν καὶ τὸ πράσινον, καὶ θεωρητέον οἶον Λυδία τῷ λόγῳ ταυτὶ παρέξετασιν, ὅποιον αὐτῶν εὐγενέστερον καὶ σεμνότερον, καὶ ἀποδοτέον ὡς ἐνὶ μάλιστα τῷ κρείττονι τὰ πρεσβεῖα ἢ, ἐπειδὴ φθάσαντές τινες τὸν ἀγῶνα ἐρήμην ὠήθησαν τοῦ πρασίνου καταψηφίσασθαι, αὐτοῖς γε τούτοις ἀντιπαραβλητέον τὸ γράμμα καὶ λόγον λόγῳ παλαιστέον κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν, οὐχ ὡς ἄλογόν τινα βούλησιν ἢ παράλογον ἐκτελέσειν ἀπλῶς ἡμῶν διατεινομένων – οὐ μὰ γὰρ τὴν Καισαρικήν κεφαλὴν, οὐκ ἐφ’ οὕτω μεγάλοις ἀλόγως θεληματαίνομεν – ἀλλὰ πρῶτα μὲν τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ὑποπτευόντων ὑπερμαχεῖν, οἷς τοῦ πρασίνου ὑπερμαχοῦμεν, ἔπειτα καὶ κύκλῳ πολεμουμένῳ πράγματι διδόντων χεῖρα ξυνέριθον. ἰλήκοιεν δὲ τῷ λόγῳ οἱ τοῦ Καίσαρος ὀφθαλμοί, κἂν ἀγωνιεῖται οἱ παρὰ τὴν βούλησιν.

Γένους μὲν οὖν τὰ τέτταρα τοῦ αὐτοῦ· ὑπὸ τὸ χρῶμα γὰρ καὶ ἔτι τὴν ποιότητα κοινῶς ἀνιένεχται. φασὶ δὲ τὸ μὲν τι τούτων ἀπλοῦν τὸ λευκόν, τὰ δ’ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ τε τοῦ λευκοῦ καὶ τοῦ μέλανος, τῆς τοιαύτης ἢ τοιαύτης ἀναλογίας τῶν ἐν τούτοις μίξεων τε καὶ κράσεων γεννώσης τε ἅμα καὶ ἐξαλαττούσης τὰ χρώματα, ἀλλ’ ἐντεῦθεν ἡμῖν ἀρκτέον τῆς θεωρίας, κἀπειδὴ τινες ὡς ἀπλοῦν καὶ στοιχειῶδες καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις αἴτιον ἀποσεμνύνουσι τὸ λευκόν, φατέον πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὧδέ πη· πότερον οἱ τὸ λευκόν ἀνυμνοῦντες καὶ τῆς τῶν ἄλλων χρωμάτων γενέσεως αἰτιώμενοι καὶ ὁμογενὲς αὐτοῖς διδόατε εἶναι ἢ ἐτέρου γένους εἶναι φάτε; ἢ τούτων μὲν οὐδέτερον, ἐνδέκατον δὲ τι τοῦτο γένος πρὸς τοῖς δέκα χειροτονεῖτε; εἰ μὲν τοῖς γενικωτάτοις καὶ τοῦτο προστίθετε, ἀπορῶ τὰ πρῶτα πῶς τὴν Ἀριστοτέλους δξύτητα παρελθόν, ὑμῖν γε ἀπεκαλύφθη τοῦτο τὸ γένος, ἔπειτα καὶ ποῖα τούτου τάξαιμεν εἶδη ὑπάλληλά τε καὶ εἰδικώτατα· οὐ γὰρ δὴ αὐτὸ ἑαυτῷ καὶ γένος ἔσται καὶ εἶδος, εἰ μὴ καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν Σωκράτη πατέρα τε ἑαυτοῦ καὶ υἱέα εἶναι ὁμολογήσετε. εἰ δ’ ὑφ’ ἑτερον μὲν τὸ λευκόν ἀνάγετε γένος, ὑφ’ ἑτερον δὲ τὰ λοιπὰ χρώματα, ζητῶ μαθεῖν ἐκεῖνο τὸ γένος, ὑφ’ ὃ τὸ λευκόν· καὶ οὐ πρότερον τῆς ζητήσεως ἀποσταῖην, μέχρις ἂν ἢ ὃ ὑπέθεσθε δοῖτε ἢ τῷ λείποντι μέρει τῆς διαιρέσεως ἐπινεύσοιτε. εἰ δὲ καὶ τοῦτο τέως ἐρρωμένως ἔχετε τοῦ νοοῦντος, τὸ τὸ χρῶμα κατηγορεῖν ὡς γένος καὶ τοῦ λευκοῦ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων· τίς ὑμᾶς ξυνέπεισε δαίμων τὸ μὲν τῶν ὁμογενῶν αἴτιον εἶναι, τὸ δ’ αἰτιατόν γε ὁμολογεῖν, καὶ ταῦτα τῆς φιλοσοφίας ὁμότιμον εἶναι μυσταγωγούσης τὴν ἐκ τοῦ γένους τοῖς εἶδεσι προβολήν; οἱ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ τό τε ὁμογενὲς ἀποδέχεσθε καὶ λυμαίνεσθε τῇ ἰσοτιμίᾳ· ἔπειτα δεδόςθω γὰρ καὶ ὁμογενὲς τοῖς ἄλλοις εἶναι τοῦτο καὶ αἴτιον, οὐκ ἀνάγκη παρὰ τοῦτο τὴν νικῶσαν ἐπιψηφίσασθαι τῷ λευκῷ· οὐ γὰρ αἰεὶ τὸ ξυντεθὲν

Translation

To the Caesar, or For the Color Green

Many have often busied themselves, wisest Caesar, concerning colors, their constitutions and origins. Now, as I am about to speak of colors too, I must not proceed along the same road as they have; for the fruits of such philosophical inquiry are sufficient for people. Rather, I must compare colors to colors, not each of them to the others, but two, white and black, to two others, red and green. This issue, namely which one is nobler and more majestic, must be investigated with abstract reasoning, as a Lydian touchstone, and I must allot this privilege to the superior color. At the very least, seeing as some have already considered green a no-show in this contest and voted against it, I must confront them in this text and let discourse wrestle with discourse, as the proverb goes.⁴ This is not to say that I am simply exerting myself to fulfill an unreasonable and irrational request. No, by the head of Caesar, I do not unreasonably comply with other peoples' wishes in matters of such importance! Rather, first of all, I believe that I am fighting on behalf of the truth when I fight on behalf of the color green. Secondly, I extend a helping hand to a creature surrounded by enemies. May Caesar's eyes look graciously upon my discourse, even if it struggles against his wishes.

The four colors evidently belong to the same genus. For they are generally categorized as "color" and moreover as "quality." They claim that one of them, white, is the simplest one, whereas the others derive from this very white and from black, and that different proportions in mixtures and blends of white and black produce and diversify the colors.⁵ This is where I must begin my investigation. Since some people glorify white for being simple, elementary, and the cause of the others, I must respond to them as follows: You celebrate white and make it the cause of the other colors. Do you also attribute it to the same genus as them or claim that it belongs to another? Or is neither the case, meaning that you propose that an eleventh genus should be added to the other ten?⁶ If you do add it to the principal genera, first of all I am at a loss concerning how this genus passed by the sharp mind of Aristotle but was uncovered by you. Secondly, what kind of subordinated and specific species should we allot to this genus. Surely it cannot be a genus and a species subordinated to itself, unless you agree that Socrates can be a father and his own son at the same time.⁷ If, however, you refer white to one genus and the other colors to another, I want to know what genus white belongs to. I will insist on my question until you reveal your premise or agree that a part is missing from your division. But if you are sane enough to categorise color as a genus to which white and the others belong: what demon persuaded you to accept that one member of a genus is the cause of the others, whereas another is an effect, even though philosophy initiates us into the realization that the advancement from a genus to its many species is equal in degree?⁸ You accept that they belong to the same genus but dishonor their equality in degree. Furthermore, even if we grant that it belongs to the same genus as the others and still causes them, we must not necessarily proclaim white victorious. The composite is not always less worthy than its parts, but sometimes it is even more worthy. For the baked brick, polished stone, and

τῶν ἐξ ὧν συντέθειται ἀτιμότερον, ἀλλ' ἔστιν ὅπου καὶ τιμιώτερον· οἰκίαν γὰρ πλίνθος ὀπτῆ καὶ λίθος ξεστή καὶ ἄλλα ἄττα ξυντίθησιν, ἀλλ' οὐ πλίνθου φαῖμεν τὴν οἰκίαν ἀτιμότεραν· καὶ γῆ μὲν ἀνθρώπου στοιχεῖον, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ καὶ βελτίων ἀνθρώπου· καὶ χορδὰς μὲν μόνας καὶ μόνους κολλάβους εἴπερ ἀνὰ χεῖρας ὁ ἐκ Μηθύμνης θεῖτο κιθαρῳδός, οὐκ ἂν οὐδὲ πολλοστόν τι μέλος προήσεται· εἰ δὲ τὸ ξύνθετον μετὰ χεῖρας λάβοι, τὴν περικαλλέα καθ' Ὅμηρον κίθαρην, τάχα καὶ δελφίνας ἔλξει τῇ μελωδίᾳ καὶ ἰππάσεται ἐφ' ὑγρῶν καὶ σωθήσεται.

Ὅρᾳς ὡς εἰς τὸ ἐναντίον τὸ πρᾶγμα περιετράπη σοι, ὦ φίλ' ἑταῖρε, ἄλλως τοῦ τῆς παροιμίας κύβου ρίφεντος, ὡς ἐγὼ σε καὶ τῆς τῶν χρωμάτων ἐπαινῶν συστοιχίας, οἷς εὐστόχως ἄγαν καὶ φιλοσόφως ἐτέθησαν καὶ λευκὸν μὲν καὶ μέλαν ἄκρα γεγράφαται, τὸ μέντοι πράσινον καὶ τὸ ἄλουργὸν τὴν μεσαιτάτην μοῖραν εἰλήχεσαν, τοῦ ἐντεῦθεν ἐπιχειρήματος οὐδ' ὀπωστιοῦν ἀποδέχομαι· εἰ γὰρ τὸ λευκὸν ἐπαινοίης ἄκρον γε ὄν, ἐπαινήσεις ἂν ταύτη καὶ τὴν δειλίαν, ἣ καὶ νῆ τὸν λόγον τὸ θράσος· ἄκρω γὰρ ἑκατέρω. τοῦτο δ' ὅποι φλαυρότητος ἐξολισθαίνει, καὶ τυφλῶ, φασί, δῆλον.

Ἄλλ' ἔπου μοι, ὦ λῶστε, καὶ συνθεωρῶμεν κατὰ λόγον τὰ χρώματα. ἔχομεν δὲ πάντως ἀπὸ τε τῶν βίβλων ἀπὸ τε τῆς ἐνεργείας κάλλιστον αἰσθητὸν τὸ τῇ αἰσθήσει ἡδύ καὶ σῶζον ταύτην οὐκ ἀπολλύον, οἷον ἄριστον ὄσφραντὸν τὸ τῇ ὄσφρησει ἡδύ καὶ σῶζον τὸν ὄσφρησιν, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὁμοίως. θεωρῶμεν δὴ τοῦτο κάπτι τῶν χρωμάτων καὶ τῆς ὀράσεως καὶ τὸ ἡδύ τε ἅμα τῇ ὀράσει καὶ σωστικὸν κάλλιστον εἶναι χρῶμα τιθώμεθα. τὸ μὲν οὖν λευκὸν ἢ τὸ μέλαν οὐκ ἂν εἴη τοιοῦτον· τὸ μὲν γὰρ διακρίνει τὴν ὕψην καὶ διαχεῖ καὶ σκεδάννυσι – τὸ λευκὸν, τὸ δὲ – τὸ μέλαν – συγκρίνει καὶ συνάγει παντάπασι, καὶ οὕτως ἐκάτερα λυποῦσιν αὐτὴν ἢ καὶ νῆ τὴν Θέμιν γε ἀπολλύουσιν. οὐκ ἄρα οὐδὲ ξανθὸν τε καὶ φοινικοῦν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ φαιὸν καὶ κυανοῦν αὐτὴν ἡδυνεῖ· τὰ μὲν γὰρ τούτοις λευκότερα, τὰ δὲ μελάντερα καθεστήκασι. λείπεται δὴ τὸ ὡς ἐπίσης μέτεχον ἀμφοῖν καὶ μέσον καὶ ξυμμέτρως κραθέν, τοιοῦτον εἶναι οἷον δῆτα καὶ ὑπεθέμεθα, μεσαίτατον δὲ καὶ ξυμμετρότατον, καὶ ὡς ἐπίσης τῶν ἀπλῶν μετέχον τὸ πράσινον πρὸς τῷ ἄλουργῷ· τὸ ἄρα πράσινον κάλλιστόν τε χρῶμα καὶ τιμιώτατον.

Τί πρὸς ταῦτα λέγεις, ὦ πρὸς Εὐκλείδου; ἀφυῶς κατεγεωμετρήθη τὰ χρώματα; οὐ μὲν οὖν καὶ αὐτὸς ὁμολογήσεις εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι. βούλει σοι κάκεῖνο τῆς γραφῆς ἐξετάσομαι, ὅπου κυάνεον μὲν ἀπεφῆνω τὸν οὐρανόν, μέλαιναν δὲ τὴν γῆν, τὸ δὲ ὕδωρ λευκόν, ἢ σὴν χάριν τοῦτο γοῦν ἀποσιωπήσομαι; ἄμεινον οἶμαι φάναι, καὶ φήσω ἔνθεν ἑλών. ἀπόκριται γοῦν μοι ὁ φυσικώτατος σύ· χρῶμα διδως τῷ ἀερίῳ σώματι ἢ οὐχί; ἀλλ' οὐκ ἂν οἶμαι δοίης αἰδοῖ τοῦ, ὄν διδάσκαλον κομπάζεις, Ἀριστοτέλους, ἀχρωμάτιστον εἶναι αὐτό[ν] ἀποφαινομένου. εἰ δὲ ἀτὴρ ἀχρωμάτιστον τὸ περὶ ἡμᾶς τοῦτο σῶμα τὸ παθητὸν καὶ ἀλλοιωτόν, πολλῶν πλέον τὸ αἰθέριον ἐκεῖνο καὶ ἀπαθές· ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ κεχρῶσθαι φαῖμεν τὸν οὐρανόν, ἐνταῦθα τὸ ἀπορώτατον ἀνακύψει τῶν ζητημάτων· πῶς γὰρ ἀπλοῦν σῶμα ὄν ὁ οὐρανός καὶ ἀσυνθετότατον οὐχ ἀπλοῦν εἰλήχει καὶ χρῶμα, τὸ λευκὸν τυχόν ἢ τὸ μέλαν, ἀλλὰ ξύνθετον τὸ κυάνεον; ὡς ἐγὼ γε οὐδ' ἄλλο οὐδὲν τῶν ἀπλῶν σωμάτων κεχρῶσθαι διατενοῦμαι· οὐ πῦρ, οὐχ

so on form a house; yet, we would not say that the house is less worthy than a brick. Earth is an element of the human being; yet, it is not superior to the human being. Indeed, if the lyre-player from Methymna⁹ could hold unconnected strings and unconnected pegs with his hands, he would not produce much of a melody. If, however, he would hold the composite object in his hands, “the truly beautiful lyre,”¹⁰ as Homer puts it, he could perhaps even attract dolphins with his melody, ride over the waves and be saved.

You can see that the issue has been turned against you, dear friend, unlike the cast dice of the proverb,¹¹ so that even though I praise you for your series of colors, where they were shrewdly and philosophically arranged, placing white and black at the extremities while allotting green and purple to the middle, I cannot possibly accept your attempted proof from these premises. For if you praise white, being an extremity, you would also praise cowardice for the same thing, or even – I swear by the Word – audacity, since both of them are also extremities. Even a blind man, as they say, will see what silliness this slips away into.

But come along with me, dear friend, and let us investigate the colors together according to reason. We know fully, from books as well as from actual experience, that the finest perceptible thing is that which is sweet for our perception and benefits rather than harms it, just as the best-smelling thing is that which is sweet for our sense of smell and benefits it, and so on for the other senses. Let us consider the same thing in respect to colors and visual perception. We establish that the finest color is that which is sweet for visual perception and benefits it. Surely, this is not the case with white or black. For the former, i.e. white, dilates the eye, dissolves and scatters it, and the latter utterly contracts and gathers it. Thus, both of them cause distress for the eye; by Themis, they even harm it! It follows that neither yellow and red nor gray and blue give pleasure to it. For the former are too white, the latter too black. Consequently, the color that fits our preliminary assumption is that which has an equal share in both, lies in the middle and is blended symmetrically. The color that is closest to the center, most balanced and with an equal share in the simple colors is green closely followed by purple. Accordingly, green is the most beautiful and worthy of all colors.

What do you answer to this, follower of Euclid? That the colors have been unsuitably geometrized? No, you will agree with me, I know as much as that. Do you want me to examine that part of your text too, where you declared that heaven was blue, earth black, and water white, or do you prefer me to pass over it in silence for your sake? I think that it is better to speak, so I will do so and take up the argument from that point. You who are so well versed in physics, answer me this much: Do you assign a color to air or not? I believe that you do not, out of reverence for the man you proclaim to be your teacher, Aristotle, who shows that it is devoid of all color.¹² If air – the body that surrounds us and is so liable to external influence and change – is devoid of all color, it must be even more so with that etherian body that is not liable to external influence. But even if we would agree that heaven has a color, the most impossible of questions will arise: for how can heaven, being a simple and completely non-composite body, not be allotted a simple color, i.e. white or black, but the composite color blue? As for my part, I would stoutly maintain

ὕδωρ, οὐ γῆν. κἄν σύ μοι προβάλλῃ τὸν ποιητὴν πολιὴν τὴν θάλασσαν ὀνομάζοντα, ἐγώ σοι τοῦτον αὐτὸν ἀντιπροβαλοῦμαι μέλανα τὸν πόντον ἀντονομάζοντα· κἄν ὑπὲρ σαυτοῦ καὶ τοῦτο τοῦ ἔπους ἐκδέξῃ, ἐπὶ τὸν ἡεροειδέα πόντον μεταπλευσοῦμαι· τί τοῦ ποιητοῦ ἐντεῦθεν αἰνιτομένους; ἢ ἀχρωμάτιστον οἶμαι εἶναι καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ ὡς τὸν ἀέρα, ἢ, εἰ μὴ τοῦθ' οὕτως δοῖμεν ἔχειν, πολλὰ ἂν τὸ ἀπλοῦν ὕδωρ ἔξει τὰ χρώματα· τὸ ἡεροειδές, τὸ ἰοειδές, τὸ μέλαν, τὸ πολιόν, καὶ ἄλλα ἄττα ὅποσα τῆς ῥαψωδίας ἐστὶ μεταφέρειν. ἐξεδύθη σοι ἄρα ὁ οὐρανὸς τὸν κυανοῦν χιτωνίσκον τοῦ λόγου τοῦτον ἀπογυμνώσαντος.

Γῆν δὲ τις ἄρα καὶ ἀμφισβητοῖ, ὡς οὐ κατὰ φύσιν τῶ μέλανι κέχρωσται, κατ' ἔθνη καὶ τόπων ἐξαλλαγὰς καὶ μετάλλων ἐξαλλαττόμενα οἱ γινώσκων τὰ χρώματα, ὡς πῆ μὲν σιδηρίτην εἶναι, πῆ δὲ χρυσίτην, καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ ἀργυρίτην· καὶ τὸ ἕλον φάναι, παντοδαπὴν βούλει καὶ τὴν γῆν ἀποδοῦσαι ὁ περιέθου ταύτην μέλαν χιτώνιον, ἢ ἡμεῖς γε τῆ τοῦ λόγου μαχαίρα φθάσαντες αὐτὸ περιρρήξομεν; ἀποδύσεις γε πάντως αὐτός· τί γὰρ καὶ πεπαρωνηκυῖα ἢ παμμήτωρ μελαμορφήσει; ἀλλὰ τί μοι τούτων τῶν λόγων· τί δὲ πόρρωθεν καὶ ἐξ αἰθέρος ἔλκω τὰς ἀποδείξεις καὶ ἕλους Ἄθως καὶ Παρνασοῦς ἐπικυλινδῶ τῆ γραφῆ καὶ θαλάσσης ὅλας ἐποχετεύω τῶ λογῶ καὶ τυρανῶ τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆ μαρτυρία, ἐξὸν αὐτόθεν δεῖξαι τὴν τῶν χρωμάτων τούτων διαφορότητα; ὀπηνίκα γὰρ ἀκμάζει τε ἢ καθ' ἡμᾶς φύσις καὶ τὸν νεανίσκον ἢ τὸν μείρακα παραλλάττομεν, πυρρὰ μὲν ὡς τὰ πολλὰ ἡμῖν ἢ κόμη, πυρρὸν δὲ τὸ γένειον, ἔρευθος δὲ κύκλω περιγράφει τὴν παρεϊάν καὶ βάπτεται τὸ χεῖλος ἡλικία καὶ ὄση πρὸς κάλλος τῆ τοῦ κοκκίνου βαφῆ, καὶ ὅλως ἄγαλμά τι ἀγάκαλον τυγχάνομεν ἄνθρωποι, ὀπηνίκα δὲ ἢ τε φύσις γηράσοι καὶ συγγηράσοι τὸ ζῶον, λευκαὶ μὲν κατὰ τὸν εἰπόντα περὶ κροτάφοισιν ἔθειραι τὴν μέλαιναν κῆρα τοῦ θανάτου,¹ λευκὸν δὲ καθεῖται μέχρι καὶ κατὰ γονάτων τὸ γένειον, λευκὴ δὲ καὶ ταῖς ῥίσι ἐπιμυρμύρεται κόρυζα, λευκὸς δὲ καὶ τὰ χεῖλη περικάθηται σιέλως καὶ ὄχρα περιπλανᾶται τὴν παρεϊάν, καὶ ὅλως ἀσθένημα φύσεως ὁ Λόγος παρίστησι τὴν λευκότητα.

Ταῦτόν οἶμαι τούτῳ καὶ ἐπ' ἀσταχῶν ἔστιν ἰδεῖν· ἐπὶ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῆς τῆς ἀκμῆς καὶ τῆς ἥβης τοὺς στάχους ἢ φύσις τῶ πρασίνῳ κατακοσμεῖ, ὅταν δὲ ἀσθενήσωσι τε καὶ ξηρανθῶσι παντάπασι, τοῦ τρέφοντος ἐξικμασθέντος ἅπαντος ὕγρου, τότε δῆτα καὶ λευκανθίζουσι καὶ τὸν θερισμὸν ὡς θάνατον ἀπεκδέχονται. καὶ ἵνα τὰ λοιπὰ παρεάσω ὅσα ἐν φυτοῖς καὶ βοτάναις καὶ δένδρεσιν ἠρύθρωταί τε καὶ περιπρασίνωται καὶ ὥρα λειμώνων γίνεται, ἔτι δὲ ὅσα ἐν σμαράγδοις τε καὶ λυχνίταις – λίθοι δὲ οὗτοι τῶν πολυτίμων, ἐπειδὴ² τούτοις τὸ ζωογόνον αἶμα καὶ τῆς ὄλης ἡμῶν ξυστατικὸν φύσεως – τίς οὐκ οἶδε κεφαλὴν μὲν οἰκουμένης τοὺς βασιλέας, παράσημον δὲ βασιλέων τὴν πορφυρίδα; ἢ πυνθάνομαί σου καὶ μοι ἀπόκριναί· ποτέ πλεον τῆς γῆς ἀποδέχῃ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν καὶ εὐχρυστέραν εἶναι τίθης, ὀπηνίκα τῆ χιόνι λελεύκανται ἢ ὀπηνίκα πεπρασίνωται ταῖς βοτάναις; οὐκ ἂν οἶμαι τὸ πρῶτον ἐρεῖς, εἰ μὴ ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον λημᾶ σοι τὸ ὀπτικὸν τῆς ψυχῆς, ὡς καὶ τῆς καλλίστης ὥρων ἕαρος ὑπερθεῖναι τὴν κακίστην χειμῶνα.

Οὕτω μὲν ἡμῖν περὶ τούτων εἴρηται τε καὶ ἀποπέφανται καὶ ὀρθῶς ἴσως, σὺ δ' οὐκ οἶδ' ὅτι παθῶν, ὃ ἄνθρωπε, τό τε φοινοκοῦν διαβάλλειν ἐπικεχείρηκας, οἷς ἐκ τοῦ φόνου ἠτυμολόγηκας, μὴ εἰδῶς ὅτι δύναται τις καὶ ἀντετυμολογεῖν αὐτὸ ἐκ τοῦ φαίνειν διὰ τὸ φανότατον

that none of the simple bodies has color: not fire, not water, not earth. And if you point out that the poet calls the sea “gray,” I will point out in return that the same poet also calls the sea “black.”¹³ And if you invoke this verse in favor of your own argument, I will change my course and sail over the “air-like” sea:¹⁴ what does the poet indicate with this epithet? Either, as I believe, that water is devoid of all color, just like air, or – in case we do not accept that it is so – that water, being a simple body, will take on many colors: air-like, violet, black, gray, and all the other colors that can be gathered from the rhapsody. So there you go, heaven has taken off its blue cloak, as this argument has undressed it.

Who would dispute that earth is not naturally black, knowing that its colors vary depending on nations, different places, and metals; here it is rich in iron, there full of gold, and elsewhere of silver. Let me put it simply: do you want to remove this black garment that you put on many-colored earth yourself, or do you prefer that I cut it up with the blade of discourse and tear it off? Surely, you will take it off yourself. For why would the mother of all things wear black, even if she were drunk out of her mind? Why do I even bother with these words? Why should I continue to pull proofs out of the ether, overturn Mounts Athos and Parnassus entirely through writing, redirect whole oceans with my words, and rule over the elements with evidence, seeing as it is possible to prove the variegation of these colors straightaway? For at the point in our development when we blossom and grow past the age of the young man or boy, our hair is usually yellowish-red, our beard yellowish-red, and redness draws circles on our cheeks and stains our lips with scarlet, resulting in beauty, and we human beings form an altogether beautiful image. However, as our power of growth grows old and the image grows old together with it, white hairs in our temples, as the saying goes,¹⁵ foretell the black fate of death, the beard hangs white all the way down over the knees, below the nose white mucous bears witness to our age, white slobber encircles the lips and ocher is spread out over the cheeks. All told, the Word established white as the weakness of growth.

The same thing can, I believe, be observed regarding the ear of corn. For when they blossom and are in their prime, nature adorns the ear of corn with the color green, but when they are weakened and totally dried up, as all nourishing moistness evaporates, they too grow white and eagerly await death when harvest comes. Let us skip over the rest of the plants, herbs and trees that are red or green and are the fruits of the meadows. Let us skip over all emeralds and rubies – these are precious stones, since they flow with the blood that generates life and produces all of our growth. Who does not know that the head of the inhabited world is constituted by the rulers, and that purple is a distinguishing mark of rulers? Or let me ask you this, and answer me please: when do you most enjoy the surface of the earth and find it beautiful in color? When is it white with snow or green with herbs? I do not believe that you would pick the former, unless the eye of your soul is so blind that it prefers the worst season, winter, over the most beautiful, spring.

This is what I have to say and to show by reasoning regarding these things, perhaps correctly. But you, suffering from some unknown madness, tried to accuse the color red (*to phoinikoun*) in that you derived it etymologically from murder (*phonos*), unaware of the fact that it is possible to counter with another etymology and claim that it derives from

τῆς μορφῆς, καὶ τὸν ὅλον λόγον κατεμετάλλευσας. καὶ οὐ μόνος σὺ περὶ τὸ ἔργον ἠνέσχου πονεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ τὸν ἐξ Ἄσκρης σοφὸν γέροντα ἄνδρα πρὸ μυρίων ἤδη πού τῶν ἐτῶν Ἀϊδόσδε³ κατ' αὐτὸν ἐκεῖνον βεβῶτα δι' ὁποίας οὐκ οἶδα νεκυίας ἀνεστακῶς ξυνεργὸν παραλαμβάνεις τῇ μεταλλείᾳ, μοχθηρῶ γε πράγματι. ἀλλ' εἰπέ μοι, ὦ μεταλλουργῶν γενναιότατε, πῶς ποτε τὸ λευκὸν προθέμενος ἐπαιεῖν καὶ τὸ μέλαν; οὐκ οἶδα γὰρ ὅπως ἀντὶ κυανέου τῶ μέλανι κέχρησαι, ἐκεῖνο τῶν Ἡσιόδου προσαγήτοχας εἰς μαρτυρίαν τῶ λόγῳ, ἔνθα τὰς τῶν πάλα γενῶν ποιότητος ὁ σοφὸς ταῖς ἀπὸ γῆς ταύταις ὕλαις τῶ χρυσῶ καὶ τῶ ἀργύρῳ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀπέεικασε, καὶ τὸ λευκὸν ἀποσεμνύνειν ἔφησ τὸν ποιητὴν, οἷς ἀποσεμνύνει τὸν ἄργυρον. καὶ μὴν εἰ ταῦτα τοιαῦτα· τί μὴ τοῦ λευκοῦ μᾶλλον τὸ ὠχρὸν ἐπαιεῖς; τοῦ γὰρ ἀργύρου τὸν χρυσὸν ὁ ποιητὴς ὑπερτίθησιν, ὠχρὸν γε ὄντα· τί δὲ καὶ τὸ μέλαν ξυνεπαινωῶν, τό ἐξῆς τοῦ ἔπους ἀπεσιώπησας, ὅπου τὸ μέλαν σιδήρειον γένος ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον αὐτὸς διαβάλλει καὶ πονηρὸν εἶναι τίθεται, ὡς καὶ τοῦτο προαχθῆναι φάναι περὶ αὐτοῦ;

Μηκέτ' ἔπειτ' ὄφελλον ἐγὼ πέμπτοισι μετεῖναι
ἀνδράσιν ἀλλ' ἢ πρόσθε θανεῖν ἢ ἔπειτα γενέσθαι

ἢ τίς, εἰπέ μοι, ἡ ἀποκλήρωσις τοῦ μὲν ἀργυρέου γένους εὐφημουμένου, συνευφημεῖσθαι λέγειν καὶ τὸ λευκόν, τοῦ δὲ σιδηρέου βλασφημουμένου, μὴ καὶ τὸ μέλαν συμβλασφημεῖσθαι;

Ταῦτά μοι ὡς οἶόν τε περὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἐρρέθη· εἰ δὲ καὶ τῶ σοφῶ μὴ κατὰ γνώμην ἐρρέθη Καίσαρι, συγγνώμη τῶ λόγῳ, δυοῖν ὄντων φίλοι προτιμήσαντι τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ἦν καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν ἅπασιν τῶν ἀπάντων τιμᾶται.

radiate (*phainein*), since it is the most radiant kind of appearance. Then you made a mining enterprise of your whole speech, and you did not endure to work alone but through some sort of *nekuia* you raised the old wise man from Ascra¹⁶ who has gone “to Hades’ house,” as he himself says,¹⁷ some thousand years ago, and took him on as an associate in your mining – this wretched task! But tell me this, noble metalworker, why in the world did you apply yourself to praising white and black? For I do not know how you used black instead of blue, [and] invoked Hesiod as a witness in favor of your argument, those verses where the wise man likened the qualities of ancient generations with the earthly metals, gold, silver, and so on, and said that the poet praises white where he praises silver. If this is so: why do you not praise ocher instead of white? For the poet places gold, being ocher-colored, higher than silver. And why do you praise black, keeping silent about the rest of the verses, where the same poet accuses the “black” generation of iron and presents it as wicked, bringing himself to saying this about himself:

If only then I did not have to live among the fifth
men, but could have either died before or been born after!¹⁸

Or tell me, how absurd is it to claim that since the silver generation is spoken well of, white is spoken well of together with it, but since the iron generation is spoken ill of, black is not spoken ill of?

I have treated these things as far as I am capable. If I have not spoken in accordance with the opinion of wise Caesar, excuse [this] discourse, which has two friends but privileges truth over the other,¹⁹ and it honors it for ever and ever.

Commentary

1. προμαντεύονται scripsi : προμαντεύομαι V : προμαντευόμενοι MBb).
2. ἐπειδὴ MBb : ἐπὶ δὴ V.
3. Ἄιδόςδε MBb : Ἄιδός τε V.
4. Gregory of Nazianzos, *Poem*, 1.2.33, v. 14, PG 37: 929.
5. The theory that all colors derive from white and black comes from the pseudo-Aristotelian treatise *On Colors*. See Kuehni and Schwarz 2008: 32.
6. Aristotle, *Categories*, 4, 1b–2a.
7. Socrates is often used as an example of an individual human being in syllogisms. For the phrasing, cf. Plato, *Hippias Major*, 297b.
8. Cf. Porphyry, *Isagoge*, 9.
9. The legendary singer Arion was kidnapped by pirates. Facing certain death he sang a song in praise of Apollo and was saved by dolphins (Herodotus, *Histories*, 1.24).
10. Homer, *Odyssey*, 1.153.
11. Unlike Caesar, who famously uttered the proverb from Menander “let the dice be tossed” when he crossed the Rubicon (Plutarch, *Caesar*, 32.8), Prodromos’ opponent has unknowingly put himself in danger.
12. Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 2.7, 418b28.
13. Homer, *Iliad*, 1.350.
14. Homer, *Iliad*, 23.744, etc.
15. *The Greek Anthology*, 12.240.
16. Hesiod, the Greek poet from the small Boeotian village of Ascra.
17. Hesiod, *The Shield of Heracles*, Scut. 254; cf. Homer, *Odyssey*, 3.410, etc.
18. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 172.
19. Allusion to Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1096a.

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I.4.2

Philes and the Materials: Epigrams on Stones and Precious Metals

Manuel Philes (c.1270 or slightly later – after 1332/34 or mid 1340s)

MARINA BAZZANI, WITH A NOTE ON THE AUTHOR BY ANDREAS RHOPY IN COLLABORATION WITH MARINA BAZZANI

Significance

The following epigrams are extremely interesting, not only from a literary point of view, as they are the creations of one of the most talented Byzantine epigrammatists, but also because they offer modern readers a tool to understand the esthetic sense of the Byzantines, and the way they perceived works of art. Additionally, the frequent presence of multisensorial stimuli stirred by the contemplation of the objects may provide indications of the way Byzantine viewers reacted to these images. These compositions that focus specifically on the medium in which the object was carved – be it rock crystal, steatite, hard colored stones, precious metals, and pearls – are also splendid examples of the poetic understanding of tangible raw materials.

Introduction

The Author

Manuel Philes was born in Ephesos; he then moved to Constantinople and studied under George Pachymeres. His life coincides to a large extent with the reign of Andronikos II, Michael IX, and Andronikos III Palaiologos in the late thirteenth/early fourteenth centuries.¹ His name appears for the first time in 1294 in a letter of Maximos Planoudes; in 1297, he is attested as a member of an embassy to the khan of the Golden horde, Toqtai² to settle the marriage of Maria, daughter of the emperor Andronikos II to the khan. In 1304 he went to the khan of Tabriz, and in 1305–06 to Georgia, to recruit troops to deploy against the Catalans. Philes' position in these embassies is unclear, but suggests that he served as a court official, although it seems that his position was not fully secure, as there are instances of him complaining about late payment for his services.³

1 Stickler 1992: 19–36; *PLP* 29817; Rhoby 2016: 149–60.

2 Dölger 1960 no. 2201.

3 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, ed. Miller, II, 138.

Philes is better known as one of the most prolific poets of the Byzantine empire than as a prominent courtier: his oeuvre comprises more than 25,000 verses, which were commissioned by and addressed to the imperial family, members of the court, and the aristocracy, for example the Tarchaneiotes family. His poems were composed on different occasions: laudatory and dedicatory poems, tomb epigrams, and an enormous number of epigrams on works of arts (minor objects and monuments), as well as poems on flora and fauna, and dialogic compositions. Many of these verses were meant to be inscribed on things. Some of the verses that became verse inscriptions are, in fact, still extant today.⁴ For instance, one can still read his verses on the outer cornice of the chapel of the St. Mary Pammakaristos church in Constantinople.⁵ Like other authors before him (e.g. Theodore Prodromos) Philes was dependent on commissions and for this reason his poetic corpus is full of requests for proper remuneration; although he had connections with the most important personalities of the time, many of whom figure prominently among his patrons, he often complained in his poems about poverty, hunger, and illness. Many of these complaints are probably a literary cliché, but there may be some truth in them, since at the time the number of intellectuals gravitating around the imperial court and striving for patronage was very high.

Philes briefly suffered imprisonment and banishment from the court during the later years of the reign of Andronikos II; his misfortunes came to an end with the accession to the throne of Andronikos III, who in 1328 forced his grandfather to abdicate after a seven-year civil war. From this period we have a panegyric for the birth of John V, the heir to the throne, which occurred in June 1332; after this date, it becomes very difficult to follow Philes' circumstances.

Following the conventions of the genre, most of his verses are composed in either dodecasyllables, or political verse. Interestingly enough, very soon after his death Philes was already regarded as a model author for composing iambs. In an anonymous version of a treatise on rhetoric, dated after the middle of the fourteenth century, Philes is mentioned alongside the "ancient" authorities Sophocles, Gregory of Nazianzos, George of Pisidia, and Theodore Prodromos.⁶ Although scholarship has assumed that the prolific poet was active until the first half of the 1330s, there is some evidence that Philes might have lived until the middle of the 1340s.⁷

4 Cf. *BEIÜ* 1:4f; *BEIÜ* 2: 37f; *BEIÜ* 3: 96f.

5 See II.75.

6 Walz 1832–36, III 562 n. 37 = De Falco 1930: 112; cf. Rhoby 2009: 39 n. 14; Hörandner 2012: 129.

7 Rhoby 2016: 153–60.

Text A | Epigrams on Divine Images Carved in Different Stones

Ed.: Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Scor. 86–87, ed. Miller, I, 38

MSS.:⁸ Athens, EBE, *Μετόχιον τοῦ Παναγίου Τάφου* 351 (s. XIV), f. 183r

Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo, R.III.17 (s. XIV), f. 3v

Florence, BML, Conventu Soppressi 98 (s. XIV), f. 40r (only text a)

Paris, BNF, Graecus 2876 (s. XIV), f. 64v

Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, E. 55 (Martini 74) (s. XIV), f. 130r (only text a)

Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 1126 (s. XIV), f. 207v

Warsaw, Biblioteka Narodowa BOZ Cim. 125 (s. XIV), f. 234r

Florence, BML, Plutei 32.19 (s. XV), f. 108v

Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo, XIV.20 (s. XV/XVI), f. 22r

Moscow, Gosudarstvennyj Istoričeskij Muzej, VI.437 (s. XV) (only text a)

Other Translations: Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, nos. 112 and 113 (German)

Significance

These are excellent examples of dedicatory Byzantine epigrams; compositions which were generally meant to accompany the offer of votive, devotional, or religious objects. They assumed different functions, such as the description of the object, the record of personal piety, repentance, thanksgiving, and largesse. In this instance, Philes manages to elaborate on the same topic with a very limited number of verses, while creating an almost endless variety of images.

The Author

See p. 390–91, above.

Text and Context

There are no elements by which to date the following epigrams, or to identify their commissioner. It seems likely that these poems are actually about the same object, namely an image of Christ carved in a rock crystal. As they are quite similar, both in their length and in their making Christ's supernatural action the focal point of these verses, one can presume that Philes composed several versions of the epigram from which his patron could choose the preferred option. The poet focuses on the transparency of the crystal, which resembles the appearance of water, and underlines the paradox of hard and liquid substances coexisting in the same object by playing with the double meaning of the word κρύσταλλος, which means both crystal and ice. The extraordinary aesthetic effects of the crystal, which may be a consequence of gazing at the object in candlelight, are attributed to the miraculous action of the divine image carved on the object, as well as

8 Not consulted.

to the reverence that Christ the Creator rouses in His creation. The style of the epigrams is simple but, at the same time, these verses are sophisticated and carefully composed; Philes makes extensive use of paradoxes, *adynata*, and *homoiooteleuta* in order to convey the supernatural power exerted by the divine image and the extraordinary experience of the viewer.

Text

I. Εἰς λίθον κρύον, ἐν ᾧ ἦν γεγλυμμένη ἡ δεσποτικὴ εἰκὼν

“Υδωρ ὁ λίθος οὗτος, οὐκ ὄντως λίθος.¹
 πῆγνυσι δ’ οὖν καὶ τοῦτον εἰς λίθου φύσιν²
 ὁ πηγνύς εἰς κρύσταλλον ὑδάτων χύσιν,³
 μήπως ὁ τύπος ἐκλυθεῖς διαρῶρη.⁴

II. Εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν

Ἀμήχανον μὲν ἔστιν εἰς ὕδωρ γράφειν.⁵
 πλὴν ἔνθα Χριστός, εὐχερὲς καὶ τὸ ξέειν.
 ὕδωρ γὰρ ἦν ὁ λίθος, ἀλλ’ ἐξετράπη
 τὴν δεσποτικὴν εὐλαβηθεῖς εἰκόνα.⁶

Translation

I. On an image of Christ carved in rock crystal

This stone is water, not truly a stone;
 but he who hardens the flow of waters into ice
 hardens this also into (the nature of) stone,
 lest the image melts and flows away.

II. On the same

It is impossible to write on water,
 yet there where Christ is, the carving is effortless.
 for the stone was water, but has changed itself
 out of reverence for the image of the Lord.

Commentary

1. Again Philes plays with the contrast between the hard nature of the crystal and its transparency, which calls to mind the fluidity of water.
2. Reference to God’s creation of the land in Gen. 1:10.
3. *Homoioteleuton* is a rhetorical figure derived from classical literature. It implies the repetition of words ending in the same way at the end of two or more verses; in this case φύσιν/χύσιν.
4. Following the reading of other manuscripts, Braounou-Pietsch prints τύπος,⁹ which makes better sense, while Miller, who was only reading Escorial, had λίθος.
5. *Adynaton* is a figure of speech in the form of a hyperbole (exaggeration) taken to such an extreme level as to imply that a statement is impossible (for instance, “I believe this when hell freezes over”).
6. The wonder of the seeming transformation of water into a solid state is due to the supernatural powers contained in the divine image of Christ.

9 Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 192.

Text B | Epigrams on Images of Christ Carved in Different Stones

Ed.: Manuel Philes, *Poems*, par. 19–20, ed. Miller, II, 65–66

MSS.:¹⁰ Athens, EBE, Μετόχιον τοῦ Παναγίου Τάφου 351 (s. XIV), ff. 10v, 9v

Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo, R.III.17 (s. XIV) f. 4r

Paris, BnF, gr. 2876 (s. XIV), f. 65r

Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, E.55 (Martini 74) (s. XIV), f.131v*

Vatican City, BAV, gr. 1126 (s. XIV), ff. 208r and 207v

Warsaw, Biblioteka Narodowa BOZ Cim. 125 (s. XIV), ff. 234v and 227r

Florence, BML, Plutei 32.19 (s. XV), f. 109r

Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 914 (s. XV), f. 130r (only text b)

Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, no. 2911, (s. XV/XVI), f. 93v (only a)

Other Translations: Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder* nos. 114 and 115

Significance

The following epigrams are further variations on verses on small crystal objects. While at a first glance the poet seems to be describing the work of art, he is actually digressing on the appearance of the material, which resembles the natural elements associated with water, such as ice, snow, and dew; and also on the luminosity that irradiates everywhere from the crystal, feasibly when the object is hit by the sun rays or candlelight. Once again Philes manages to re-elaborate the same topic in a limited number of verses, but enriches it with several subtle variations.

The Author

See p. 390–91, above.

Text and Context

It is likely that Philes composed these epigrams for his patron to choose the preferred one, as they are about the same object and are also quite similar in their structure. Central to both compositions is the transparent and translucent crystal that simultaneously resembles snow, ice, and water. The multifaceted appearance of crystal allows Philes to consider different features of the object. In B.I the poet focuses on the whiteness and clarity of crystal, comparing it to snow and thus considering especially the chromatic and brightening effects of the object, which can illuminate the firmament; whereas in B.II Philes shifts the focus of the verses to the texture of the material, contrasting the appearance of firmness and fluidity in the crystal with that of water and snow. It is Christ, carved into the image, whose paradoxical nature permits the coexistence of water in both a liquid and a solid state.

¹⁰ Not consulted.

Text

I. Εἰς λίθον κρύον ἐν ᾧ ἦν ἐγλυμμένος ὁ δεσπότης Χριστός

Λίθος χαλασθεῖς¹ εἰς ὑπόκρισιν δρόσου
καὶ χιονωθεῖς καὶ Θεοῦ τύπον φέρων,
οὐ λίθος ἐστὶν ἀκριβῶς οὐδὲ δρόσος,
ἀλλ' αἰθριάζων οὐρανοῦ κύκλος τάχα.

II. Εἰς τὸν αὐτὸς

“Υδωρ ὁ λίθος, ἢ χιῶν αὖθις λίθος·
ὑφίσταται γὰρ καὶ δοκεῖ ρεῖν ἐν μέσῳ·
καὶ γίνεται ροῦς, καὶ παγεῖς λίθος μένει,
τοῦ δεσποτικοῦ θαυματουργοῦντος τύπου.

Translation

I. On a rock crystal on which the Lord Christ has been carved

A stone that has softened into the appearance of dew
turned white as snow and carrying the image of God,
it is neither truly a stone nor dew,
but rather brightens up the canopy of heaven.

II. On the same

The stone is water, the snow again is stone;
for it is set and seems to flow in the middle.
And it becomes a stream of water, yet, having hardened, stays stone,
since the image of the Lord is working miracles.

Commentary

1. χαλασθεῖς – χιονωθεῖς: assonance and homoioteleuton (see the Commentary, n. 3).

Text C | Epigrams on Enkolpia

Ed.: Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 196–97 no. 116; previous edition: Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Scor. 107, ed. Miller, I, 50

MSS.:¹¹ For the full list of manuscripts see Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 196–97 no. 116

Other Translations: Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder* no. 116

Significance

By drawing inspiration from the colors of the stone object, Philes manages to create a series of contrasts that mirror the supernatural power inherent in the enkolpion and the portrait of the prophet Daniel.

The Author

See p. 390–91, above.

Text and Context

The title found in the manuscript reveals that the object in question is an enkolpion, a small devotional object that was worn around the neck for protection. Enkolpia could bear a religious image (Christ, Mary, and the saints), carry an inscription, and often contain a relic. Usually, enkolpia were made of precious materials such as gold, enamel or, as in this case, jasper. Jasper is a quartz, most commonly red because of its iron content, but it could also be green, yellow, or brown; this semiprecious stone was used in Antiquity and the Byzantine era to make vases, seals, rings, and other artistic objects.¹²

In this epigram, Philes uses the beautiful and multisensorial appearance of the material in which the enkolpion is carved as a starting point for his verses. Thanks to its red and green veins, the poet proposes the image of fire and water to the viewer; these two incompatible elements coexist side by side within the stone thanks to the miraculous work of the prophet Daniel, who is portrayed on the enkolpion. The juxtaposition of fire and dew alludes to the miracle of the three youths in the furnace narrated in the book of Daniel. The three boys, who were condemned to be burnt alive by king Nebuchadnezzar because of their refusal to worship idols, were saved from the flames by an angel of the Lord who sprinkled them with a dewy breeze.¹³ The extraordinary concurrence of πῦρ and δρόσος within the stone evokes divine intervention, which will presumably be granted to the wearer of the enkolpion.

¹¹ Not consulted.

¹² *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst* 2: 152–64; *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 5: 322–32; Lipinsky 1983: 51–59.

¹³ Dan. 3:49–50.

Text

Εἰς ἐγκόλπιον ἴασπιν ἐν ᾧ ἔστηκεν ὁ προφήτης Δανιήλ· ἔχει δὲ φλέβας πρασίνους καὶ ἐρυθρὰς

Ὁ λίθος ὑγρός, ἀλλὰ πῦρ ἔνδον βλεπω.
 στέγει τὸ πῦρ ὁ λίθος, ἡ φλόξ τὴν δρόσον·
 καὶ θαυματουργεῖ Δανιήλ ζῶν ἐν μέσῳ·
 μὴ τοῖς πάλαι τέσσαρσι πέμπτος εὐρήθη;

Translation

On a jasper encolpion on which stands the prophet Daniel ; the encolpion has red and green streaks

The stone is moist, but I see fire in it.
 The stone sustains the fire; the flame the dew.
 And Daniel, alive in its middle, works wonders:
 Is this perhaps the fifth after the four of old?

Text D | Epigrams on an Image of the Sacrifice of Abraham Carved in Stone in the Blachernai

Ed.: Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 93–94, 97–99 nos. 31, 34, 36; previous edition: Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Scor. 98 and 101, ed. Miller, I, 44–45 and par. 23, ed. Miller, II, 66–67

MSS.:¹⁴ For the full list of manuscripts see Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 93–94, 97–99 nos. 31, 34, 36

Other Translations: Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 93–94, 97–99 nos. 31, 34, and 36 (German)

Significance

These epigrams offer an excellent example of the Byzantine approach to poetry, as well as of Philes' ability to elaborate time and again on the same theme with originality. In fact, although the poet is apparently dealing with the biblical episode of Abraham and Isaac, he is focusing his attention not on the story per se – it would indeed be hard for the (modern) reader to understand what these verses are about, were it not for the titles that accompany the composition, and the mention of Abraham's name in D.II – but rather on the esthetic effects that the carving exerts on the beholder and how they affect their perception of the object. As such, the precise details of the biblical narration seem to become ancillary to and yet are artfully conveyed: the extraordinary vividness of the artifact mirrors the miraculous nature of biblical events.

The Author

See p. 390–91, above.

Text and Context

These three short epigrams belong to a group of compositions scattered across different manuscripts, describing the depiction of the sacrifice of Abraham carved on stone; according to the title given in some of the manuscripts this stone relief was kept in the Blachernai, either in the area located in the north-western part of Constantinople or, perhaps, in the imperial church next to the homonymous palace that had become the habitual imperial residence under the Komnenoi and where the Palaiologan rulers also lived.¹⁵ There are no elements that allow us to identify who commissioned these verses or when they were commissioned, but one could assume that Philes created these in order to offer his patron a selection of epigrams from which he could choose one. All three compositions address two major points; first, the deceptive appearance of the object's material, for

¹⁴ Not consulted.

¹⁵ C. Mango, "ODB 1, s.v. Blachernai, Palace and Church of"; Talbot 1993.

it looks like stone but is, in fact, not; second, the vitality and verisimilitude of the relief. In order to convey the liveliness and vibrancy of these religious images, Philes uses evocative words such as πνοή (breath), τόνος (energy), ἔμπνοος (living), δύναμις (force), and then juxtaposes them to words such as ἄτεγκτος (unwavering) and ἄψυχος (lifeless, unanimated), in order to emphasize their supernatural qualities.

Text

I. Εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν

Μή, μή, θεατά, μή παρέλθης τὸν λίθον
 ὡς λίθον ἀπλῶς· οὐδὲ γὰρ ὄντως λίθος,
 ἀλλὰ πνοῆς ἄδηλον ἐγγέας τόνον,
 γλυφῆς χάριν ἔδειξεν ἐψυχωμένην.

II. Εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν

Ὁ λίθος εἰ ζῆ καὶ δοκεῖ τάχα πνέειν,
 τῆς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ τοῦτο θαυματουργίας·
 μή τάχα κρυπτὴν ἐξ Ἐδέμ χέας δρόσον
 ἤμειψε τὴν ἄτεγκτον εἰς ἔμπνουν φύσιν;

III. Εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ

Ὁ λίθος ὡς γῆ δένδρα καὶ κτήνη τρέφει,
 τάχα δὲ καὶ πνέοντας ἀνθρώπους φύει·
 καὶ μὴν τίς ἐμπέφυκεν ἰκμάς τοῖς λίθοις,
 ἢ τίς πνοῆς δύναμις ἐν τοῖς ἀψύχοις;
 5 οὐκοῦν τέρας ὁ λίθος, οὐκ ὄντως λίθος,
 εἰ καὶ πάλιν ἔμεινεν εἰς λίθου φύσιν.

TranslationI. On the same¹

Do not, do not, O viewer, pass by the stone
 as if it was merely a stone; in fact, it is not truly stone,
 but having infused an invisible living energy,
 displays the animated grace of the carving.

II. On the same

If the stone lives and almost seems to breathe,
 this too is a consequence of Abraham's miracle-making;
 perhaps, pouring some secret dew from Eden²
 has he changed the unwavering nature (of stone)³ into a living one?

III. On the same⁴

The stone, like the earth, feeds trees and cattle,
 and almost also generates living men;
 indeed what sap is rooted in the stones,
 or what breathing force in that which is lifeless?
 5 Surely the stone is a wonder, not just a stone,
 even though it has retained the nature of stone.

Commentary

1. The title of this epigram seems to refer to the title of epigram Miller I, 43 Esc. 93 which reads as follows εἰς τὴν ἐν λίθῳ πεποιημένην φιλοξενίαν τοῦ Ἀβραάμ (on the representation of the hospitality of Abraham carved in stone), the first of a series of eleven compositions about the biblical episode narrated in Gen. 18:1. The same epigram, however, appears also in other manuscripts with the title εἰς τὸ αὐτό εἰς τὴν ἐν Βλαχέρναις ἐγλυμμένην θυσίαν τοῦ Ἀβραάμ, seemingly referring to the Sacrifice of Isaac. From such a short and unspecific text one can not affirm with certainty which of the two biblical episodes it describes; nonetheless, considering the strong emphasis bestowed upon the living and breathing animation of the carving, one could assume that the poet wants to create a contrast between the sacrifice of Isaac, which should have resulted in death, and its unexpected outcome, which is mirrored in the liveliness of the carving. The same confusion concerning the epigram title occurs also in the case of epigram D.2.
 2. The dew of Eden has miraculous powers: it can save from fire (see text C.1) and it can also soften and revive the unyielding nature of stone.
 3. The choice of this adjective is probably intentional and reconnects, if not linguistically at least conceptually, with δρόσον (dew) in the preceding verse; ἄτεγκτος (unyielding, unwavering) derives from privative α and the verb τέγωω (to wet, make wet and then, figuratively, to grow soft, be moved) which is linked to the idea of moisture conveyed by δρόσον.
 4. The title refers to the title of the epigram immediately preceding that reads as follows: εἰς τὴν ἐν Βλαχέρναις ἐγλυμμένην θυσίαν τοῦ Ἀβραάμ.
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Text E | Epigrams on Images of the Virgin Mary and Christ Flanked by Angels

Ed.: Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 197–99 nos. 117 and 118; previous edition: Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Fl. 231, ed. Miller, I, 433; Manuel Philes, *Poems*, par. 123, ed. Miller, II, 160–61

MSS.:¹⁶ For a list of the manuscripts see Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 197–99 nos. 117 and 118

Other Translations: Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 197–99 nos. 117 and 118 (German)

Significance

These epigrams express the comprehensive and far-reaching action of sacred images; the supernatural effect of the divine mysteries depicted on the objects, which is brought across through the artistry of the carvings, becomes at the same time a replication of the reaction that the believer experiences before the image.

The Author

See p. 390–91, above.

Text and Context

There are no elements that help date these epigrams or identify for whom Philes composed them. It is possible to speculate on the nature of the objects described in these verses; in the first epigram Philes is probably describing a carving of the Virgin holding the Christ child and flanked by angels, perhaps similar to some of the surviving steatite carvings of the Virgin Mary;¹⁷ the second epigram seems to be about a similar small carved stone object with Christ and the angels sculpted on it. The crucial theme of epigram E.I is one of the fundamental religious dogmas of Christianity, namely the virginal motherhood of Mary; Philes, confronted by such an unfathomable event and unable to explain it, can only resort to a paradox and affirm that even angels, who are incorporeal creatures, were turned into stone by the potency of such an awe-inspiring divine mystery.

Another Christian dogma, Christ's incarnation, is at the core of epigram E.II. As in the case of Mary's virginity, the subject is beyond human comprehension and the poet finds himself unable to explain it; the only way to convey the extraordinariness of it and the sense of reverence that Christ's divine and human nature inspires in corporeal and incorporeal creatures alike, is the paradoxical pronouncement that even angels have become petrified in amazement before the image of Christ as God incarnate. In both cases the poet is using a double entendre by transferring the concrete materiality of the stone, which characterizes these devotional objects, to the petrified nature of the angels.

¹⁶ Not consulted.

¹⁷ Kalavrezou-Maxeiner 1985, 1: 79–88, 208–09.

Text

I. Εἰς τὴν θεοτόκον ἣ παρειστήκεισαν ἄγγελοι ἐκ λίθου πεποιημένοι

Τοῦ σοῦ τόκου τὸ θαῦμα, σεμνὴ παρθένε,
κὰν τοῖς τύποις οὐχ ἦττον εὐρέθη ξένον·
τί γὰρ ἄν ἄλλο τοὺς ἀϋλοὺς ἀγγέλους
ὡς ἐξ ὕλης ἤμειπεν εἰς λίθου φύσιν;

II. <Untitled>

Βαβαὶ χάρις ἀφραστός εἰς ἔμπνουν τύπον·
Θεὸς γὰρ ἔστιν, εἰ δὲ καὶ σὰρξ εὐρέθη.
τοῦτ' αὐτὸ κατέπληξε καὶ τοὺς ἀγγέλους·
ὁρῶ γὰρ αὐτοὺς ἐκτραπέντας εἰς λίθον.

Translation

I. On an image of the Theotokos flanked by angels carved in stone

The wonder of your childbirth, revered Virgin,
even in the images reveals itself no less bewilderingly.
For what else could have changed the immaterial angels¹
into stone, as if they were made of matter?

II. <Untitled>

Oh! Ineffable is the grace in the living images;²
indeed he is God, even if he became flesh.
And this is what astounded even the angels:
for I see them having been turned into stone.

Commentary

1. The virginal birth of Christ is such an inexplicable and inconceivable occurrence, not only for human beings, who as earthly creatures cannot understand the divine mystery, but also for celestial creatures, such as the angels, who, despite their vicinity to God, are also unable to shrug off the awe caused by the vision of the Theotokos and her wondrous maternity. The reaction of the angels at the sight of Mary can be considered a reflection of the reaction of the beholder when confronted by the sacred mystery depicted on the objects.
 2. On living images see C, l.1; D, l.1; D2, and D3.
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Text F | Epigram on an Image of Christ Studded with Pearls

Ed.: Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Fl. 230, ed. Miller, I, 433

MS.:¹⁸ Florence, BML, Plutei 32.19 (s. XV), f. 273r

Other Translations: None

Significance

Another example of a description of a religious object; this short epigram is also an example of the poet's ability to evoke striking visual contrasts and religious echoes through the clever use of language.

The Author

See p. 390–91, above.

Text and Context

It is impossible to date the epigram or determine the identity of the patron who commissioned it. It is also difficult to specify the object described in these verses: probably a dark textile bearing the image of Christ surrounded by pearls fastened on the rim; Philes seems to refer to an ἀήρ,¹⁹ which is the largest of three liturgical veils carried in the ritual procession that preceded the liturgy of the Eucharist,²⁰ and it was used to cover the chalice and paten when they had been placed on the altar. Otherwise, it is possible that such a preciously embroidered silk cloth could have functioned as an icon veil and have covered the holy image. The poem develops around the antithesis created by the juxtaposition of the dark cloth and the glowing white color of the pearls, which adorn the cloth's edge; moreover, Philes adds to such a visually conspicuous image, by offering a deeper, transcendent connotation: for the dark dye is read as a foil for the perils of the passions, from which Christ, thanks to his salvific action, can save the patron, the poet, and the reader/ beholder too. The first person singular verb φύγω can refer to anyone who is contemplating the veil and reading the epigram.

¹⁸ Not consulted.

¹⁹ A. Gonosová, *ODB*, s.v. "Aer."

²⁰ R. F. Taft, *ODB*, s.v. "Great Entrance."

Text

Εἰς εἰκόνα δεσποτικὴν ἔχουσαν ἐν τῇ περιφερείᾳ μαργάρους εἰς ἀέρα μέλανα πεπηγότας

Ὡς μαργαρίτην τὸν θεάνθρωπον μέγαν
 γραφέντα λεπτοῖς ἀγλαΐζω μαργάροις
 χέας ὑπ' αὐτοὺς ἐκ βαφῆς εἶδος μέλαν,
 ὡς ἂν τὸ βαθὺ τῶν παθῶν φύγω σκότος.

Translation

On an image of Christ with pearls in the frame fastened on a dark background

Like a great pearl,¹ the God-man
 is depicted and I adorn him with fine pearls;
 and I have poured under them the dye of darkness²
 so as to escape³ the gloom of the passions.⁴

Commentary

1. An allusion to Clement of Alexandria *Paidagogos* 2.13: Καὶ οὐκ αἰσχύνονται αἱ κακοδαίμονες περὶ ὄστρειον ὀλίγον τοῦτο τὴν πᾶσαν σπουδὴν πεποιημένοι, ἐξὸν ἀγίῳ κοσμεῖσθαι λίθῳ, τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ θεοῦ, ὃν μαργαρίτην ἢ γραφὴν κέκληκέν που, τὸν διαυγῆ καὶ καθαρὸν Ἰησοῦν/“And the wretched creatures are not ashamed at having bestowed the greatest pains about this little oyster, when they might adorn themselves with the sacred jewels, the word of God, that the Scripture has somewhere called a pearl, the pure and translucent Jesus.” Women should not adorn themselves with pearls and jewels, rather with the word of God, which is called a pearl in the scripture (Mt. 13:44–52).
2. The poet is describing the dark color of the textile – black or perhaps deep purple. This rather convoluted expression bears a double function; on the one hand it underlines the chromatic contrast between the translucency of the pearls and the darkness of the veil. On the other, it mirrors and, at the same time, defies the gloom of the passions: the darkness of the passions is dissolved by the translucency of the pearls, which is a metaphor for the healing effect of Christ.
3. Philes often moves between several layers of meaning in his verses, and in this case he bestows upon the verb φύγω a threefold implication. φύγω, *in primis*, refers to the donor, who, by means of his votive gift, is also seeking the redemption of his soul. At the same time though, one can almost be certain that the poet too, as the creator of these verses, is expressing his own plea for salvation by choosing this verbal form. Finally, keeping in mind that epigrams and inscriptions were often read aloud by the Byzantines, it is possible to think that Philes, using the first person singular, wants to extend the salvific effect of the appeal to all who will come across these verses, thus conferring a universal relevance to what was originally a personal act of piety
4. μέλαν–σκότος: both vv. 3 and 4 close with words connected to the semantic field of obscurity; however, the apparent impression of doom and gloom evoked by μέλαν–σκότος is eased and almost erased by the presence of the preceding φύγω.

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I.4.3 Author Unknown

An Icon of the Baptism Adorned with Precious Stones

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: Spingou, *Poetry for the Komnenoi*, B1. Other editions: *eadem*, *Text and Image at the Court of Manuel Komnenos: Epigrams on Works of Art in Marc. Gr 524* (unpublished M. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 2010), 38; T. Papamastorakis, “The Display of Accumulated Wealth in Luxury Icons: Gift-Giving from the Byzantine Aristocracy to God in the Twelfth Century,” in *Βυζαντινές Εικόνες: Τέχνη, Τεχνική και Τεχνολογία*, ed. M. Vassilaki (Heraklion, 2002), 41 n. 18; Lambros, “Ο Μαρκιανός κώδιξ” no. 39, 16, vv., 110–14

MS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 524 (s. XIII ex.), f. 39r

Other Translations: Spingou, as above, *Text and Image*, 39

Significance

The epigram refers to an icon adorned with gold, rubies, and emeralds. As well as celebrating the pious act of the reigning emperor adorning a holy icon, the poet guides the viewer towards interpreting the materials used for the offering.

The Author

See F. Spingou, I.3.3 in this volume.

Text and Context

The Baptism of Christ, which was commemorated together with the feast of the Epiphany on the sixth of January of each year, was one of the most important Byzantine religious feasts. It was illustriously celebrated in the Hagia Sophia with a banquet in the Imperial Palace to follow.² The epigram below refers to an icon displayed on that day in the Palace. The icon was richly adorned with a precious revetment commissioned by the emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80). The exact date of composition and the precise function

¹ Consulted.

² See the *Book of Ceremonies*, 26 (35), transl. A. Moffatt and M. Tall, 143–47. Cf. later, in the middle of the fourteenth century, Pseudo-Kodinos, ed. Verpeaux, p. 219, l. 27, p. 220, p. 239, ll. 15–18, transl. Macrides *et al.* 167–69. Indicative for the importance of the feast is the fact that this is one of two (the other is Christmas Eve) when the emperor appeared with his crowned sons and despots in a prokypsis (Macrides *et al.* 2013: 17, 132–46). On the Baptism of Christ see Mt. 3:13–17; Mk. 1:9–11; Lk. 3:21–22.

cannot be discerned with certainty. Even if the general meaning of the preposition *εἰς/ eis* in the title cannot support an inscriptional function for this poem,³ the descriptive content (cf. deictic verbs in v. 6–7 and v. 10) and the final supplication on behalf of the emperor (vv. 11–14) give credence to such a stipulation. The epigram guides the viewer to see and interpret the icon and the material with which it is adorned.

The epigram is divided into three sections. In the first section the poet mentions the luxurious materials that the emperor used for the ornamentation of the icon (vv. 1–5); the second section is a description of the icon of the Baptism (vv. 6–9); and the third is a supplication on behalf of Manuel (vv. 10–14). As implied in the first two verses, the icon was ornamented with rubies,⁴ gold, and emeralds. The author explains the theological meaning of these materials. Rubies symbolized the coals that God gave to Isaiah in order to be purified.⁵ The purifying nature of the coals also symbolized Holy Communion and, finally, Christ. The precious stones (probably emeralds⁶) brought to the poet’s mind the “cornerstone,” by which David implies Christ.⁷ There is no need to explain the usage of gold, which follows upon the “hierarchy of metals”: gold – as expected – was the metal of the aristocracy and the emperor.⁸ The cultural background of the viewer will provide him/her with all the necessary preparation to know that the use of gold demonstrates imperial authority and wealth.

The second section eloquently describes the painted depictions. The greenness of the Earth symbolizes Christ who, according to the poem, is depicted in the river. Furthermore, John the Forerunner and the Holy Spirit (as a dove) were depicted. Perhaps, the two aforementioned prophets, David and Isaiah, were also portrayed.⁹ The icon of the Baptism usually shows, on the one shore, John the Forerunner, who baptizes Christ and, on the other, two or more angels.¹⁰ Even if all the other iconographic elements (even the green color of the background) are described, the angels are, strangely, not mentioned. Instead, the two prophets are mentioned, which may suggest that they have “replaced” the angels here. A personification of the river Jordan may also have been represented, as in other icons of the Baptism.¹¹

3 On the preposition *εἰς* see Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 25–26, with references to earlier bibliography.

4 Cf. Manganaios, *Poems*, 30, 51–58.

5 Is. 6: 5–7; cf. Skylitzes, *Dedicatory Verses for the Sacred Arsenal*, vv. 40–41.

6 Cf. Manganaios Prodrmos, *Poems*, 30, 53: πλουτεῖς καὶ λίθον σμάραγδον ὡς χλόην ἔξανθοῦσα, transl. Jeffreys and Jeffreys: “but also rich in the nature and power of life.”

7 Cf. Mk. 12: 10–12.

8 Cf. Cutler 1981: 772–76.

9 Cf. the depiction of David and Solomon in a late twelfth-century icon with the *Anastasis* from the Kremlin; Evans and Wixom 1997: 166–67 (no. 15).

10 Schiller 1971: 134–35; Ristow 1965: 23–24.

11 Ristow 1965: 46. See, for example, the miniatures in the Gospel book in the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul no. 3, f. 3v (first half twelfth century/Paliouras 1989: 128); the *Paris Psalter*, f. 26 (Ristow 1965: 31); *Chludov-Psalter*/Moscow, *Hist. Mus. MS. D.29*, f. 117 (mid ninth century/Ristow 1965: 32); the mosaic in the Hosios Loukas (Schiller 1971 no. 362); cf. Nicholas Mesarites, *Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles*, XXIV, 2.

The third section is a supplication for the emperor. The poet asks on behalf of the emperor, to grant him (the emperor) power and victories against the enemies of the empire. Such a supplication is normal in dedicatory epigrams.¹²

Titos Papamastorakis' interpretation of the same epigram should be noted. He suggests plausibly that there is an implied parallel between Christ and the emperor in this epigram.¹³ However, there are other instances in which this parallel is drawn more clearly. For example, the name of Manuel is the same as Emmanuel (= Christ); for this reason, it seemed appropriate to depict Manuel on the reverse of imperial coins or seals, and Emmanuel–Christ on the obverse.¹⁴

12 Cf. Papamastorakis 2002: 38–39.

13 Papamastorakis 2002: 41.

14 Magdalino, *Manuel*, 434–35.

Text

Εἰς εἰκόνα τῆς βαπτίσεως τοῦ Χριστοῦ προτιθεμένην ὅτε ὁ πατριάρχης ἐν παλατίῳ ποιεῖται τὰς τῶν Φώτων εὐχάς, κοσμηθεῖσαν παρὰ τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἀγίου ἡμῶν βασιλέως

Εἷ τις ποταμὸς ἄνθρακος φλόγα βρῦει,
 ὠχρόν τε χρυσὸν καὶ χλόην ἀνθεῖ λίθου,
 ἔργων ἐπ' αὐτῶν ἔστι νῦν Ἰορδάνης·
 Ἡσαΐας γὰρ ἄνθρακα Χριστὸν βλέπει
 5 λίθον δὲ Δαυὶδ ἀκρόγωνον συγγράφει.
 τὸ δὲ χλοάζον γῆς ὑπεμφαῖνον χροάν
 τὴν ἔκγονον γῆν, σάρκα Χριστοῦ, δεικνύει
 ὃν ἔνδον ὄντα δεικνύει τῷ Προδρόμῳ
 περιστερὰ τὸ Πνεῦμα φανέν ὑψόθεν.
 10 χρώζει δὲ χλωρότητι χρυσοῦ τὸν τύπον
 ὁ πορφυρανθῆς Μανουὴλ αὐτοκράτωρ,
 οὗ, λίθε Χριστέ, τὸ κράτος μὲν ἐδράσας,
 ἐχθρῶν δὲ τὴν βλάστησιν ὡς ἀγροῦ χλόην
 βολαῖς φλογίσαις μυστικῶν πυρανθράκων.

Translation

On the icon of the Baptism of Christ, which is displayed when the Patriarch gives blessings in the Palace for the feast of Epiphany and which has been ornamented by our mighty and holy Emperor.

If there is a river swelling with coal's flame
 and flourishing with pale gold¹ and greenness of stone,
 then it is the Jordan in this work here.²
 For Isaiah sees Christ as a coal,³
 5 and David describes Him as a cornerstone.⁴
 The verdure, which lets the soil's color shine through,
 symbolizes the Earth that has sprung forth, the flesh of Christ,
 whose presence within is pointed out to the Forerunner
 by the (Holy) Spirit, appearing from above as a dove.⁵
 10 The purple-blooming emperor Manuel
 tinges the icon with gold's pallor.
 May you strengthen his power, O Christ Cornerstone,⁶
 and may you burn down the crop of enemies, like wild weeds,
 by scattering mystical embers of fire.⁷

Commentary

1. Gold here symbolizes the earthly polychromy, the so-called *poikilia*, and heavenly pallor.¹⁵
2. V. 1 implies the materials of the icon revetment: gold, emeralds, and rubies.

The source of the reference in vv. 1–2 is Gen. 2:11–12. The four rivers of Heaven are described. Among them Pheison is described as follows:

ὄνομα τῷ ἐνὶ Φισίων· οὗτος ὁ κυκλῶν πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν Εὐϊλάτ, ἐκεῖ οὗ ἔστιν τὸ χρυσίον. τὸ δὲ χρυσίον τῆς γῆς ἐκείνης καλὸν καὶ ἐκεῖ ἔστιν ὁ ἄνθραξ καὶ ὁ λίθος ὁ πράσινος.

The name of the one is Pheison; it is the one that encircles the whole land of Heuilat, there where the gold is; now the gold of that land is good, and carbuncle and light green stone are there.

The anonymous poet of the epigram in the *AM*, by interpreting the River Jordan as one of the rivers of Heaven, connects the Old and the New Testaments.

The personification of the Jordan is a *topos* in both art and literature that persisted throughout the centuries.¹⁶ In art, the River Jordan appears in icons of the Baptism, as a boyish or elderly figure, standing at the foot of Christ, half-submerged in the water.¹⁷ In literature, the River Jordan also appears alive. See for example, the following verses on Baptism by the celebrated twelfth-century poet Theodore Prodromos:

– Τί δρᾷς, ποταμέ; ποῦ τὰ ρεῖθρα σου στρέφεις; – Οὐκ οἶδα τί δρῶ, πλὴν τὸν ἔστωτα τρέμω. – Οὐχ’ εἰς γε μὴν ἔστηκεν. – Εἰς δέ με στρέφει· ὅποιος οὗτος, τὴν περιστερὰν σκόπει.

– What are you doing River? Why do you change your stream?– I do not know what I am doing; I fear the one who stands in front of me [Christ]. – He is not the only one who stood in the river. – But, the only one who changes my flow, and look at the dove (to understand) who that is.¹⁸

3. Cf. Is. 6:5–7.
4. Cf. Ps. 90 (91):12; Mt. 4:6. The image of the “stone” (λίθος) by the repetition of the word is turned into the central idea of the poem. The stone is connected to the River Jordan, one of the Rivers of Paradise. The stone flourishes, as indeed the deeds of Jesus “flourished after his Baptism in the River Jordan.” But Christ is also a stone, the cornerstone (v. 5).

The repetition of the word stone (λίθος) highlights the simile of Christ and stone, and turns it into the central idea of the poem. Firstly, in vv. 2–3, the stone is immediately connected to the Jordan. The stone flourishes as did the works of Jesus which “flourished” after his Baptism in the Jordan. The Jordan, in this passage, is one of the

¹⁵ See Maguire, *Nectar and Illusion*.

¹⁶ On the rivers of Paradise and the problematic personification of Rivers see Maguire, *Nectar and Illusion*, 22.

¹⁷ Keiko 2001: 172–78.

¹⁸ Greek text: Theodore Prodromos, *Tetrasticha*, 190a; the translation is mine.

rivers of Paradise (see Commentary, n. 2). Secondly, in v. 5, the poet states that David describes Christ as a cornerstone.¹⁹ However, this cannot be found in the Book of Psalms. Rather, the phrase derives from Is. 28:16: Ἴδου ἐγὼ ἐμβαλῶ εἰς τὰ θεμέλια Σιών λίθον πολυτελεῖ ἑκλεκτὸν ἀκρογωνιαῖον ἔντιμον εἰς τὰ θεμέλια αὐτῆς, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυθῆ.

5. Cf. Mt. 3:13–17.

6. Ps. 67 (68):13–14.

7. Is. 5:24 ; Lk. 3:9.

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Magdalino, *Manuel*

Maguire, *Nectar and Illusion*.

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¹⁹ Cf. Athanasios, *On the Holy Scriptures*, 24–31.

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I.4.4 Author Unknown (? twelfth century)

Making Colors: Seven Ink Recipes

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: I. Ink Production. P. Schreiner and D. Oltrogge, *Byzantinische Tinten-, Tuschen und Farbrezepte* (Vienna, 2011) no. 13, 38–39; see also C. M. Mazzucchi, “Inchiostri bizantini del II secolo,” *RSBN*, n.s. 42 (2005), 157¹

II. <Untitled>. Schreiner and Oltrogge, as above, no. 14, 40; see also Mazzucchi, as above, 159–60

III. Ink Production. Schreiner and Oltrogge, as above, no. 4, 34; see also Mazzucchi, as above, 160

IV. Other. Schreiner and Oltrogge, as above, no. 15, 40–41; see also Mazzucchi, as above, 160–61

V. Production of Saffron Color. L. Benedetti, “Ricette byzantine del XII secolo per tincture inchiostri,” *Aevum* 88/2 (2014), 443–44. The text printed below emends the edition of Benedetti, normalizing the punctuation, accentuation, and the usage of subscribed iota.

VI. Production of Red Color/Lachas. Benedetti, as above, 447

VII. The Golden-Writing is Made as Follows. Benedetti, as above, 450–51

MS:² I. Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 222 inf. (= Martini and Bassi 886) (c.1180–86), f. 105v

II. Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 222 inf. (= Martini and Bassi 886) (c.1180–86), f. 105v

III. Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 222 inf. (= Martini and Bassi 886) (c.1180–86), f. 218r

IV. Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 222 inf. (= Martini and Bassi 886) (c.1180–86), f. 218r

V. Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 222 inf. (= Martini and Bassi 886) (c.1180–86), f. 218v

VI. Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 222 inf. (= Martini and Bassi 886) (ca.1180–86), f. 218v

VII. Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 222 inf. (= Martini and Bassi 886) (ca.1180–86), f. 218v

I am indebted to Manolis Alissavakis, Joel Kalvesmaki, Dimitris Krallis, and Andrea Olsen Lam for their valuable comments and corrections and to Andrea Capra for his help with the manuscript.

1 Schreiner and Oltrogge have regularized the punctuation of Mazzucchi's edition in I–III.

2 Consulted.

- Other Translations:** I. Schreiner and Oltrogge, as above, 38–39 (German); Mazzucchi, as above, 158–59 (Italian)
- II. Schreiner and Oltrogge, as above, 40 (German); Mazzucchi, as above, 159–60 (Italian)
- III. Schreiner and Oltrogge, as above, 34 (German); Mazzucchi, as above, 160 (Italian)
- IV. Schreiner and Oltrogge, as above, no. 15, 41 (German); see also Mazzucchi, as above, 161 (Italian)
- V. Benedetti, as above, 444 (Italian)
- VI. Benedetti, as above, 447 (Italian)
- VII. Benedetti, as above, 450–51 (Italian)

Significance

These are the earliest surviving recipes in Medieval Greek regarding the production of ink and pigments. The texts below concern the making of black/brown, yellow, red, and gold inks. The recipe for yellow is the only one surviving in the Greek language. The texts also attest to commercial activity related to the ingredients of black ink.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

Ink, in different colors, is the primary material for writing a medieval book. Byzantine scribes most frequently used black ink, which becomes brown with age. Like most of their pre-modern counterparts, scribes in Byzantium used iron-based ink that was made with nut-gall, Arabic gum, and vitriol. Inks of different color, such as gold or red, were also used in book production. The historical record for ink production in Byzantium is extremely meager, with recipes on dark-colored inks occupying a conspicuous place in the surviving record. Peter Scheiner and Doris Oltrogge have collected more than eighty such recipes written in Medieval Greek dated to between the twelfth and the fifteenth centuries.³ Since these recipes usually appear as brief, untitled, notes, they were often neglected by early modern authors of manuscript catalogs. One can only be confident that more recipes will come to light with the publication of modern manuscript catalogs.

³ Schreiner and Oltrogge 2011; for a summary of the project in English and some further observations on the corpus as a whole see Oltrogge 2011. After the publication of the collection with recipes from Reinsch and Oltrogge, the publication of a few more has followed; see Parpulov *et al.* 2010: 201–16 for a treatise on the technique of icon painting dating from the middle of the fourteenth century; and Benedetti for further recipes from MS. Milan, Ambrosianus gr. C 222 (= Martini and Bassi 886) (s. XII) and MS. Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria 1808 (s. XV).

At any rate, the current number of surviving recipes is comparatively small considering (a) that more than four hundred western medieval manuscripts are known to deal with the production of pigments and inks, and (b) that the earliest surviving Latin source is a Carolingian translation from a Byzantine original.⁴ The small number of the surviving records becomes even more surprising in view of the numerous recipes for inks and pigments in Greek to be found in Late Antique papyri, as well as the great number of Post-Byzantine and Early Modern treatises also written in Greek on the same subject.⁵

The following recipes are the earliest surviving attestations for the manufacturing of scribal ink in the Byzantine world.⁶ They can be found in the celebrated MS. Ambrosianus C 222, famed for the Classical and Late Antique texts it contains. Carlo Maria Mazzucchi placed the production of the manuscript in Constantinople, between 1180 and 1186, and he identified its scribe as a certain Constantine who must have been among the prominent members of the Constantinopolitan literary circles.⁷ The seven recipes this book contains are copied by the pen of this primary copyist and are found in three different sections of the same manuscript, ff. 105v, f. 218r, and 218v.⁸ In all cases the recipes have been added wherever the copyist found blank space between texts he had already copied. The recipes on ff. 115v and 218r (texts nos. I–II and III–IV, respectively) were copied at around the same time as other additions were made. All four of them refer to the production of iron-based ink. The recipes on f. 218v (texts nos. V–VII), concern the production of color inks. Perhaps the main scribe of the manuscript, Constantine, got hold of these recipes later, as they are copied in a different pen than the recipes for the dark ink. The recipes for color ink appear on a page that begins with a list of names of the months according to the Egyptians and they are mixed with more notes on poetic meters and grammar (*contra* the notes on f. 105v and 218, which were continuously written). The same folio (f. 218v) has suffered water damage resulting in the loss of one quarter of the original text.

The recipes are in a simple demotic Greek. The first four notes have almost impeccable spelling in the manuscript while a confusion between omicron and omega occasionally appears in the last three. This might indicate that the scribe – a very well-educated individual – copied the notes from at least two different sources. Practical texts such as these recipes are most often anonymous and it is impossible to establish even the approximate date of their composition. In this respect, the first recipe in the Milan manuscript is unique, since its composition has been dated close to the time the manuscript was written

4 See Oltrogge 2011: 61.

5 Oltrogge 2011: 61–62.

6 It is clear in the phrasing of the recipes that all but the fifth concern ink purposed for use in writing or painting manuscript and not textiles; for a discussion of the purpose of manufacturing yellow ink see n. 46.

7 See Mazzucchi 2004, 2003. Mazzucchi's dating is heavily dependent on the presumed date of John Tzetzes' death. This date however has recently come under dispute and scholarship tends to place it after the "mid 1160s." On the later history of the manuscript see Mazzucchi 2007. On the dispute regarding Tzetzes' year of decease (where earlier scholarship is also mentioned) see Cullhed 2015: 53–62.

8 These are published first in Mazzucchi 2005: 157–61 and Benedetti 2014: 443–44, 447, 450 (both with Italian translation).

(that is, in the twelfth century). Mazzucchi convincingly argued the case, based on the recipe's direct reference to the city of Andramyttos as a blooming commercial center.⁹

All the recipes below have previously appeared in print, but in different publications. The recipes are offered in their original order, so as to encourage the appreciation of these texts in their manuscript context. The Commentary includes a few notes related to text criticism (some of which have been mentioned by previous editors), because different readings can change the meaning of the text, can offer insights on the use of measuring units, and can bring to light further details on the implementation of the recipes.

9 See the Commentary, n. 34.

Text

f. 105v

I. On making ink

†Κατασκευή τοῦ μελανίου

†† Εἰ θέλεις ποιῆσαι μελάνιον ἄχρι τζυκαλίου μικροῦ ἑνός, ὀφείλεις ἔπαρεῖν κικίδια ἑκατὸν ἢ ὅσα θέλεις πρὸς τὸ ποσὸν ὃ θέλεις ποιῆσαι. Χώρισον δὲ μαῦρα βαρέα βυζωτὰ καὶ βάλε ἀναλόγως καὶ τὰ ἕτερα δύο εἶδη οἷον τὸ καλάκανθον¹ οὐγγίας β´ καὶ κομμίδιον οὐγγίαν α´. καὶ τὸ μὲν κικίδιον γίνεται εἰς χώρας τῆς Ρωμανίας· οὐδὲ γὰρ φέρουσι τοῦτο ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας ἢ ἀπὸ τίνος ξένης χώρας. φέρουσι γοῦν τοῦτο ἀπὸ τῆς Ρωμανίας χώρας καὶ πωλοῦσι τοὺς Ἑβραίους, μικτὰ δὲ καὶ ἄσπρα καὶ μαῦρα. σὺ γοῦν ἐπιλέγου τὰ μαῦρα καὶ βαρέα. τὸ καλακάνθιν τὸ καλὸν ἐκ τῆς Κύπρου φέρουσιν· ὑελλίζει γὰρ καὶ οἷον κιτρινίζει. ἔρχεται δὲ καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν μερῶν τοῦ Ἄτραμύττου. καὶ αὐτὸ καλὸν μικρόν τι. γίνεται δὲ καὶ εἰς ἄλλους κοινούς τόπους ἡμετέρους, ἀλλὰ οὐκ ὠφελεῖ· ἀποσυναγεται γὰρ τὸ ὄλον χῶμα. τὸ δὲ γε κομμίδιον τὸ καλὸν φέρουσιν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας. Ξηραίνουσι γὰρ τοῦτο ἐκεῖ καὶ φέρουσι ξηρὸν τοῦτο. γίνεται δὲ καὶ ἀπὸ δαμασκηneas καὶ ἀπὸ ροδακινέας, ἀλλ’ οὐ τοσοῦτον ἐστὶ καλόν. καὶ τὸ μὲν κικίδιον ἔστι τὸ κυριώτατον τῶν ἄλλων δύο εἰδῶν καὶ ἡ οὐσία τοῦ μελανίου ὡσανεὶ. καὶ ὅταν βράζη ὡς ἄσπρον ἐστὶ. τὸ δὲ γε καλάκανθον ἐμβληθὲν μαυρίζει τὸν ζωμὸν τοῦ κικιδίου. τὸ δὲ κομμίδιον σπιλβώνει. καὶ εἰ ἐμβληθῆ πλέον τοῦ δέοντος πηκτὸν² ἀποκαθιστᾷ πολὺ τὸ μελάνιον καὶ ἀπόξυλον τὸ βαμβάκιον.

Τὸ δὲ ἔψημα γίνεται οὕτως †

Εὐρίσκεις καινούργιον τζυκάλιον καὶ ἐμβάλλεις γλυκὺ ὕδωρ, ὅσον γεμίσεις τὸ τζυκάλιον μετὰ τῶν κικιδίων τῶν συντεθλασμένων· συνθλᾶς γὰρ αὐτὰ μετὰ τίνος μαρμάρου ἢ σφυρίου εἰς καθαρὸν τόπον. εἴθ’ οὕτως βάλλεις αὐτὰ εἰς τὸ τζυκάλιον μετὰ καὶ ὄξους ὅσον τὸ ἡμισυ τοῦ ὕδατος τοῦ τζυκαλίου· ἡμισυ γὰρ ἄς³ ἔνι τὸ ὕδωρ,⁴ καὶ τὸ ἡμισυ ὄξος. ὅταν γοῦν ποιήσουσιν ἐντὸς τοῦ τζυκαλίου τὰ κικίδια μετὰ τοῦ ζωμοῦ τοῦ μικτοῦ ὕδατος καὶ ὄξους ἡμέρας κᾶν ἧ’ ἢ δέκα, τότε βράζεις αὐτὰ καὶ ταράσσεις. καὶ ὅταν μεσασθῆ, τότε σακελλίζεις μετὰ χονδροῦ πανίου ἀραιοῦ τὸν ζωμὸν εἰς ἄλλο σκεῦος, ἢ πινάκιον ἢ τζυκάλιον. καὶ τὰ ὑποσυναγόμενα συνθλάσματα τῶν κικιδίων ρίπτεις αὐτά. εἶτα πάλιν βάλλεις τὸν ζωμὸν ὃν σακελλίσεις εἰς τὸ τζυκάλιον καὶ μετ’ ἐκείνου τὰ ἕτερα δύο εἶδη, καὶ βράζουσιν ἀμφοτέρα. ἔνι δὲ καὶ τὸ κομμίδιον ἀποβεβρασμένον⁵ εἰς ὄξος,⁶ τὸ δὲ καλακάνθιν οὐ. καὶ εἰ μὲν θέλῃς, τάρασσέ τα, εἰ δὲ μή γε, ἕα· βράζουσι γὰρ μόνα. ὁ ζωμὸς γὰρ ὁ πρῶτος τῶν κικιδίων ταράσσεται, ὅταν δὲ ἐμβληθῆ ὅλα ὁμοῦ, οὐκ ἔχεις ποιεῖν ἐξ ἀνάγκης. ὅταν γοῦν ἐπάρῃ βράσιν πρῶτην καὶ δευτέραν τὸ τζυκάλιον, τότε καταβιβάσεις αὐτὸ κάτω. καὶ ψύχεται, καὶ βλέπεις τοῦτο εἰς τὸν ὄνυχά σου, καὶ εἰ μὲν ἴσταται, ἔνι καλόν, εἰ δὲ τρέχῃ, βάλλεις καὶ ἄλλο καλακάνθιν καὶ περιβράζει μικρόν τι πάλιν. καὶ οὕτως πάλιν σακελλίζεται καὶ γέμιζεις τὸ ἀγγεῖον ὃ θέλεις. καὶ οὕτως γράφεις.

II. Εἰ θέλεις δὲ ποιῆσαι καὶ δεύτερον μελάνιον, εἰς τὰ κικίδια τὰ προσακελλισθέντα βάλλεις καὶ τὰ ἕτερα δύο εἶδη ἀναλόγως καὶ ὕδωρ γλυκὺ, οὐχὶ ἀλμυρόν, καὶ οὕτως τίθης εἰς τὸ πῦρ καὶ βράζουσι καὶ ποιεῖς δεύτερον μελάνιον. τὸ καλακάνθιν τρίβεις ψιλὰ⁷ καὶ οὕτως ἐμβάλλεται. τὸ δὲ κομμίδιον οὐ κοπανίζεται, ἀλλὰ οὕτως κόπτεις καὶ ἐμβάλλεις.

Translation

I. Ink Production²³

If you wish to make ink (in a quantity) up to one small pot, take a hundred galls²⁴ or as many as you wish, according to the amount of ink you wish to make. Select the black, heavy and lumpy ones,²⁵ and add a good proportion of the other two ingredients – that is, two ounces of vitriol²⁶ and one ounce of gum.²⁷ The galls are produced in the land of *Romania* [i.e. Byzantium];²⁸ for they do not import it from Alexandria or any other foreign land.²⁹ So they³⁰ bring these from *Romania* and they sell them to Jews,³¹ the white and black [galls] mixed.³² Pick the black and heavy [galls]. They bring the good vitriol from Cyprus; this is seemingly green and can even have a yellowish appearance.³³ It also comes from the area around Atramyttion.³⁴ This [the vitriol] is also fairly good. It [i.e. the vitriol] also comes from our other common lands, but it is not useful, for it is collected completely mixed with soil. But they³⁵ bring the good gum from Alexandria. For they dry it out there and then transport it. It [i.e. the gum] can also be made out of plums and peaches, but this is not as good [as the gum from Alexandria]. The galls are the most important of the other two ingredients and indeed, the very substance of the ink. And when they boil [them], they look almost white/silver.³⁶ When the vitriol is added [into the mixture], it blackens the wash of the galls. But the gum becomes shiny. If more [gum] than necessary is added, [the ink] becomes quite thick and it results in making the paper hard as wood.³⁷

The boiling happens as follows: Take a new pot and add drinking water, and then fill the pot with the crushed galls, crush them using a marble or hammer on a clean spot. Then place them into the pot together with vinegar³⁸ in the proportion of half of the water in the pot. So these [pots] will contain half water and half vinegar. After the galls, together with the wash of water mixed with vinegar, have completed [soaking] in the pot for nine or ten days, boil them and shake them altogether. And as soon as the [mixture] is half way through its boiling time, then strain³⁹ the wash with a thick cloth [and pour it] into a different vessel or a bowl or a pot. And after gathering the shards of the galls, throw them also [into the pot]. Then, pour the wash that you have filtered into the pot again, along with the two ingredients, so they may all boil together. The gum was boiled in vinegar, but the vitriol was not. And should you wish, shake them; if not, let them rest, because they will boil by themselves [and so they will mix]. The first wash of the galls is the first to shake by itself: as soon as all are mixed together, there is no need for that [i.e. shaking them]. Take [the mixture] off the fire after the second boil. After it is cooled down, try it with your pinkie finger and if [the mixture] stains it [i.e. the finger], then it [i.e. the ink] is good. If it drips, then add more vitriol and boil it for just a bit longer. Filter this again and fill [with it] any pot you wish. And so you can write [with your ink].

II. If you wish to make a second [pot of/quantity of] ink [from the same galls],⁴⁰ add to the strained galls the other two ingredients [i.e. the gum and the vitriol] in good proportions together with the drinking water – not salt water – and place them over the fire. And when they will boil, you will make a second ink [from the same galls]. Finely grate the

Τὸ ὄξος διατοῦτο ἐμβάλλεται εἰς τὸ κικίδιον, διὰ τὸ ποιεῖν τὸ μελάνιον δριμύ καὶ κολλητικόν⁸ εἰς τὴν χάρτην. τὸ κομμίδιον ποιεῖ στιλπνότητα, τὸ δὲ καλακάνθιν μαυρίζει τὸν ζωμὸν τῶν κικιδίων. γίνεταί τὸ μελάνιον καὶ μετὰ τῶν δύο εἰδῶν, ἀλλὰ ἂν οὐκ ἐμβληθῆ καὶ τὸ κομμίδιον, στιλπνότητα οὐ ποιεῖ τὸ μελάνιον.

† Τὸ καλακάνθιν καὶ τὸ κομμίδιον εἰ θέλῃς καμπανίζεις αὐτά, εἰ δ' οὐ θέλεις, ἀπὸ στοχασμοῦ βάλλεις αὐτά εἰς τὸ τζουκάλιον. †

f. 218r

III. Κατασκευή μελανίου⁹

Οὐγγία μία καλακανθίου καὶ β' κικιδίου καὶ γ' κομμιδίου, ὁμοῦ οὐγγία ς'. βάλε δὲ ἐν ταῖς ς' οὐγγίαις ὕδωρ βροχινὸν λίτραι τρεῖς. τὸ οὖν κομμίδιον καὶ τὸ καλακάνθιν καὶ μία ἡμισυ λίτρα ὕδωρ ἐμβάλλονται εἰς ἕν ἄγγεϊον. τὸ δὲ κικίδιον τεθλασμένον καὶ τὸ ἕτερον ὕδωρ εἰς ἄγγεϊον ἕτερον. καὶ μετὰ ἡμέρας ἧ' βραζομένα τὰ ἄγγεϊα ἰδίως καὶ ἰδίως ἐνοῦνται. καὶ μικρὸν ἄλλο ἀναβρασσόμενον ἔστι τὸ μελάνιον.

IV. † ἄλλο.

Κόπτεται χονδρὸν τὸ μαῦρον βυζωτὸν κικίδιον καὶ ἐμβάλλεται ἐν ἄγγεϊῳ μετὰ βροχινοῦ ὕδατος, καὶ ἠλιάζεται ἕως λυθῆ τὸ κικίδιον ὡσεὶ πηλός. ἐν ἐτέρῳ δὲ ἄγγεϊῳ ἀποβρέχεται κομμίδιον, καὶ ὅταν ἐκλυθῆ τέλεον τὸ κομμίδιον,¹⁰ ἐμβάλλεται ἐν αὐτῷ καλακάνθιν τετριμμένον καὶ ὕδωρ, εἴ γε θέλει, καὶ ἄλλο. εἶτα ἐπιτίθεται τῇ ἀνθρακιᾷ ἢ ἀποβροχῇ τοῦ κικιδίου καὶ ἐψομένη καλὰ σακκελίζεται. καὶ αὖθις ἐπιτίθεται ἐπὶ στακτοπυριᾷ καὶ περιβραζομένη¹¹ ἐπιβάλλεται ἐν αὐτῇ ἢ ἀποβροχῇ τοῦ καλακανθίου καὶ τοῦ κομμιδίου καὶ μετὰ μικρὸν διόλου ταρασσῶν αὐτὴν ἐμβάλλεις ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ὄξος δριμύ. καὶ εἴθ' οὕτως καταβιάσας αὐτὴν τοῦ πυρὸς ἠλίαζε ἡμέρας τινάς. εἰς τὴν οὐγγίαν¹² τὸ κικίδιον ἐμβάλλεται τῆς βροχῆς ὕδωρ λίτρα μία ἡμισυ, καλακανθίου ὑελλίνου οὐγγίαι¹³ τρεῖς καὶ κομμίδιον τοσοῦτον, καὶ ὄξος καυκίον.

f. 218v

V. † κατασκευή τοῦ κρόκου

Εἰ θέλεις ποιῆσαι αὐτὸν πάνυ λαμπρὸν εἰς τὸ βάπτειν : –

Ἄγόρασον ἀμωνιακὸν ἄσπρον καλὸν κἂν ἐνὸς τεμαχιδίου καὶ κομμιδίου¹⁴ ἐτέρου ἐνός. καὶ βάλε ὁμοῦ τὰ αὐτὰ εἰς καυκίον μετὰ ὕδατος γλυκέος ἢ ἄλμυροῦ· καὶ ἄς ποιήσωσιν ἀμφοτέρα ἐν τῷ ὕδατι κἂν β' ἡμέρας μέχρις ὅτου λυθῆ ὡς ὕδωρ. εἴθ' οὕτως βάλε ταῦτα εἰς τζουκάλιν¹⁵ καὶ θές ἐν τῷ πυρὶ, ἵνα ἐπάρωσι βράσιν μικρὰν μίαν. καὶ οὕτως καταβιάσον ...¹⁶ καὶ ἀντὶ χλιαροῦ ὕδατος, βάλε ἀπὸ τοῦ ζωμοῦ ἐκείνου ... ἀεὶ γὰρ οὕτως πέφυκεν εἶναι ὑδατώδης καὶ μὴ πεπηγώς. : –

vitriol and, when this is done, add it [to the mixture]. The gum should not be ground, but chop it into pieces as it is and [then] add it [to the mixture].

The vinegar is added to the gall for the following reason: it makes the [color of the] ink very sharp and persistent on paper.⁴¹ The gum makes it shine, while the vitriol blackens the wash of the galls. The ink is made with only these two ingredients [i.e. gall and vitriol], but if gum is not added, the ink has no shine.

† If you wish, weigh⁴² the vitriol and the gum, if not, just add these [ingredients] to the pot according to your estimate. †

III. Ink Production

One ounce of vitriol, two ounces of gall and three of gum, [these make] six ounces altogether. Add to these six ounces three more liters of rain water. Then, the gum, the vitriol, and one and a half liters of water should be poured into one vessel. And the crushed galls and the rest of the water [should be poured] into a different vessel. After the [contents of the] two vessels have fermented³⁹ separately from each other for eight days, [the contents of the vessels] should be mixed. And after [the mixture] is boiled for a bit longer, you will have the ink.

IV. Other

A black lumpy nutgall is thickly chopped and it is placed into a vessel together with rain water. It is left under the sun until it is dissolved like mud. The gum has been soaked in a different vessel. When the gum has perfectly dissolved, vitriol is added to that and more water, if is indeed needed. Then the wash with the gall is put over the fire and after it is well cooked, it is strained. And again, it [i.e. the wash with the gall] is placed over the fire.⁴⁴ And while it [the wash] bubbles up⁴⁵ the solution of gum and vitriol is added. Do not shake [the product] at all for a while. Add strong vinegar to that. Then, take [the product] off the fire and let it dry out under the sun for a certain amount of days. For one and a half liters of rain water add an ounce of gall, three ounces of green vitriol and the same amount of gum, and also a cup of vinegar.

V. Production of Saffron Color⁴⁶

If you wish to make this [i.e. saffron] extremely shiny for dyeing [follow this]:

Buy good quality gum-ammoniacum⁴⁷ of white color, and if possible in one piece and another [kind of] gum. Place them together into a cup along with water, either drinking or salty. And leave them both there in the water for up to two days, until [the ingredients] dissolve [and become] like water. Then place them into a pot and boil them over a fire. Subsequently, take them off the fire ... and instead of lukewarm water, add some of that wash ... For if you always do it this way, it will remain watery and it cannot ferment [properly].

VI. † σκευασία τοῦ λαχᾶ

† τὸ λαχᾶ λέγεται τῇ Σύρων καὶ Ἀρμενίων διαλέκτῳ, λούκ· οὗ ἡ σκευασία γίνεται οὕτως· χορίγιον ἀνθρώπινον ἑβδομάδος μιᾶς ἢ καὶ δύο. πρῶτα μὲν σακελλίζεται, εἶτα ἐμβάλλεται εἰς τζουκάλιν¹⁷ καὶ βράζει καλῶς. καὶ ἔτι βράζοντος, ἐπιβάλλεται ἐν αὐτῷ ὁ λαχᾶς τετριμμένος καὶ καθαροκοσκινισμένος, ὀλίγον ὀλίγον ταρασσόμενος ἔτι μετὰ ξύτρου. καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο ἐπιβάλε ἐν αὐτῷ στύψιν Ῥωμαϊκὴν καὶ αὐτὴν τετριμμένην καὶ κοσκινισμένην.¹⁸ καὶ μικρὸν βράζοντος, σακελλίζεται ἔτι ζέοντος καὶ ἡλιάζων ἡμέρας τινὰς αὐτῷ¹⁹ γράψον· τὸ χορίγιον ἢ τὸ βροχινὸν ὕδωρ καὶ μᾶλλον τὸ πρῶτον, λίτραι β´, ὁ λαχᾶς λίτρα μία, καὶ ἡ στύψις σταλάγματα δ´. †

VII. † ἡ χρυσαφία γίνεται οὕτως.

Ῥινίζεται τὸ χρυσάφιον μετὰ ῥινίου φιλοῦ· εἶτα τρίβεται εἰς μάρμαρον Ῥωμαῖον ἕως γένηται ὡς χροιάδιν. εἶτα λαμβάνεις θεῖον ἄπυρον τοῦ χρυσαφίου ἰσόσταθμον καὶ τρίβεις καὶ αὐτὸ εἰς ἕτερον μάρμαρον καὶ μεθὸ²⁰ στεγνώσεις τὸ τρίμμα τοῦ χρυσαφίου μίξον τὸν θεῖον ἄπυρον μετ' αὐτοῦ καὶ σύντριπον ἐπὶ μαρμάρῳ. καὶ οὕτως λαβὼν χωνίον χρυσοχικόν²¹ ἐκπύρωσον αὐτὸ σφοδρῶς. εἶτα ἔμβαλε τὸ μίγμα ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ καῦσον ἕως ἐκλείπει τὸ θεῖον καὶ οὕτως ἐκβαλὼν καὶ πλῦνον²² αὐτὸ ὕδατι γράψον.

VI. Production of Red Color/*Lachas*.⁴⁸

Lachas [i.e. lac] is called *louk* in the language of the Syrians and Armenians.⁴⁹ It is manufactured as follows: Human urine, one or two weeks [old]. First it should be filtered, then poured into a pot and well-boiled. While still boiling, add [to the urine] the *lachas* [sticklac] which is ground, cleaned and sifted⁵⁰ – [add this] slowly, while you shake [the pot] using a cloth.⁵¹ After that add the alum,⁵² that is also ground and sifted. As soon as it has boiled briefly, it should be strained while it is still hot. After leaving it under the sun for a few days you can write [with it]. The human urine or the rain water – better [to use] the former: two liters; *laches* [sticklack]: one liter [ounce?];⁵³ and the alum: four drops.

VII. Chrysography is Made as Follows⁵⁴

The gold is filed with a fine file. Then, they [i.e. the filings of gold] are ground on porphyry marble⁵⁵ until they become like powder. Then you take the same amount of unbaked sulfur as the gold, and you grind it as well on a different marble. After that dry out the filings of gold, mix it with unbaked sulfur, and again grind it on marble. Then put [the mixture] in a crucible for melting gold and heat it to a high temperature. Then add the mixture to that [pot] and set it on top of a strong fire, until the sulfur disappears. Then take it off the fire, and after you cleanse it with water, write [with your ink].

Commentary¹⁰

1. Above the line is written: τὸ κύπριον ἐστὶ καλόν = “the one from Cyprus is good.”¹¹
2. Comma after πηκτόν is noted in Schreiner and Oltrogge 2011.
3. ἄς in Mazzucchi 2005: 158 and Schreiner and Oltrogge 2011: 38.
4. Another hand added: γλυκύ δε = “also drinking [water].”
5. Above, the same scribe also suggests the reading προβεβρασμένον with a note above ἀποβεβρασμένον.
6. A different hand has added: πρό τινων ἡμερῶν, τὸ δὲ καλακάνθιν οὕτως φυλάττεται ἕως αὐτῆς τῆς ὥρας καθ’ ἣν βράζεις τὸ ζωμὸν τῶν κικιδίων, καὶ τότε ἐμβάλλεται = “the vitriol is saved for a few days before the time when you boil the wash with the galls. Only then should it be added [to the wash].”
7. ὑψηλὰ cod.
8. κολλητικόν suggested Mazzucchi, the manuscript has κόλληται.
9. Title on the margin: † ἕτερον περὶ μελανίου = “other [recipe] about ink.”
10. κικίδιον reads in the manuscript.
11. περιβράζονται Mazzucchi (2005: 161) and Schreiner and Oltrogge (2011: 40). I have also modified the punctuation here. Schreiner and Oltrogge 2011: 40 add a full stop after στακτοपुरιᾶ and comma after περιβράζονται.
12. λίτραν in the manuscript.
13. λίτραι in the manuscript.
14. κομίδ’ in the manuscript; κομίδ[ι] Benedetti.
15. τζουκάλ manuscript ; τζουκάλ[ι] Benedetti.
16. The manuscript has a lacuna at this point. The first word after the lacuna is also hardly legible. Benedetti suggested that the lacuna μεγ[ά]λ[α]. I read ... τ.σα.
17. The manuscript reads τζουκάλ; Benedetti suggested τζουκάλ[ι].
18. κοσκηνησιμένην in the manuscript and Benedetti.
19. αὐτό in the manuscript and Benedetti.
20. Instead of the Classical Greek μεθ’ ὃ.
21. χρυσοχικόν in the manuscript, χρυσοχοϊκόν Benedetti; cf. χρυσοχονικόν in Schreiner and Oltrogge 2011 no. 41.1, p. 57.
22. πλύνον in the manuscript, corrected by Benedetti.
23. The terms that are used in the titles of ink recipes to indicate manufacturing are συσκευασία or σκευασία, κατασκευή, and ποίησις.
24. Reference to nutgalls, which are found on oak trees. They are created by the oak tree as a defense against insects which puncture the tree to store their eggs.¹² Nutgalls are rich in tannin, which is the key ingredient for making black ink.
25. The author of the recipe suggests later that black nutgalls should be preferred over the white ones. The black galls were collected before the insects had escaped after

10 Except otherwise noted nn. 1–13 include observations on the original text also mentioned in Oltrogge and Schreiner 2011 and Mazzucchi 2005.

11 See the Commentary, n. 22.

12 See Cardon 2014: 406–09.

becoming an adult and so they preserve more of the tannin. White galls, by contrast, were harvested after the insects had made their way out; for this reason, they preserve less tannin.¹³

26. Χαλάκκανθος or κολάκκανθος is the iron sulfate or ferrous sulfate ($\text{FeSO}_4 \cdot 7\text{H}_2\text{O}$), which is traditionally used in the Mediterranean as mordant in dye recipes. It was also called “Roman vitriol” and it is distinguished by its greenish color (see also n. 33). In a few texts, the same term was applied to blue vitriol ($\text{CuSO}_4 \cdot 5\text{H}_2\text{O}$).
27. “Arabic gum” or *Acacia Arabica* is the dried exudate from the hardened sap of various species of the acacia tree. It was originally collected from the *Acacia Nilotica*.¹⁴
28. Galls from the Morea and the Aegean islands are small, very dark, and lumpy. They contain around 29–30 percent tannin.¹⁵

The term “Romania” – coined in the fourth century – denotes all countries conquered by Rome. Since Constantinople was considered the second Rome and Byzantines named themselves “Romans,” the term Romania could be put to use for the lands of Byzantium.¹⁶

29. Byzantine merchants were known to go to Alexandria (and Cairo) in search of goods until the very end of the twelfth century.¹⁷ Alexandria was the main Mediterranean outlet for spices and other oriental commodities after the eleventh century.¹⁸ The text later attests to imports of gum from Alexandria. This gum was particularly famous.¹⁹
30. The text does not specify to whom the personal pronoun refers. Probably the reference is to merchants (πραγματευταί), either Byzantine or Italian (esp. Venetian or Genoese).²⁰
31. Jews in Constantinople played a crucial role in the tanning industry.²¹ There are ample references to their activities dated to the twelfth century.²² It cannot be entirely excluded that the galls were also used for making ink for writing, since the flourishing Byzantine–Jewish communities of the twelfth century employed their own scribes.²³
32. On black and white galls, see n. 25. The author of the text does not specify whether the galls are brought mixed or whether they are sold to tanners mixed.

13 Cardon 2014: 408.

14 Cardon 2014: 447–49; for its use in Byzantine ink recipes see Schreiner and Oltrogge 2011: 113.

15 Cardon 2014: 409.

16 On the term “Romania” see Pirenne 1939: 17 n. 1; I owe this reference to Dimitris Krallis.

17 Jacoby 2000; see also Laiou 2002: 749–50.

18 Jacoby 2000: 30–31.

19 See Schreiner and Oltrogge 2011: 113.

20 On the role of the Italian in the commerce between Egypt and Byzantium see Jacoby 2000.

21 It has been suggested that the Byzantine emperor Romanos Lekapenos (r.920–944) forced Jewish communities to be occupied with the tanning industry, however this speculation has been proved unsupported. See Jacoby 2011: 229–33; see also Bowman 1985: 55–56 and esp. 338–40, where the relevant source is offered in translation and with a commentary.

22 Jacoby 2011: 230–31.

23 See Holo 2009: 112–19 and p. 60 n. 144 for references to scribes in private letters.

33. The “vitriol of Cyprus” is Copper-II-Sulfate (CuSO_4), that also contained some iron ($\text{Fe}\cdot\text{CuSO}_4$).²⁴ This vitriol was produced near copper ore deposits and it was also used as a blackening agent for leathers.
34. Also spelled Atramyttium, modern Edremit. A town on the northwest coast of Asia Minor, part of the *thema* of Neokastra in the twelfth century.²⁵ Mazzucchi notes that this reference to Atramyttion offers a specific date for the recipe:²⁶ the region came under the protection of Manuel Komnenos after 1165, when it was re-colonized,²⁷ but in the years 1196–97 the city was pillaged by Genoese pirates.²⁸ The Byzantines lost control of the city to the Crusaders in 1205, at the famous battle named after the city. The terminus *ante quem* set by the historical events related to Andramyttion coincides well with the date that the same modern scholar suggests for the Ambrosianus manuscript.
- Byzantine iron mines, from which the Copper-II-Sulfate would have been extracted, have been relatively recently excavated between the Hellespont and the Gulf of Adramyttion.²⁹
35. Again the text does not specify to whom the personal pronoun refers.
36. The Greek word ἄσπροον can indicate both white and silver.
37. This might be an indication that the recipes were addressed to scribes as well as to painters of miniatures. Note the use of βαμβάκιον (mean. cotton) for indicating paper.³⁰ Arabic paper was used in Constantinople from at least the late tenth century. Italian paper came to substitute for it from around the year 1300.³¹
38. Vinegar and other acidic solutions, such as wine, were thought to promote the extraction of tannins.³²
39. The word σακελλίζω is the Byzantine word for σακίζω or σακεύω (LSJ, s.v.).
40. This ink will presumably be of a lesser quality, since most of the tannin in the galls will be used for the first wash. The suggested use of water instead of vinegar would make the color of the ink even less lively.
41. Note the use of ἡ χάρτης, instead of the usual ὁ χάρτης or τὸ χαρτίον. Cf. the attested τὸ χάρτη.³³ On the properties of vinegar as acidic solution see n. 38.
42. The word καμπανίζω is attested in sources after the sixth century CE and it derives from Latin, see LSJ and LBG, s.v. καμπανίζω.

24 See Karpenko and Morris 2002: 998; for further details see Oltrogge and Schreiner 2011: 127.

25 See Haldon 1999: 97.

26 Mazzucchi 2005: 162.

27 Cf. Choniates, *History*, 150, 35–561, transl. Magoulias, 85.

28 Choniates, *History*, 481.2–482.7, transl. Magoulias, 264.

29 See Pernika *et al.* 1984: 533–99 and Wagner *et al.* 1986: 723–52.

30 Cf. the tenth-century Suda (s.v. πάμβας) where it is indicated that the formal πάμβας or παμβάκις was already substituted by βαμβάκιον. Most often the word βα(μ)βίκιον was used for paper.

31 For a comprehensive reference on book production in Byzantium see Oikonomides 2002: 590.

32 For the importance of vinegar and similar acids in ink recipes see Schreiner and Oltrogge 2011: 92–99.

33 See the useful but incomplete Atsalos 1971: 138–39 (see also the book reviews included in the repr. version of Atsalos' book, 2001).

43. Here I translate βραζόμενα. The word βράζω usually means “to boil,” but the passage rather gives it the meaning “to ferment” or “to macerate.” The word ἀναβραζόμενα in the next sentence usually bears the meaning “to boil” or “to bubble up” (see LSJ and Lampe, s.v. ἀναβράζω).
44. The Greek word στακτοπυριά appears only in a version of the Hippiatrica, which probably dates from the fourteenth century, and it is known for its obscure, yet demotic, language.³⁴
45. The Greek word περιβράζομαι is an hapax.
46. Note that the word κρόκος here is used to signify primarily the color saffron (golden yellow hue) rather than the plant *Crocus Sativus* (commonly called saffron).³⁵ The material on to which the final product was applied is not specified in detail. The subtitle of the note claims that the yellow color was meant to be used for dyeing textiles. However, the total amount of paint that was to be produced is very small and thus it might refer to ink that resembles gold.³⁶
47. Ammonium Chlorid, NH₄Cl.³⁷
48. The word λαχάς (also λαχᾶς, λακχᾶς, and λακκᾶς) may refer to three different things: the color red, the lack dye, and the product of *Kerria Lacca*, a species of insects that is native to Asia (the sticklac).³⁸ This insect was imported to the Byzantine world from India and China and it is responsible for the production of the famous Byzantine red color.³⁹ This is a shiny deep red color used in dyeing textiles (esp. silk and cotton), as well as wood, paper, etc. The word probably comes from the Persian “lāk” or the Arabic “baqqam.” The word λακχᾶς is also attested as a synonym of ἄγχουσα,⁴⁰ the modern “Alkanna tinctoria” or the “dyer’s alkanet.”⁴¹ This is a herb the roots of which are used as a red dye and it is distinguished by its bright blue flowers. It is native in the Mediterranean region and has remained in use as a dye substance since antiquity.⁴²
49. A recipe for *lachas* preserved in a fifteenth-century manuscript also suggests a connection of its production with the Syrians. In the later recipe the reference to the Syrians in the title suggests that they were considered authorities on this subject.⁴³
50. The Greek word καθαρκοσκινισμένος that is used here is a *hapax*.

34 Excerpta Lugdunensia, sect. 23, 3; on its language see Bernini 2014: 454–57.

35 On the properties of saffron as dyeing substance see Cardon 2014: 296–300.

36 For another example of a recipe for an ink that resembles gold without using any part of the precious metal see Schreiner and Oltrogge 2011 no. 70, p. 73–74.

37 Oltrogge and Schreiner 2011: p. 88.

38 See also Oltrogge and Schreiner 2011 no. 70, p. 116–18.

39 On Kermes see Cardon 2014: 593–95, 587–88; for a comprehensive study on the production of red dyes in the ancient world see Wouters and Verhecken 1989: 189–200. On bibliography on *lahas* see the commentary on the tenth-century *Book of the Eparch* in Koliais and Chroni 2010: 174–75 n. 5.

40 See LSJ, s.v. λακχᾶς.

41 See LSJ, s.v. ἄγχουσα.

42 See Cardon 2014: 75–78; Schreiner and Oltrogge 2011: 116–18.

43 Oltrogge and Schreiner 2011 no. 52, p. 64, from MS Rome, Angelica gr. 17.

51. Ξύτρον is also an extremely rare word. The word ξύτρα occurs in the *Etymologicum Gudianum* and it is explained as a synonym for χλανίς.⁴⁴
52. “Alum” translates στύψις ῥωμαϊκή (which was also call σχιστόν or σχεστόν).⁴⁵ This is usually identified in bibliography as limonite ($2\text{Fe}_2\cdot 3\text{H}_2\text{O}$), which is an iron ore, but most probably should be identified with the hydrated iron oxy-hydroxide, $\text{FeO}(\text{OH})\cdot\text{H}_2\text{O}$.⁴⁶ Benedetti in her commentary on this text identified this ingredient with a kind of solution that contains mainly sulfates of iron and aluminum.⁴⁷
53. Note that the same confusion between liter and ounce occurs in the fourth text.
55. This is a further reference to book production. Χρυσσαφία is a corrupted type of the usual χρυσογραφία or χρυσογραμμία.
Μάρμαρον ῥωμαῖον, a reference to porphyry.⁴⁸ For its role in the production of gold ink see, e.g., Schreiner and Oltrogge 2011: no. 41, p. 57 and no. 66, p. 72.

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44 *Etymologicum Gudianum*, p. 416.

45 On σχεστόν, see Schreiner and Oltrogge 2011 no. 56.2, p. 66.

46 For further references see Papathanassiou 2002: 123 n.19; I owe this comment to Manolis Alissavakis.

47 See Benedetti 2014: 447–48.

48 On ῥωμαῖον μάρμαρον cf. *Vita Basilii*, par. 85, ed. Ševčenko, p. 277; see also the commentary in J. J. Reiske’s edition of *De Ceremoniis* [CSHB 10/2] (Bonn, 1829–30) p. 756, on d.5. On the name and its symbolism see Sodini 2002: 172.

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I.4.5 Nikephoros Blemmydes (1197–c.1269)

Concerning Gold Making

SHANNON STEINER

Ed.: M. Berthelot and C. E. Ruelle, *Collection des anciens alchimistes grecs*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1887), 452–57

MSS.:¹ Paris, BnF, Graecus 2509 (s. XV), ff. 137r–139r

Paris, BnF, Graecus 2329 (s. XVI–XVII), ff. 159r–161r

Other Translations: M. Berthelot and C. E. Ruelle, in *Collection des anciens alchimistes grecs*, eds. M. Berthelot and C. E. Ruelle, vol. 3 (Paris, 1887), 423–28 (French)

Significance

This text shows the interest of a later Byzantine intellectual in the materials and technical processes originating in metallurgy and other craft traditions. It speaks to his knowledge of philosophical theories surrounding the potential to transmute matter, using an allegorical framework popular in both Byzantium and the Islamic world. The recipe is also important for suggesting connections between the material origins of artistic practices and the social and intellectual values people accorded to them.

The Author

Nikephoros Blemmydes was a prominent intellectual and cleric in the Laskarid Empire of Nicaea. Many of his writings survive, perhaps most remarkable among them an autobiographical preface to his monastic *typikon* known best by the title *A Partial Account*. In his autobiography Blemmydes recounted at length his activities as a scholar and teacher. He was born in Constantinople. In 1204, following the Latin conquest of the Byzantine capital during the Fourth Crusade, he relocated with his family to Prousa (Bursa) in Asia Minor.² There he studied grammar for several years before receiving a formal education in rhetoric and logic in Nicaea and medicine in Smyrna.³ As a young man he attended the court of John III Vatatzes (r.1222–54) in Nymphaion with the intent to learn politics, only

Special thanks to Olivier Dufault for generously sharing his thoughts on transmutation theory in the Greek alchemical corpus.

1 Consulted.

2 Constantinides 1982: 7–9; Munitiz 1988: vii–viii.

3 Blemmydes, *A Partial Account*, Bk. I, chs. 3–5.

to abandon his post without permission in order to study mathematics and science.⁴ He traveled extensively to collect rare books and wrote a textbook on physics.⁵

In 1224 Blemmydes began his career in the church and later took monastic vows. He was a popular candidate for the vacant position of patriarch in 1255, although he declined the appointment.⁶ He served as *hegoumenos* of the monastery of Gregory Thaumaturgos in Ephesos and eventually founded a monastery of his own nearby.⁷ A series of scandals plagued Blemmydes over the course of his life. He stood accused of embezzlement, slandering the emperor, homosexuality, and even murder.⁸ Despite being exonerated in each case, he was known for his indifference to authority and he survived at least two assassination attempts.⁹ His controversial reputation notwithstanding, Blemmydes was a highly sought-after teacher among the Nicæan aristocracy. He counted among his students the future emperor Theodore II Laskaris (r.1254–58) and the historian and diplomat George Akropolites (c.1217–82), who praised his teacher as the most accomplished scholar of his time.¹⁰

Text and Context

At an unknown point in his life, Blemmydes composed this recipe for *chrysopoeia*, or gold making, achieved through the distillation of eggs. It is the latest work in what is known as the Greek alchemical corpus, a compilation of texts on the subject of alchemy dating from late antiquity to medieval Byzantium and collected in the late nineteenth century.¹¹ The lengthy list of instructions calls for the division of an egg into two separate parts, its yolk and shell. These must then be baked, distilled multiple times, heated slowly in warm ashes or manure, and eventually recombined to produce a powder that transmutes molten silver into gold. The procedure involves at least twenty-five distillations and, according to the text, it can take anywhere from 230 to 343 days to complete the aurifaction process. In addition, several steps in Blemmydes' recipe require skills or equipment originating in artistic production. These include pigment grinding, glass-making, and metalworking.

Chrysopoeia formed the foundation of Byzantine alchemy (χημεία), a tradition with close ties to applied metallurgic and artistic practices. The Souda lexicon defines alchemy as the making of silver and gold as practiced in Alexandria, and mentions that Diocletian mandated the destruction of all books on the subject most likely due to the threat of counterfeit currency.¹² At times *chrysopoeia* also encompassed the creation of alloys, enamelling, and tinted glass, and the manufacture of artificial gems and pearls.¹³ As early

4 Blemmydes, *A Partial Account*, Bk. I, chs. 6–10.

5 Blemmydes, *A Partial Account*, Bk. I, chs. 63–64.

6 Blemmydes, *A Partial Account*, Bk. I, ch. 80, Bk. II, ch. 77.

7 Blemmydes, *A Partial Account*, Bk. I, chs. 11–12, 45–48, 49.

8 Blemmydes, *A Partial Account*, Bk. I, chs. 19, 24–25, 44, 49–56, Bk. II, chs. 41, 67–74.

9 Blemmydes, *A Partial Account*, Bk. I, chs. 29, 41–44.

10 Blemmydes, *A Partial Account*, Bk. I, chs. 27, 67; George Akropolites, ch. 32.

11 Berthelot and Ruelle 1887.

12 Papatthanassiou 2002: 123.

13 See, e.g. the variety of recipes in the eleventh-century treatise; Wolters 2006: 259–84.

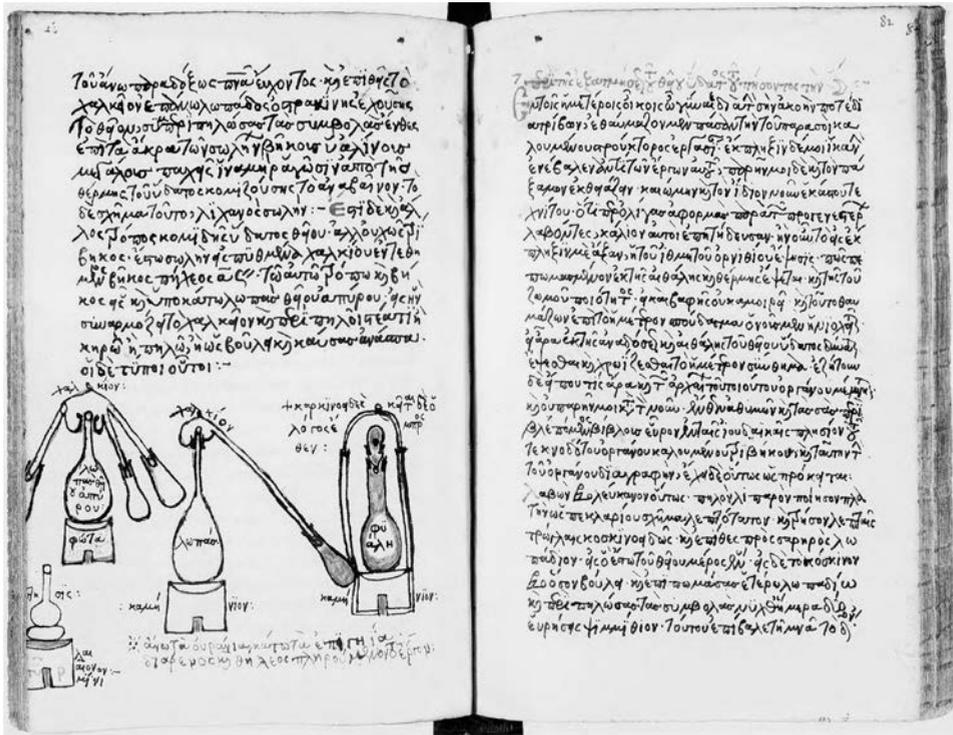


Fig. I.4.5 Sketches of chemical distillation apparatus. Paris, BnF, gr. 2327, f. 81v (a.1478)
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as the third and fourth centuries, alchemical authors wrote operational treatises on processes such as gilding and what we today call materials science under the heading of *chrysopoeia*, using allegorical language derived from Classical philosophy.¹⁴ Beginning in the eleventh century, however, elite Byzantine intellectuals sought to bring *chrysopoeia* under serious philosophical discussion. Michael Psellos (c. 1018–78) wrote in a letter of his intention to defend *chrysopoeia* from rumors that the practice belonged to the unlearned realm of craftsmen (i.e. manual laborers) or the unorthodox domain of the occult, and instead formally elevate it from a low science to a demonstration of natural philosophy.¹⁵ Blemmydes makes a similar remark about astronomy in *A Partial Account*, designating it as a legitimate area of study reclaimed from astrology, which he calls “stupidities and follies.”¹⁶ These accomplished Byzantine scholars apparently saw an opportunity in *chrysopoeia* to explore theories of natural philosophy.

14 Dufault 2015: 215–44.
 15 Michael Psellos, *To the Patriarch Kyr Michael Concerning How One Should Make Gold*, 1–47; Moore 2005: 90–94.
 16 Blemmydes, *A Partial Account*, Bk. I, ch. 5.

Formulas and short tracts on egg-*chrysopoeia* comprise a small, yet meaningful subset within the Greek alchemical corpus. Eggs appear as both a literal and metaphorical ingredient in the writings of Zosimos of Panopolis (fl. 300), arguably the most celebrated and widely copied alchemical author in Byzantium. Parts of actual eggs could be distilled into sulfurous-smelling liquids used to tint metals, but Zosimos also notes that the egg was simply another name for mercury.¹⁷ The allegorical dimension of the egg amplified over time. A later anonymous text names the egg the “Philosopher’s Stone,” a perfect object containing all four physical elements and their qualities – earth, air, fire, water; dryness, coolness, warmth, and wetness.¹⁸ Each part of the egg might stand in for a number of metals, chemical solutions, or minerals depending on the similarity in physical qualities between a material and a given part of the egg. Late Antique and Byzantine alchemists in general viewed the egg as symbolic of generation and praised it as proof of transmutation, that is to say, that one matter might be produced from the proper combination of others.¹⁹ Commentaries on the alchemical egg in Greek and Arabic flourished in the eighth century, most notably in the work of Jābir ibn Ḥayyān (c.721–815). Jābir’s writing supplies evidence of dialog surrounding the egg among Greek-, Latin-, and Arabic-speaking scholars. Jābir cites from identifiable Greek alchemical texts in a commentary on the egg found in his well-known compilation *The Book of Seventy*, and translations of Jābir’s work into Latin were studied and modified by later Greek writers.²⁰ Blemmydes’ own recipe offers further confirmation of such transmission. His egg-*chrysopoeia* depends upon the separation and recomposition of the egg, a feature prevalent in Arabic commentaries but not found in earlier Greek ones.²¹ At the same time, Blemmydes’ addition of certain ingredients that are absent from Arabic sources for egg-*chrysopoeia*, such as quicklime, and the functional structure of his text show a conscious effort on his part to merge and refine two alchemical traditions.

Blemmydes’ egg-*chrysopoeia* straddles the technical format so central to Greek alchemical writing and the allegorical egg symbolism that appealed to his class of learned men. His language slips easily from straightforward description of technical procedures to allusive comments that suggest the egg parts he discusses may in fact stand in for metals or minerals. He refrains from any detailed allegorical description, a departure from both Psellos and Jābir. Whether Blemmydes ever intended the recipe to be used is unclear. His deliberate complication of the transmutation process and obfuscation of its materials suggests that, despite its practical appearance, Blemmydes’ recipe is more of a theoretical, literary composite.²² It encompasses his knowledge of scientific thinking both within and outside of Byzantine intellectual circles, displays his familiarity with alchemical authors who preceded him, and participates in a tradition of elite Byzantine scholarship engaged with the technical aspects of metallurgy as evidence for theories pertaining to physics and natural philosophy.

17 Sheppard 1958: 140–48.

18 Anonymous, *The Name of the Egg, for it is the Mystery of the Art*, 20–21.

19 Sheppard 1958: 141.

20 Colinet 1998: 165–90.

21 Colinet 1998: 171.

22 Mertens 2006: 225.

Text

Περὶ τῆς ὠοχρυσοποιίας
 τῆς μετῆλθεν ὁ σοφώτατος ἐν φιλοσόφοις κύριος
 Νικηφόρος ὁ Βλεμμίδης
 καὶ ἠυμοίρησε τοῦ σκοποῦ τῆ συνεργεία τοῦ πάντα ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων
 εἰς τὸ εἶναι παραγαγόντος Χριστοῦ τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν,
 ᾧ πρέπει δόξα εἰς αἰῶνας αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.

- I. Λαβῶν σὺν θεῶ λίθον οὐ λίθον, ὃν λέγουσι λίθον τῶν σοφῶν, ἐν ᾧ εἰσι τὰ δ' στοι-
 χεῖα, γῆ, ὕδωρ, ἀήρ καὶ πῦρ, τουτέστιν ὑγρόν, θερμόν, ψυχρόν καὶ ξηρόν, λαβῶν
 οὖν τὸ ἐν τῶν δ' στοιχείων, ἦτοι τὴν γῆν, τὸ ψυχρόν καὶ ξηρόν, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ὁ φλοι-
 ὸς τῶν ὠῶν, πλύνας καὶ καθάρας, ψύξας καὶ τρίψας καλῶς, ἔμβαλε εἰς χύτραν· καὶ
 φράξας τὸ στόμα τῆς χύτρας μετὰ πηλοῦ πυριμάχου, [θές] εἰς κάμινον ὑελοψοῦ·
 καῦσον ἡμέρας ἧ', ἄχρις ἂν λευκάνη· καὶ ἔχε πεφυλαγμένον· αὕτη γάρ ἐστι ἡ πε-
 ριώνυμος ἄσβεστος. φύλαξον.
- II. Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα, λαβῶν τὸ ἐνδότερον λευκόν, θές αὐτὸ ἐν κλοκίῳ· καὶ ἐν στόματι
 τοῦ κλοκίου ἐπίθες ἄγγος μασθωτὸν ὅπερ λέγεται ἄμβυξ· ἔστω δὲ πεφραγμένον
 καλῶς, καὶ συντεθειμένον μετὰ γύψου· καὶ ἀνάσπα τοῦτο ὡς ῥοδόσταγμα· καὶ
 ἔχε πεφυλαγμένον ἐν φιάλῃ. φύλαξον.
- III. Εἶτα λαβῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀσβέστου μέρος ἕν, καὶ ἀποσταχθέντος ὕδατος μέρη ἐννέα,
 ἐνώσας, ἔμβαλε. καὶ φράξον ἀσφαλῶς ὡς τὸ πρότερον· καὶ ἀνάσπα τοῦτο ὡς ῥο-
 δόσταγμα. ἔστω δὲ κλοκίον τοῦτο ὑέλινον· τὸ γὰρ πρῶτον ὀστράκινον ὀφείλει
 εἶναι. καὶ τὸ ἀποσταχθὲν στρέψον πάλιν εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν τέφραν· καὶ ἐξέλε καὶ βάλε
 πάντα ὁμοῦ εἰς φιάλην ὑέλινον· καὶ τὸ στόμα αὐτῆς φράξον μετὰ πανίου καὶ γύ-
 ψου καλῶς· καὶ χῶσον ἐν κόπρω ἵππειά ἡμέρας μ'· εἰ δ' ἔστι σποδός, ἡμέρας κα'·
 φύλαξον.
- IV. Εἶτα ἐκβαλὼν τοῦ κόπρου, ἔμβαλε τῷ κλοκίῳ, καὶ ἀνάσπα ὡς πρότερον, καὶ πά-
 λιν ὁμοῦ πάντα λαβῶν, τὸ τε ὕδωρ καὶ τὴν ὕλην βάλε εἰς φιάλην ὑέλινον, καὶ
 σῆψον ἐν κόπρω ἵππειά ὡς τὸ πρότερον· καὶ ἐξελὼν τῆς κόπρου, θές αὐτὰ ὁμοῦ
 ἐν κλοκίῳ, καὶ ἀνάσπα ὡς τὸ πρότερον, καὶ ἔχε ἐν φιάλῃ. φύλαξον.
- V. Τοῦτο λέγεται ὕδωρ θεῖον, καὶ ὕδωρ ἀσβέστου, καὶ ὕδωρ θαλάσσιον, καὶ ὄξος,
 καὶ ὑδράργυρος, καὶ γάλα παρθένου, καὶ οὔρον παιδὸς ἀφθόρου, καὶ ὕδωρ στυ-
 πτηρίας, καὶ ὕδωρ σποδοκράμβης, καὶ ὕδωρ νίτρου, καὶ ὕδωρ πρωτοστάκτου,
 καὶ ἕτερα ὀνόματα. τοῦτο ὑπάρχει τὸ θεῖον ὕδωρ δι' οὗ λευκαίνεται τὸ σῶμα τῆς
 μαγνησίας, [454] ὅπερ λέγουσι χαλκὸν κεκαυμένον, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἡ τέφρα ἢ μέλλου-
 σα γενέσθαι ἀπὸ τοῦ κροκοῦ τῶν ὠῶν.
- VI. Ὅφείλει δὲ λαβεῖν ἕτερα φροῦστρα ἄκαυστα ὠῶν, καὶ τρίψαι καλῶς, καὶ βαλεῖν
 αὐτὰ ἐν κλοκίῳ ὑέλινω, καὶ ὕδωρ ἀνάσπαστον χωρὶς ἀσβέστου ἅπαξ· ἔστω δὲ
 ἀπὸ ὕδατος τούτου ὅσον μέρη τρία, οἱ δὲ φλοιοὶ μέρος ἕν. καὶ τοῦτο στάξον πάλιν
 τρίς, χωρὶς σήψεως· καὶ κατὰ μίαν στάξιν, ρίψον τοὺς φλοιοὺς, καὶ βάλε ἐτέρους
 τὸ αὐτὸ ποσόν· τῆς δὲ τρίτης φορᾶς ἔχε ἐν φιάλῃ ἀποτιθέμενον.

Translation

Concerning Making Gold from Egg, which the Wisest Among the Philosophers *Kyr Nikephoros Blemmydes* Discussed

And he excelled at this goal with the assistance of the One who brings all non-existence into existence, Christ our True God, to whom belongs glory forever and ever. Amen.

- I. Take, with God's help, a stone that is not a stone, which they call the Philosopher's Stone,² in which exist the four elements: earth, water, air, and fire; that is to say, moisture, warmth, coolness, and dryness. Take one of the four elements, namely earth, the [element] that is cool and dry – eggshell is this very thing. After washing it and cleansing it, dry it and crush it well, and put it in a vessel. Stop up the mouth of the vessel with fire-resistant clay and put it in a glass-smelter's kiln. Heat it for eight days until it becomes white. Keep it with care, for this is the famed quicklime. Carefully set it aside.³
- II. After that, take the white [substance] inside, put it in a *klokion*⁴ and upon the mouth of the *klokion* put the breast-shaped vessel that is called [453] an alembic. It should be sealed well together with plaster, and distill the white substance just like rose attar.⁵ Keep it with care in a flask. Carefully set it aside.
- III. Then take one part quicklime and nine parts distilled water, combine them and put it in [the still]. Close it up securely as before and distill the mixture just like rose attar. The *klokion* should be glass, but the first should be terracotta. And turn the distilled product into the same lime dust. Remove it and put it all together in a glass flask. Then close it up well with cloth and plaster. Bury in horse manure for forty days. If it is [buried in] embers, twenty-one days.⁶ Carefully set it aside.
- IV. After removing it from the manure, put it in the *klokion* and distill it as before. Take everything all together again, put water and the matter in a glass flask, and ferment it in horse manure as before. After removing it from the manure, put it together in a *klokion*, distill as before and put it in a flask. Carefully set it aside.
- V. This is called "divine/sulfur water," "limewater," "seawater," "vinegar," "mercury," "virgin's milk," "the urine of a virgin boy," "alum water," "cabbage-ash water," "soda water," "water of the first distillation," among other names. This is the divine/sulfur water by which the body of magnesia is made white, [454] which they call burnt copper, and which is the ash about to be produced from egg yolk.⁷
- VI. One must take other unburned eggshells, crush them well and put them and water distilled once in a glass *klokion* without quicklime. There should be three parts from this water, and the eggshells should be about one part. Distill this, three times, without fermenting. And each distillation, discard the shells and

- VII. Εἶτα λαβῶν ἄσβεστον νεαράν, μίξον ταύτην μετὰ ὕδατος τούτου καλῶς. ἔστω δὲ τὸ ὕδωρ τοῦτο μέρη τρία, καὶ ἡ ἄσβεστος μέρος ἕν· καὶ τοῦτο θές ἐν φιάλῃ. καὶ φράξον τὸ στόμα τῆς φιάλης καλῶς, καὶ σῆψον εἰς κόπρον ἡμέρας μ'. εἰ δὲ ἐστὶ σποδός, κα'.
- VIII. Εἴθ' οὕτω λαβῶν κροκὰ τῶν ὠῶν, θές αὐτὰ ἐν κλοκίῳ ὀστρακίνῳ, καὶ στάξον ταῦτα ὡς ῥοδόσταγμα μετὰ πυρὸς δυνατοῦ· τῶν γὰρ προειρημένων τὸ πῦρ ἔστω μαλακώτερον. ἔστω δὲ τὸ περιφραγμα καλῶς ποιηθέν· καὶ δέχου ἐπ' αὐτῶν ἔλαιον κόκκινον.
- IX. Τοῦτο τὸ ἔλαιον λαβῶν, ἔνωσον μετὰ τῆς σεσημμένης ἀσβέστου τῆς εἰρημένης τῶν φλοιῶν· ἔστω δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς λελεγμένης ἀσβέστου μέρος α', καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐλαίου μέρη γ'. καὶ τοῦτο ποιήσον ὡς τὸ τῆς ἀσβέστου ὕδωρ, τουτέστι στάξον καὶ σῆψον· καὶ πάλιν στάξον καὶ σῆψον· καὶ στάξας, ἔχε τέλειον. φύλαξον.
- X. Τὴν δὲ ἀπομένουσαν τέφραν τῶν κροκῶν λεύκανον μετὰ τοῦ (πρώτου) θείου ὕδατος τῆς ἀσβέστου· αὕτη γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ μαγνησία.
- XI. Ταύτης τῆς μαγνησίας λαβῶν μέρη δ', καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀσβέστου τῆς ἀπομεινάσης ἐν τῷ κλοκίῳ μέρος α', ἤγουν τὸ (πέμπτον), τρίψον καλῶς ἀμφότερα ἐν μαρμάρῳ ὥστε ἀραιωθῆναι καὶ λεπτυνθῆναι τελείως μετὰ ὀλίγου ὕδατος τοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀσβέστου, καθὼς ποιοῦσιν οἱ ζωγράφοι· καὶ ψύξας, βάλε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἐν κλοκίῳ μέρος ἕν, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος τῆς ἀσβέστου μέρη γ'. ἔστω γοῦν ἐνταῦθα τὸ κλοκίον ὑέλινον· καὶ ἀνάσπα τοῦτο ὡς ῥοδόσταγμα, καὶ δέχου τὸ σταχθέν ἅπαν ἐν ἀγγεῖῳ ὑελίνῳ.
- XII. Εἴθ' οὕτω τὸ ἐναπομείναν ξηρὸν ἐν τῷ κλοκίῳ πάλιν βάλε ἐν μαρμάρῳ· καὶ τρίβε τοῦτο ὀλίγον πρὸς ὀλίγον μετὰ τοῦ ἀποσταχθέντος ἐξ αὐτοῦ· καὶ ἔασον τοῦτο ξηρανθῆναι ἐν σκιᾷ· καὶ τοῦτο ποιεῖ ἄχρις οὗ δαπανηθῆ ἅπαν τὸ σταχθέν ὑγρόν.
- XIII. Εἶτα τρίψας αὐτὸ τὸ ξηρίον, θές ἐν κλοκίῳ, καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ ἕτερον ὕδωρ ἀσβέστου. ἔστω δὲ τὸ ὕδωρ μέρη τρία καὶ τὸ ξηρὸν μέρος α'. καὶ ἀνάσπα τοῦτο, καὶ τρίβε, ὡς εἴρηται, ἄχρι φορῶν ε'.
- XIV. Τὴν δὲ (πέμπτην) φορὰν λαβῶν ἅπαν τὸ σταχθέν ὑγρόν, ἔνωσον μετὰ τοῦ ἐναπομεινάντος ξηροῦ· καὶ λαβῶν ἀμφότερα ἐν βικίῳ ὑελίνῳ, χῶσον εἰς κόπρον ἡμέρας μ', ἢ ὅσον βούλει.
- XV. Εἶτα πάλιν στρέψον αὐτὸ ἐν τῷ κλοκίῳ τῷ ὑελίνῳ, καὶ ἀνάσπα ὡς πρότερον· καὶ ὅταν ἀποσταχθῆ τὸ ἡμισυ τοῦ ὑγροῦ, ἀνοίξας τὸ κλοκίον, στρέψον πάλιν τοῦτο ἐν αὐτῷ· καὶ τοῦτο ποιήσον ἄχρι φορῶν ε'.
- XVI. Εὐρήσεις δὲ τοῦτο τὸ σημεῖον ἐν αὐτῷ, οὐχ ὡς πρότερον ἀποστάξον, ἀλλ' ἀνειμένως καὶ βραδέως.
- XVII. Μετὰ δὲ τὴν (πέμπτην) φορὰν δέχου ἅπαν τὸ σταχθέν ἐν βικίῳ· καὶ τὸ ἐναπομείναν ξηρὸν ἐν τῷ κλοκίῳ θές ἐν μαρμάρῳ· καὶ τρίψας τοῦτο μετὰ τοῦ ἐξ αὐτοῦ σταχθέντος ὑγροῦ, καὶ ἔασον ψυγῆναι ἐν σκιᾷ· καὶ τοῦτο ποιεῖ ἕως ἂν πῆ ἅπαν τὸ ὑγρόν· καὶ ἐν τῷ τρίβειν καὶ ποτίζειν αὐτὸ εὐρήσει ὅτι λευκάνεται· καὶ ἡ λευκότης αὕτη ὑπάρχει σύμβολον τῆς ἐρυθρότητος.

- add others of the same quantity. The third time, take [and put] what was left [of the eggshells] in a flask and set it aside.
- VII. Then take the new quicklime, mix it well with that water. There should be three parts from this water and the quicklime should be one part. And put this in a flask. Then stop up the mouth of the flask well and ferment it in horse manure for forty days; if it is [fermented in] embers, twenty-one.
- VIII. Then take the egg yolk, put it in a clay *klokion* and distill it just like rose attar, with a higher flame; the flame should be lower than the aforementioned flames. The still should be well made, then collect crimson oil from the egg yolks.
- IX. Take this oil and combine with the aforementioned fermented quicklime obtained from eggshells. There should be one part from the aforementioned quicklime, and from the oil there should be three parts. And do as with the limewater, that is, distill it and ferment it. And distill and ferment it again. After distilling it, keep it uncontaminated. Carefully set it aside.
- X. Whiten the remaining ashes of the eggshells with the first divine/sulfur water obtained from quicklime. For this is magnesia.⁸
- XI. [455] Take four parts of this magnesia and one part of the quicklime remaining in the *klokion*, that is to say the fifth part, crush both of them well on marble with a little limewater so as to make it entirely rarefied and thinned out, as the painters do.⁹ After letting it cool, put one part of this in a *klokion* with three parts limewater. Here the *klokion* should be glass. And distill it as you do with rose attar and collect all the distillation in a glass jar.
- XII. Then take the powder remaining in the *klokion* and put it back on the marble. Grind it little by little with its distillate. Then allow this to dry up in the shade and do this until all of the distilled liquid is spent.
- XIII. Then grind the powder itself, put it in a *klokion* with more limewater. It should be three parts water and one part powder. Distill it and grind it as has been said, five times.
- XIV. The fifth time, take all the distilled water and combine it with the remaining powder. Then put both in a glass jar. Bury it in manure for forty days¹⁰ or as long as you wish.
- XV. Then return it [the powder and water mixture] back into the glass *klokion* and distill it as before. And when half of the liquid has been distilled, open the *klokion*, and return this [distilled liquid] back into the glass jar. Do this, five times.
- XVI. You will find this sign in it: that it distills not [quickly] as before, but more gently and slowly.
- XVII. After the fifth time, collect all the distillation in a jar; and put the powder that remains in the *klokion* on marble and grind this well with its distillate, and let it cool [456] in the shade. Do this until all the liquid has been absorbed. In the grinding and wetting [of it] you will find it to have turned white. This very whitening is a sign of redness.¹¹

- XVIII. Δεῖ δὲ τοῦτο λευκανθῆναι καλῶς. εἴθ' οὕτω θές αὐτὸ τὸ λευκανθὲν ἐν βικίῳ ὑέλινῳ· καὶ θές πάλιν εἰς αὐτὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος τῆς ἀσβέστου ὅσον μέρη γ'. τοῦτο δὲ ἔστω μέρος α'· καὶ ἐνώσας καλῶς, χῶσον ἐν κόπρῳ ἡμέρας ἑτέρας.
- XIX. Εἴθ' οὕτως ἐκβαλὼν, ἀνάσπα, καὶ δέχου τὸ ὑγρὸν, καὶ στρέψον τοῦτο ἐν αὐτῷ, καὶ ἀνάσπα ἐκ δευτέρου· καὶ δέχου ἅπαν τὸ ὑγρὸν, καὶ φύλαξον. τὸ δὲ ἐναπομεῖναν ἐν τῷ κλοκίῳ εὐρήσεις τοῦτο λευκόν, μαρμάρῳ παρεμφερές. τοῦτο λαβὼν, ὁμοίως φύλαξον.
- XX. Εἶτα λαβὼν ἀπὸ τοῦ μαρμάρῳ παρεμφοροῦς εἶδους μέρος α', καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος τοῦ ἐξ αὐτοῦ σταχθέντος ἕτερον μέρος α', καὶ ταῦτα ὁμοῦ ἐνώσας καλῶς, θές εἰς ὑέλινον κλοκίον μὴ ἔχον ἄμβικα, ἀλλὰ σφραγίσας καὶ ἐμφράξας αὐτοῦ τὸ στόμα μετὰ σκεπασμάτος μολυβδίνου καλῶς, καὶ τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑέλινον κλοκίον ἀλείψας μετὰ πηλοῦ πυριμάχου λεπτόν ἄλειμμα.
- XXI. Εἴθ' οὕτω σόφισον αὐτό, καὶ κτίσον εἰς φουρνάκιον ὡς τὸ τοῦ ῥοδοστάγματος· καὶ ἀντὶ πυρὸς ἀνθράκων, ἄψας λύχρον, θές ὑποκάτω αὐτοῦ. καὶ εἰ μὲν εἰσι τὰ ἔνδον ἀνὰ οὐγγίαν α' τὸ καυθὲν, ἤγουν ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων οὐγγ[ία]. δύο, χρεια ἔστιν ἅπτειν τὸν λύχρον ἡμέρας ζ', ἤγουν νυχθήμερα ζ'. καὶ εἰ μὲν τὸ εἶδος ὑπάρχει ὅσον τὸ ἡμισυ, λοιπὸν ἀψάσθω ἡμέρας δ', εἰ δὲ (τέταρτον), ἡμέρας β'. καὶ μετὰ τὰς ζ' ἡμέρας, ἀνοίξας τὸ ἄγγος, καὶ τὸ εἶδος ἰδὼν πησόμενον, ἐπίθες πάλιν ἀπὸ τοῦ πεφυλαγμένου ὕδατος ἑτέραν οὐγγίαν α' ὡς τὸ πρότερον. εἶτα ἄψας τὸν λύχρον ἡμέρας ὅσας εἴρηται, οὕτως ἔσω ποιῶν ἄχρις θ' φορῶν.
- XXII. [457] Εἶτα ἀνοίξας, εὐρήσεις τὸ γεγονός ξανθὸν πεπηγμένον ἔχοντα στάθμην τῆς προσθήκης πάσης ἧς ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἔθηκας εἰς φορὰς θ', ἕως τέλους, οὐγγ[ία] ι'.
- XXIII. Τοῦτο λαβὼν, ἔχε· καὶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ λαβὼν μέρος α', ὅσον οὐγγ[ίον] α'.
- XXIV. Εἴθ' οὕτω κατασκευάσας διὰ τοῦ πυρὸς, ἤγουν διὰ τῆς τοῦ λύχνου θερμάνσεως, πότισον αὐτὰ θ' φορὰς, καὶ πάλιν διὰ τοσαύτης στάθμης μετὰ τοῦ θείου ἔλαιου ὡς ἐποίησας μετὰ τοῦ θείου ὕδατος. εἰς δὲ τὴν ὑστάτην φορὰν, ἤγουν τὴν (ἐνάτην), μέλλεις λαβεῖν ἔλαιον ἐπὶ τοῦ διπλοῦ· καὶ ἄψητον λύχρον δυνατώτερον.
- XXV. Εἴθ' οὕτως εὐρήσεις τὸ ξηρίον τετελειωμένον, τῆ χροῖα ὀξυπόρφυρον. τρίψας δὲ αὐτό, φύλαξον καλῶς.
- XXVI. Ὅτε δὲ Θεοῦ εὐδοκοῦντος θελήσεις τὴν αὐτὴν πείραν εἰς φῶς ἀγαγεῖν, λαβὼν ἄργυρον καθαρὸν ὅσον οὐγγ[ίον] α', καὶ τοῦτον χωνεύσας ἐν πυρὶ, θές ἀπὸ τοῦ ῥηθέντος ξηρίου εἰς αὐτὸν ὅσον στάθμην κο[τύλην]. ἐνός, καὶ εὐρήσεις χρυσόν, λάμποντα καὶ φωτίζοντα τῆς οἰκουμένης τὰ πέρατα.

- XVIII. This substance must be well whitened. Then put this very whitened [substance] in a glass jar. And again, put into this limewater in the amount of three parts, and let the substance be one part. Combine it well and bury it in manure another [forty] days.¹²
- XIX. Then remove, distill, and collect the liquid. Return it back to the still and distill it a second time. Collect all the liquid and set it aside. You will find what remains in the *klokion* to be white, resembling marble. Take this, likewise carefully set it aside.
- XX. Take one part of that which resembles marble and one part of the other water that is distilled from it and combine them both well. Put them in a glass *klokion* that does not have an alembic, but seal and seal the mouth of it firmly with a lead covering, and cover the aforementioned glass *klokion* with a thin coat of fire-resistant clay.
- XXI. Then handle the substance thus: put it in a small oven like the [small oven] for the rose attar.¹³ Instead of a coal fire, put a lamp beneath it. And if what has been burned within is in the amount of one ounce apiece, that is to say both amount to two ounces, it is necessary to burn the lamp for seven days, that is to say, seven days and seven nights. And if the materials are half that amount, then burn for four days; if a quarter, two days. And after seven days, when you open the vessel and see that the material has hardened, put in one more ounce from the water that was set aside as before. Then burn the lamp for the aforementioned number of days, performing [the process] like this within [the oven] nine times.
- XXII. [457] Then, as soon as you will open it up, you will find a solid yellow product, having the measure of every addition that you made from the beginning, during nine runs, in total ten ounces.
- XXIII. Take this and hold it; and from this take one measure, one ounce in quantity.
- XXIV. Then after preparing this with fire, that is to say with the heating of the lamp, moisten it nine times, and again with the same amount of divine/sulfur oil¹⁴ as you did with the divine/sulfur water. The last time, that is to say the ninth time, you will take double the oil and then you shall light a stronger lamp.
- XXV. Then you will find the completely finished powder, bright purple in color. Grind it and guard it well.
- XXVI. When, God willing, you want to bring this very endeavor to completion, take pure silver in the amount of one ounce. After smelting it in the fire, add to it a measure of the aforementioned powder, one *kotylis*¹⁵ in quantity, and you will discover gold, shining and gleaming to the farthest reaches of the *Ecumene*.

Commentary

1. Read: φωτίζοντα.
2. I.e. an egg.
3. Blemmydes' directive φύλαξον not only indicates the substance should be kept for later use, but also implies caution when he makes reference to potentially hazardous materials. In this case quicklime, or calcium oxide, is unstable and produces an extreme thermal reaction in contact with water.
4. This step explains the construction of a basic alchemical still, yet the exact type of vessel referred to as a κλοκίον is unknown. Blemmydes' recipe is the only text to contain the term in the entire Greek alchemical corpus, although it does appear in a fourteenth-century Sicilian treatise on *chrysopoeia* synthesized from the Greek, Arabic, and Latin alchemical traditions.²³ The Souda lexicon glosses κλοκίον as a synonym for ἀμῖς, "chamber pot," and the word appears in an anonymous middle Byzantine medical text as a technical term.²⁴ Blemmydes' medical training and the hybrid nature of his recipe may both account for his idiosyncratic choice to use either a different term or a different vessel for the base of his still. The word's synonym and its context in descriptions of both medicine and alchemy suggest a shallow bowl.
5. ῥοδόσταγμα in this text signifies fragrance extracts processed by steam distillation. Beginning in the Middle Byzantine period this term commonly refers to rosewater or rose distillate used both in perfume and cooking in well-known texts such as the *Book of Ceremonies* and the epic poem *Digenis Akritis*.²⁵ This mention of parallel distillation processes in perfumery is the first instance of Blemmydes' linking alchemical practice to technical skills derived from another industry.
6. Slow heating in manure or the ashes (σποδός) of a dying fire is common to all Greek alchemical recipes that feature egg distillation. Of the two, the ashes provide a hotter environment and thus require less fermentation time.
7. "Divine water" (ὑδωρ θεῖον) is a clever play on the homonym θεῖος, meaning both "divine" and "sulfur." The liquid features as the most crucial component in *chrysopoeia* in the work of Zosimos and later Stephanos of Alexandria (fl. 610), along with numerous pseudonymous and anonymous authors in the Greek alchemical corpus.²⁶ Moreover, a list of vocabulary that abruptly interrupts ordered steps in a recipe is a structural feature unique to Byzantine alchemical writing.²⁷ In the context of a literary composite, the list demonstrates Blemmydes' familiarity with key authors, characteristic literary conventions, and important material foundations of the alchemical tradition.
8. Identifying the precise substance Blemmydes calls "magnesia" is almost impossible. The term μαγνησία does not refer to magnesium oxide as it does in the present day

23 Anonymous, *The Sacred and Divine Art of Gold Making*, 274 n. 307.

24 Anonymous, *On Urine in Fever*, 323–27.

25 *The Book of Ceremonies*, 466, 586; E. Jeffreys ed. and transl., *Digenis Akritis: The Grottaferrata and Escorial Versions* (Cambridge, 1998), 154–55.

26 Dufault (2017); Martelli 2009: 5–22; Papathanassiou 2002: 165–70.

27 Colinet 1998: 172.

but instead appears as a placeholder word for a variety of metals, alloys, or minerals. An undated anonymous treatise on *egg-chrysopoeia* defines magnesia as a combination of substances symbolized by eggshells and quicklime that results in white lead carbonate.²⁸ Multiple definitions appear under the heading for magnesia in surviving lexicons of alchemical vocabulary.²⁹ In step VIII, however, Blemmydes mentions τὸ σῶμα τῆς μαγνησίας, “the body of magnesia.” Given the near-exclusive use of σῶμα in the Greek alchemical corpus to denote substances with metallic properties, here magnesia suggests a metal or alloy.³⁰

9. A reference to grinding pigments and mixing them with a binder.
10. From as early as the first century CE, a duration of forty days seems to have been standard for fermentation and processes that required slow heating. Pliny the Elder mentions this length of time in his *Natural History* more than once, including in a passage that explains how to enhance the yellow color of chalcopyrite, a copper iron sulfide.³¹ A period of forty days also carried significant religious weight in the Byzantine world, being the duration of Lent as well as the duration of periods of trial for Moses, Elijah, and Christ himself.³² Because forty days was such well-known quantifiable amount of time in Byzantium, it may be the case that Blemmydes uses it as a guideline precisely because of its familiarity.
11. If Blemmydes has allegorized distilling a mercuric substance rather than actually calcifying and distilling eggshells, it is possible that the redness he mentions here indicates a future recombination of mercury and sulfur to synthesize cinnabar. Recipes for synthetic cinnabar appear in the Greek alchemical corpus and feature in the aforementioned anonymous text on *egg-chrysopoeia*.³³ This redness, however, is tangential to the main recipe.
12. The number 40, μ', is omitted in this passage but is implied.
13. The verb κτίσον means literally to build, i.e. “build a small oven,” but this entire step nuances the phrase in such a way that implies both building or preparing a small oven and placing the substance inside.
14. θείου ἐλαίου likely refers back to the crimson oil mentioned in step VIII. If the egg is indeed an allegorical representation of sulfur and mercury, then “divine/sulfur oil” would seem to be the earlier extraction from egg yolk, in other words the red oil produced by heating sulfur.
15. An abbreviation for κοτύλη, approximately 0.302 liters by volume.³⁴

28 Anonymous, *Concerning How the Ancients Speak of the Egg*, 18–21.

29 Sherwood Taylor 1930: 122–23.

30 Sherwood Taylor 1930: 135.

31 Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 34.120.

32 Ex. 24:18 and 34:28, 1 Kings 19:8, Mt. 4:2, Lk. 4:2.

33 Anonymous, *Concerning How the Ancients Speak of the Egg*, 20.

34 Schilbach 1970: 119.

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I.4.6 Michael Italikos (c.1100–before 1157)

A Crown for Sale, in the Words of St. Stephanos

EMMANUEL C. BOURBOUHAKIS

Ed.: P. Gautier, *Michel Italikos. Lettres et Discours* (Paris, 1972), 235–36

MS.: El Escorial, Real Biblioteca, Scorialensis Y-II-10 (s. XIII), ff. 342r–v¹

Other Translations: Gautier’s edition includes summaries of each text, but no translation

Significance

Despite the irreverent impersonation of a relic speaking on its own behalf, the general tenor of the complaints about the sale of valuable religious objects betrays an anxiety about the retreat of higher values before the financial enticements offered by wealthy foreign buyers of sacred art. The resulting paradox has un-Orthodox yet obviously devout “barbarians” showing greater appreciation for the reliquary of St. Stephanos than its Orthodox owners. The reliquary finds consolation in recalling that its itinerary and attendant benefits to the pious actually began with its initial transfer from Palestine to Constantinople. Venice is now imagined as the next stop on St. Stephanos’ tour to “crown” the remaining cities of the world.

The Author

See E. C. Bourbouhakis, I.3.8 in this volume.

Text and Context

Italikos set this text in the form of a popular school exercise (προγύμνασμα) known as an *ethopoiia* (ἠθοποιία). This required the student to adopt the first person perspective of a remote figure, either real or imagined, in a bid to hone his skill in articulating a viewpoint other than his own.

In the twelfth century, a number of Byzantine authors composed such exercises as self-standing literary endeavors intended to exhibit their skills as virtuoso rhetoricians.² The demand for *ethopoiia* reflects the marked taste for theatricality in the twelfth century, and may have contributed to the resurgence at this time of the ancient novel, which was

¹ Consulted.

² On *ethopoiia* see also E. Jeffreys, Introduction, II.3.

built, in part, on extended first person accounts by the characters in the story.³ In order to focus on the dramatic content of the exercise, the persona being channeled was placed in an extraordinary predicament, such as “what Niobe might say over her dead children,” or in a lighter vein, “what the luxuriously dressed priest said when he exited from the baths and discovered that his clothes had been stolen.” Italikos gives voice in this text to the persona of St. Stephen, the first martyr, who complains about the sale of his relics by a greedy church sacristan to Venetian “barbarians.” The author demonstrates his rhetorical adroitness by repeatedly exploiting the dual use of “Stephanos” to mean both a “crown” or “victor’s wreath” and as the proper name of the martyred saint.

Stephanos was known in the Orthodox church as the “first martyr” (πρωτομάρτυρ). According to the Acts of the Apostles (Act. 6:8–8:1) Stephanos was a deacon in the early church at Jerusalem who aroused the enmity of local Jews through his teachings. Accused of blasphemy against Moses and God, at his trial he made a long speech denouncing the religious authorities who were sitting in judgment of him and was consequently stoned to death. His martyrdom was witnessed by Saul of Tarsus, then still a Pharisee, who would later become a follower of Jesus, changing his name to Paul. In the Orthodox church his feast day is celebrated on the December 27. On August 2 the Orthodox celebrate the discovery of St. Stephanos’ relics, which hagiographic legend dates to the fourth or early fifth century.⁴ The relics were supposedly first moved to nearby Jerusalem. In 428, the regent empress Pulcheria had the right hand of St. Stephanos transferred to Constantinople. The emperor Anastasios I (r.491–518) eventually ordered the saint’s remains transferred to the imperial capital. A number of monasteries on Mount Athos display relics of St. Stephanos, as do churches in Moscow and St. Petersburg, as well as in Rome and Venice.

Relics were often reported stolen or sent as prestige diplomatic gifts in the Middle Ages. Laments about the sale of relics, a practice not widely mentioned in our sources, would have been consonant with complaints about the selling off of Byzantium’s religious and cultural patrimony to westerners, Italians especially. So Michael Choniates, in an essay bearing similarly theatrical features, complains about the wholesale purchase of books by Italian merchants in Constantinople.⁵ Without more specific evidence, we cannot judge whether the text alludes to an actual sale of a relic or is meant to reproach cupidity among Byzantine churchmen in general. We may note, however, that already in the tenth century, the *Book of the Eparch*, a regulatory compendium for the Byzantine capital’s commercial activities, cautions that any money-lender discovered buying either damaged or intact sacred objects (presumably given as collateral) without first gaining permission from the city Prefect, will be brought before the authorities.⁶

3 Hunger, *Literatur*, 108–16; cf. Bourbouhakis 2010: 175–87; on the Byzantine novel see Beaton 1996: 1–22.

4 Bovon 2003: 279–315.

5 Michael Choniates, *To Those who Accuse Him of Not Exhibiting his Talent*, 17.

6 Leo the Wise, *The Book of the Eparch*, ch. 2.7.

Text

Τοῦ Ἰταλικοῦ ἠθοποιῖα· ποίους ἂν εἴποι λόγους ὁ ἅγιος Στέφανος ὁ πρωτομάρτυς, παρὰ τοῦ νεωκόρου τοῖς Βενετικοῖς πωλούμενος

Πρὸς ἄμφω μερίζομαι καὶ συνήδομαι τοῖς πριαμένοις καὶ ἄχθομαι τοῖς ἀποδομένοις· ἄμφω γὰρ ἀκήρατον στέφανον, ἐμὲ τὸν πρωτομάρτυν Στέφανον, οἱ μὲν κακῶς ἀπέδοντο, οἱ δὲ καλῶς ἐξωνήσαντο. ὦ χρυσοῦ τὰ πάντα ποιοῦντες ὦνια, ὦ ψυχαὶ φιλόχρυσοί τε καὶ μισοστέφανοι, ὦ ποίας με καθεῖλετε κεφαλῆς. ἐκομίσθη μὲν τῇ βασιλίδι τῶν πόλεων, καυχῆσεως στέφανος· διεδείτό με αὕτη, περιετίθετο, βασιλικωτέρα μᾶλλον ἐμοὶ διεδείκνυτο τῷ Στεφάνῳ ἢ τοῖς ἄλλοις στεφάνοις, ὅσοις ἀπὸ χρυσοῦ καταστέφεται. Βαρβάρους δέ, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐφυλαττόμην εἰς καύχησιν. ὡς εὔ γε τούτοις. οὐκ ἀποπέμπομαι γὰρ αὐτῶν τὸ φιλότιμον· στέφανον γὰρ ἐφίλουν, ἀλλ' οὐ χρυσόν· ἐφιλοπλούτουν, ἀλλὰ τὸν κάλλιστον πλοῦτον, ἐμὲ τὸν Στέφανον· ἢ γὰρ ἑτέρα φιλοπλουτία δευτέρα ἐστὶν εἰδωλολατρία, ἣν οἱ ἀποδεδωκότες ἐπόθησαν.

Ἄλλ' ὦ τῶν τυραννικῶν ἐκείνων χειρῶν καὶ τὰ πάντα τολμηροτάτων. ἐξ οἶων γὰρ χειρῶν εἰς οἷας ἐμπέπτωκα πάλιν, ἐκ μισοχρίστων εἰς φιλοχρύσους, ἐκ μαρτυροκτόνων εἰς μισομάρτυρας· τότε μὲν γὰρ λίθοις ἐβαλλόμην, νῦν δὲ χρυσοῦ ἀτιμότερος ἐγενόμην· χρυσὸς ἐμοῦ τυρανεῖ, χρυσὸς με ξηνηλατεῖ, χρυσοῦ με πόθος ἐς βαρβάρους ὑπερορίζει. τὸ δὲ ἀκρότατον τῶν ἀσεβημάτων αὐτῶν, ἀλλὰ πῶς τοῦτο εἶπω; πῶς δὲ παραστήσω τὸ τόλμημα; τίνα δὲ καὶ πόσην οἱ τολμηταὶ τὴν δίκην ὑφέξουσιν; ἐπυρώθη ἐγὼ τῷ τοῦ μαρτυρίου πυρί· πρῶτος γὰρ αὐτὸς κάλλιστον ὑπόδειγμα τοῖς μάρτυσιν ἐγενόμην καὶ πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων εἰς τὴν ἄθλησιν ἐφηλάμην. καὶ εἰ μὲν κατὰ στοῖχον θεωροίης τῶν μαρτύρων τὰς στρατίας, εὐρήσεις ἐμὲ λοχαγόν· εἰ δὲ κατὰ φάλαγγα, στρατηγόν· ἄλλον δὲ ὄντιναοῦν Στέφανον οὐραγόν, φαλαγγάρχην ἂν ἴδῃς ἐμὲ καὶ τοῦ μαρτυρικοῦ κατάρχοντα τάγματος· εἰ δὲ σὺ τὰς μὲν πολεμικὰς συντάξεις οὐκ ἀποδέχη καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὐδὲ πρὸς τὰ τοιαῦτα με παραβάλλειν ἐθέλεις, φιλόμουσός τε ἄλλως τυγχάνεις καὶ χαίρεις μουσικοῖς ὀνόμασί τε καὶ πράγμασιν, ἂν χορὸν ἐπινοήσης τοὺς μάρτυρας, κορυφαῖός εἰμι· ἂν χορδὰς ἐμμελεστάτης κιθάρας, ὑπάτη· ἂν φθόγγους αὐλοῦ θεοπνεύστου, προσφῶδων ὁ πρῶτιστος· αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνδίδωμι καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις μέλος μαρτυρικόν.

Ἄλλ' ἐπυρώθη μὲν, καθάπερ εἶπον, καὶ ἐδοκιμάσθη καθάπερ χρυσὸς καὶ εἶ τις μόλιβδος, ξυνετάκη μοι. λίθοις δὲ πανταχόθεν ἀστράπτουσιν ἐκοσμούμην, ὅλοις πέμπουσι πυριμάρμαρον ἀστραπὴν, καταπύρσοις ὅλοις καὶ ἐμπεφυκόςι τῷ σώματι. τοιοῦτον γὰρ αὐτῶν ἐκαινοτόμει τὸ χρῶμα ἢ ἄνη τοῦ αἵματος· τοιοῦτος δῆτα χρυσοχοηθεὶς Στέφανος ὥσπερ παρὰ τῆς ὅλης φύσεως δῶρον ἀνηνέχθη τῷ βασιλεῖ Χριστῷ, κατὰ δευεῖν τυράννοιον τότε διττὰς ἀνηρημένῳ τὰς νίκας, Θανάτου καὶ Ἄιδου. ὁ δὲ με ἰδὼν ἀνέστη τε αὐτίκα τῶν ὑπερτάτων θῶκων καὶ ὄλαις συνέσχεν ἀγκάλαις, ὡς μέλλων περιδιῆσασθαι καὶ καταστεφθῆναι τὴν ἀνίκητον κεφαλὴν· ἀλλ' οἱ πάντολμοι φιλοχρήματοι, ὅσον τὸ εἰς τούτους ἦκον, ἐξαρπάζουσί με τῶν τούτου χειρῶν, τιμῆς ὀλίγης τὸν ἀτίμητον ἀποδόμενοι Στέφανον. οἱ δὲ

Translation

An Ethopoia of Italikos: What St. Stephen the Protomartyr might have said when he was sold by the servant of the church to the Venetians.

I am divided between the two, I share the joy of those who purchased me and I am resentful at those who sold me off; for I am an unalloyed crown, me, the first martyr Stephanos¹ to both, the ones who wrongly sold me off, and the others who rightly bought me up. O men, willing to sell anything for gold; O souls, who love gold and despise the crown; O what a head you pulled me down from. I was brought to the Queen of Cities, a crown to boast of;² the City wore me as a diadem, placed me round [her head], and showed herself more regal on account of me, Stephanos, than all the other crowns of gold with which she is crowned.³ It seems, however, that I was being preserved for barbarians to boast of. Good for them! I do not reject their honorable ambition; for they desired a crown, not gold; they desired wealth, but the most beautiful kind of wealth, me, Stephanos; for the other kind of desire for wealth is but another kind of idolatry, which those who sold me yearn for. [Col. 3:5]

O those oppressive hands whose insolence knows no bounds. Out of what sort of hands, and into what sort, I have once more fallen, from haters-of-Christ into lovers-of-gold, from martyr-killers to martyr-haters;⁴ for back then I was struck with stones, while now I have become less valued than gold; gold rules over me like a tyrant, gold drives me off to live in foreign lands, longing for gold sends me away to live among the barbarians. But how can I bring myself to describe the most extreme acts of profanity? How shall I depict this impudent act? How great and what sort of judgment will those who dared do such a thing suffer? I was forged by the fire of martyrdom; I was the first to serve as a most beautiful example to martyrs and I leapt into the contest before the others. And if you were to review the martyrs like a company of troops, you will find me to have been their captain; if as a battalion, their general; any other Stephanos might head up the rearguard, but you would see me at the head of the column, even leading the regiment of martyrs. But if you should not approve of the military orders and for this reason do not wish to compare me to such things, seeing as you happen to be an admirer of the arts and delight in musical terms and related matters, if you conceive of the martyrs as a chorus, I am the lead chorister; if as the chords of a most melodious lyre, then I am the highest string; if as the notes of a wind instrument, then I would be the first to sing forth; for I provided the others the keynote of martyrdom.⁵

But I was forged in fire, as I mentioned already, and was tested like gold, and if any lead was found, it was melted away. Meanwhile, I was adorned with stones which shimmer brightly, all emitting a flare of light bright as a flame, a deep natural fiery red.⁶ For their color made me seem an altogether original thing, a flower of blood.⁷ A Stephanos such as this, in fact, smelted and forged in gold, I was raised up to Christ our king like a gift from all of nature, bearing a double victory against both tyrants, Death and Hades. And seeing me, Christ stood up rightaway from the highest seat and embraced me tightly, intending to place a wreath and crown upon my undefeated head; but these shameless money-lovers, to the extent they could, snatch me away me away from his arms, placing little

γε κεραυνοὶ οὐκ ἐπέμποντο καὶ ἡ τὸν Ὅζαν τιμωρησαμένη τὸν παλαιὸν ἐκείνον ἡμέλει δίκη καὶ ἀνεβάλλετο. ἀλλ' ἐκείνους μὲν δικαίως ἐβδελυξάμην ὡς φιλοχρηματίας καὶ τολμητίας καὶ γεγονότας ὅλους χρυσοῦ τραυματίας· χρυσὴν γὰρ ἀποκεκλόφασι γλῶσσαν, ὡς Ἀχάρ ὁ τοῦ Χαρμί· καὶ ἐπαρῶμαι τούτοις τὰς παλαμναιοτάτας ἀράς. ἐγὼ δὲ οἶδα καὶ δισχυρίζομαι, ἐπεὶ στέφανός εἰμι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὡς ἅπασαν καταστέψω τὴν ὑπ' οὐρανὸν ἐκκλησίαν. ὡσπερ ἐκ Παλαιστίνης εἰς τὴν προκαθεζομένην τῶν πόλεων ἀφιγμένος, οὕτως ἐξ Οὐγεντίας, οἷ νῦν ἀφῆγμαι, εἰς τὰς ἐπιλοίπους τῶν πόλεων μεταναστεύσω· δεῖ γὰρ με πάσαις κεφαλαῖς ἐφαρμόσαι τὸν Στέφανον.

worth on the priceless Stephanos. But no thunderbolts were cast and the justice which punished that Ozan of old⁸ overlooked this instance and delayed its punishment. But I justly abhorred those as impertinent lovers of money, men who have become altogether victims of gold; for they have stolen away a golden tongue, like Achar [=Achan] the son of Zambri did,⁹ and I call down avenging curses fit for murderers on these men. For my part, I know and am confident, since I am the Stephanos of Christ, that I shall crown the whole of the earthly church. Just as I came from Palestine to the city which presides over all other cities, so shall I migrate from Venice,¹⁰ where I now travel, to “the remaining cities”;¹¹ for I must place the crown on every head.

Commentary

1. The whole text turns on the pun that Stephanos (Στέφανος) in Greek can be used to mean both “crown” and as a name, in this case that of the martyr St. Stephen. The author exhibits his virtuosity by exploiting every rhetorical facet of this dual sense. I use the transliterated “Stephanos” throughout in order to maintain the semblance of wordplay.
2. A phrase which appears numerous times in both the Old and New Testament.⁷
3. Alliterative play on words involving the root of the word “crown”/στεφ-.
4. Stephanos now speaks as both the person and the relic *cum* reliquary, combining *ethopoia* with *prosopopoiia*, giving voice to animals or inanimate objects, likening his persecution and martyrdom with the insult to the relics put up for sale.
5. Μέλος in musical contexts like this extended simile amounts to the “tune” or “note” for the others to follow.
6. The phrase is strikingly similar to Euripides’ *Medea*, 519.
7. The crown is likened to a flower with stones as fiery red petals, the blossom of the martyr’s blood. The language is at once graphic and stirring.
8. For the figure of Oza, see 1Reg. 6:6–7.
9. See the relevant passage in the Old Testament story of Josh. 7:1–26; cf. Michael Italikos, *Letters and Orations*, No. 6 (ed. Gautier), 236. The tongue of St. Stephen is not on any list of relics removed by crusaders, though a number of Athonite monasteries claim to have pieces of his jaw.⁸
10. The thirteenth-century Venetian church of San Giorgio Maggiore boasts possession of the true relics of St. Stephen, said to have been brought there by a returning French crusader c.1100. Cf. Meinardus, 1970: 250; cf. La chiesa di Santo Stefano, Venezia: Si conserva il corpo di santo Stefano protomartire. Le storie avventurose del ritrovamento del corpo, della sua prima traslazione a Costantinopoli e della seconda traslazione a Roma, sono lungamente raccontate nella Legenda Aurea (cap. CXII, *L’invenzione di Santo Stefano Protomartire*).
11. A phrase borrowed from a passage of Herodotus where Byzantium is mentioned: *Histories*, 6.33, τὰς ἐπιλοίπους τῶν πολίων (“the remaining cities”).

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7 Cf. Prov. 16:31 στέφανος καυχῆσεως γῆρας/ἐν δὲ ὁδοῖς δικαιοσύνης εὐρίσκεται; 1Thes. 2:19 τίς γὰρ ἡμῶν ἐλπὶς ἢ χαρὰ ἢ στέφανος καυχῆσεως – ἢ οὐχὶ καὶ ὑμεῖς – ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ.

8 For which see Didier 1875: 178–211.

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I.4.7 John Tzetzes (c.1115–after 1165)

A Letter Mentioning an Inkwell Sent as a Gift

MICHAEL GRÜNBART

Ed.: P. A. M. Leone, *Ioannis Tzetzae epistulae*, Teubner (Leipzig, 1972), 119, 1–12 and 120, 23–26 (ep. 80)

MSS.:¹ Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 1369 (s. XIII–XIV)

Paris, BNF, Graecus 2644 (s. XIV)

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Other Translations: J. Shepard, “Tzetzes’ Letters to Leo at Dristra,” *ByzF* 6 (1979), 196, 198; repr. in Kazhdan and Epstein, *Change* (English); I. Gregoriades, *Ἐπιστολαί: Εἰσαγωγή – Μετάφραση – Σχόλια* (Athens, 2001), 211–13 (Modern Greek)

Significance

The following passage mentions a writing tool that Tzetzes received as a gift from the land of the Rus'. It is a common feature in Byzantine epistolography that the receiver praises or describes the gift sent by his correspondent.²

The Author

John Tzetzes received an excellent education and served as a secretary (*grammatikos*) in the provinces (Veria in Thessaly) at the beginning of his career.³ He then returned to Constantinople and became a teacher. He also tried to establish himself as a poet, but did not succeed. He instructed Bertha of Sulzbach (then empress Eirene), who had been chosen to marry the emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80), in classical Greek literature. Tzetzes composed commentaries on ancient authors and interpreted his own letters in a verse commentary (decapentasyllables). His *Historiae* or so-called *Chiliades* were used as a manual for instructing pupils in all kinds of classical education. Tzetzes communicated with members of the high aristocracy and searched for patrons, but he did not succeed in obtaining commissions. He lived at the Pantokrator monastery in Constantinople and died after 1165.

1 Not consulted; for the manuscripts and the stemma codicum see Leone 1972: x–xvi.

2 An overview of objects and goods that were sent to Tzetzes is provided in Karpozelos 1984.

3 For his career see Grünbart 2005; for the date of his death see Cullhed 2015.

Text and Context

The letters of Tzetzes are among the major collections of the twelfth century.⁴ The letters reflect the learnedness of the writer, but also provide vivid insights into daily life. They also add to an understanding of the ways of communication in Byzantium. Tzetzes sent a couple of letters to Leo Charsianites, who became metropolitan of Dristra (today Silistra, on the southern bank of the Danube).⁵ Tzetzes expresses his gratitude to Leo, who often accompanies his letters with gifts, including various kinds of fish.

4 Grünbart 2015: 298.

5 Grünbart 1996: 195–96.

Text

Τῷ ἁγιωτάτῳ μητροπολίτῃ Δρίστρας.

Τὴν παρὰ τῆς σῆς ἁγιωσύνης προσκυνητὴν ἐμοὶ σταλεῖσαν γραφὴν ἅμα καὶ τὴν μεγαλοδωριανὴν ἀπέλαβον, θεϊότατε δέσποτα, τό τε παιδάριον, ὃ ἐκ Σεβλάδου νῦν μετεκλήθη Θεόδωρος, καὶ τὸ ταυρογλυφές, εἰ δὲ βούλει ῥωσογλυφές, μελανδόχον ἐκεῖνο πυξίδιον, ᾧ ἐξ ὀστέου ἰχθύος ὑπὲρ τὰ Δαιδάλου θρυλούμενα χειρουργήματα ἄφατόν τι κάλλος ἐνετετόρευτο· καὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ σε προσεκύνησα ἕως ἐδάφους, οὐ γὰρ εἶχον σωματικῶς προσκυνεῖν . . .

[p. 120] τὸ δέ γε πυξίδιον τοῖς γλύψασιν ἦν προσφυές ἀνδράσι πίνειν ἢ γράφειν εἰδόσιν· ἐνὼς γὰρ γραφικοῦ δονακιδίου καὶ τούτου μόλις χώρησιν εἶχεν. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν ἀστεῖσματα . . .

Translation

To the most holy metropolitan of Dristra.

I have received the reverend letter and the great gifts sent to me by your Holiness,¹ O most divine lord, [that is] the young slave² – who has now been renamed from Vsevolod to Theodore³ – and that “bull-carved” or, if you like, “Russian-carved,” little box for containing ink, on which quite unspeakable beauties, surpassing the fabled handiwork of Daedalus have been carved in relief out of fishbone. And in my heart I bowed to the ground for you, for I was not able to do so with my body.⁴ . . . [A description of the young man follows]

[p. 120] At least the container was appropriate for those who carved it, men knowing how to drink rather than how to write. For it has space for a single little writing pen and scarcely even for that. But these are pleasantries⁵ . . .

Commentary

1. Tzetzes follows the patterns of epistolographic courtesy (forms of address and formulas of gratitude). But the writer does not hesitate to express his thoughts directly, since Tzetzes and Leo were on good terms.
2. The metropolitan Leo sent a young person (a slave) from Dristra to work in the household of Tzetzes. It was common to employ servants in twelfth-century Byzantium; scholars in particular needed them for copying texts.⁶ Later, Tzetzes deplures that the young man (of about 15 years) is unable to write.
3. It was common to give persons from abroad new names in Byzantium (prominent examples are princesses).⁷ According to Jonathan Shepard the young man described by Tzetzes possibly came from Hungary, while Alexander Kazhdan argues for a Kyivan origin.⁸

6 Trapp 1980–81.

7 Tinnefeld 1993.

8 Shepard 1979: 221–228.; Kazhdan 1983: 354–55.

4. The inkbox, or at least parts of it, was possibly made of walrus ivory or narwhal horn, which was a highly appreciated and precious material imported from Kyiv or Novgorod. Even in fourteenth-century Byzantium, the historian Nikephoros Gregoras mentions trade with “fishbone” as a source of Russian wealth.⁹ Tzetzes makes a quite puzzling statement at the end of his letter, where it seems to him that the carvers were not well experienced in producing such an object. Jonathan Shepard suggests that the *pyxidion* was large enough for keeping ink, but lacked room for pens.¹⁰
5. Although a necessity for writing, only a small number of inkstands or inkwells are preserved or mentioned in either textual or pictorial sources. Writing tools are often depicted in Evangelist portraits, but they have only rarely survived to the present day. An inkwell preserved in the *Tesoro del Duomo* at Padua from the tenth century bears two inscriptions, reading: Βαφῆς δοχεῖον τῷ Λέοντι πᾶς πόρος (“Inkwell providing Leo every kind of support”), Λέων τὸ τερπνὸν θαῦμα τῶν καλλιγράφων (“Leo, the delightful wonder among the calligraphers”).¹¹

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⁹ Nikephoros Gregoras, *History*, vol. 3, p. 512 (Bonn, 1855).

¹⁰ Shepard 1979: 217.

¹¹ Hunger 1971: 474–79; Hunger 1989: 86–87, 151–52; cf. *BEIÜ* 2: Me71 and 72 (p. 241–43).

I.5 Seeing Spaces: Responses to the Built Environment

Introduction

FOTEINI SPINGOU

This chapter is about responses to the man-made environment, whether a city, a village, or a park. It explores what triggered the interest in and the individual perceptions of space for medieval visitors, as well as the regular inhabitants of a Byzantine built environment. The texts selected in this chapter offer accounts of building complexes, open spaces, rooms, and wall decorations by both Byzantines and foreign travelers (mainly, pilgrims, crusaders, and merchants).

Constantinople inevitably has a central role to play in this discussion. With an estimated population of 400,000, the possibilities of a great center for commerce and diplomacy, and a reputation as a holy place, the City of Constantine in the eleventh and twelfth centuries might be compared with our modern New York, Shanghai or Hong Kong.¹ Like the modern metropolis, medieval Constantinople could offer impressive sights, disgusting streets, and a culturally rich daily life.² Cultural plurality was one of the main characteristics of the medieval city. One of its most famous inhabitants, John Tzetzes, claimed that he needed to learn greetings in no less than seven languages to navigate around the neighborhoods of the capital.³ New magnificent buildings and public spaces were constructed, while older ones further embellished a city that had first been revamped to become a capital in the fourth century.⁴ Relics and monuments were key components for defining this city as a great Christian site. Indeed, the accumulation of holy relics was such that it led to Constantinople being called “a new Jerusalem.” The words of a mid eleventh century author, John Mauroπους, who described Constantinople as “a miracle for beholders, a miracle for listeners, a city that is raised above the ground” may be more than simple hyperbole.⁵ While the state of the city after 1204 remains unclear, given the lack of objective written sources and the paucity of archaeological evidence, surviving accounts suggest that the city continued to attract the interest of pilgrims and travelers after 1261.⁶

1 On the issue of the population of the city see also A. Alexakis' commentary to the *Miracles of Pege*, I.8.2 in this volume.

2 The bibliography on Medieval Constantinople is massive. The most influential modern appraisals of Constantinople and its built environment are by Mango (1993) and Magdalino (2002, 2007, 2010); see also Mango *et al.* 1995. For some of the most important monuments with further references to earlier scholarship and the major handbooks see Marinis 2014: 119–208.

3 John Tzetzes, *Theogony*, 771–806. See Kazhdan and Epstein, *Change*, 259–60, discussed in Ciggaar 2002: 167.

4 For Constantinople and Rome see the volume edited by Grig and Kelly (2012), with various contributions and further bibliography.

5 See Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein, *Change*, 255.

6 See, e.g., the accounts in Majeska 1984.

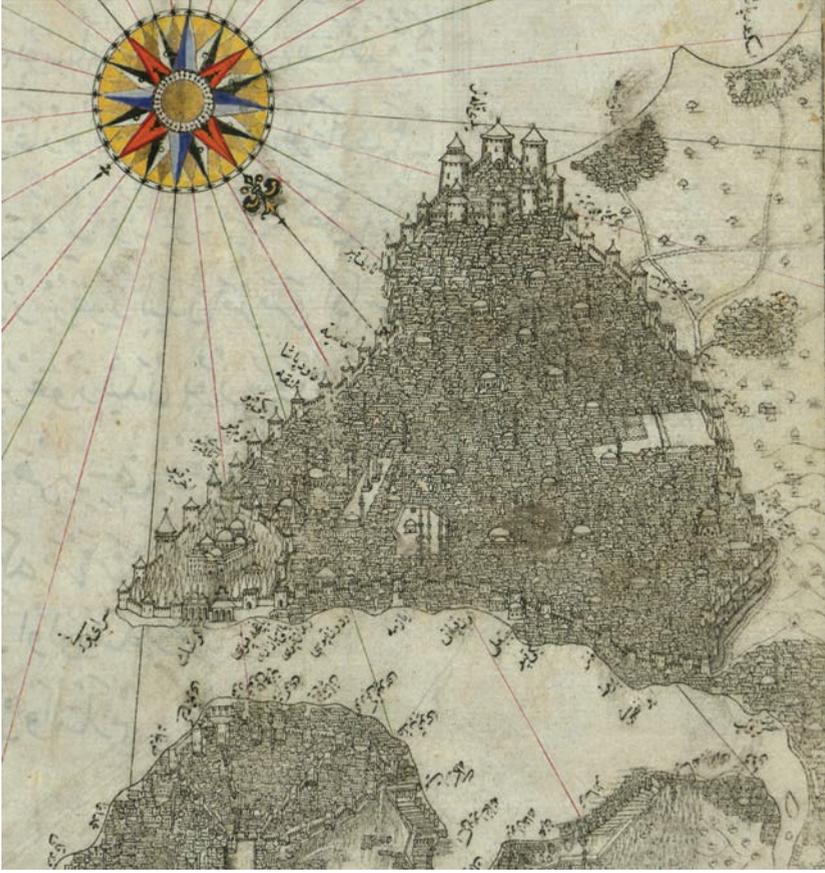


Fig. I.5 Eighteenth-century copy of the map of Constantinople in the year 1525 CE drawn by Piri Reis dedicated to Süleyman I. Detail. Walters Art Museum, W.658, fol 370b

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The majority of the texts in the first half of this section come from non-Greek speakers and concern Constantinople itself. The first contribution presents a fascinating case-study of the translation and transmission of a guide for travelers to the city. Efthymios Rizos argues that a twelfth-century anonymous description of Constantinople was first composed in Latin by a visitor of the city (and it was not translated from Greek as it was previously believed, see I.5.1 in this volume). Remarkably, the Latin text remained popular throughout the Middle Ages, until the famous scholar Constantine Laskaris translated it into Greek in the fifteenth century (this text is also translated into English by E. Rizos). Next, Alex Novikoff offers an excerpt from the *Chronicle* of the English monk Ralph of Coggeshall about the City's grandeur and wealth, and also the prophetic properties of statues and columns around the city (I.5.2 in this volume). The interest of Ralph's text in statues and columns is a

recurrent topic in many of the texts found in this chapter.⁷ George P. Majeska offers the first English translation of the famous twelfth-century description of Constantinople by Antony of Novgorod (I.5.3 in this volume). Antony's *Pilgrim's Book*, written in Slavic, is a unique attestation of the Christian shrines and the relics kept in Constantinople just before the events of 1204. An excerpt from the History of Rabban Šawmā and his disciple Mār Yahballāhā is translated from Syriac into English by Thomas A. Carlson (I.5.4 in this volume). The anonymous history was written at the end of the thirteenth century and allegedly draws from a Persian prototype. The text is concerned with Christian relics, buildings, and their rich decoration. The following text (I.5.5), an excerpt from the *Guidebook to Places of Pilgrimage* by 'Alī ibn Abī Bakr al-Harawī, highlights the importance of Constantinople as an Islamic holy city. The passage is translated from Arabic by Cecilia Palombo and reiterates the fascination of medieval authors with the famous columns of Constantinople. An excerpt from the oft-cited chronicle of Benjamin of Tudela follows next. Benjamin is a twelfth-century merchant who wrote about his travels in Hebrew (although his native language was Arabic). In the excerpt presented by Lee Mordechai (I.5.6 in this volume), Benjamin takes note of the buildings, but is particularly concerned with life in the city and especially that of the local Jewish community.

The section on medieval visitors to Constantinople continues with a dossier compiled by Scott Ashley (I.5.7 in this volume). This dossier includes excerpts from two Icelandic sagas both written in the second quarter of the thirteenth century, *Morkiskina* and *Hemskringla* (with the second relying heavily on the first). Both texts refer to a visit to Constantinople by the King of Norway Sigurðr Magnúson (r.1103–30), often called “Sigurd the Crusader” and “Sigurd Jorsalfar” in Norwegian) a century earlier, while Sigurðr Magnúson was on his way to the holy land. The author of *Morkiskina* shows an obvious fascination with the sculpture as well as the music in the Hippodrome. The author of *Hemskringla* offers the reader a stunning view of the great city approached from the sea – a view that can be compared to that offered by the anonymous author of the History of Rabban Šawmā (I.5.4 in this volume).

The author of *Hemskringla* also discusses the reception of diplomatic missions, a recurrent topic among medieval authors. Given Constantinople's political significance at the time, this is perhaps unsurprising. The engaging beauty of the site for the first diplomatic encounters, the park of Philopateion (an unidentifiable suburban area of Constantinople) is exalted by two contemporary authors. The two authors wrote independently, but do both refer to the ban against the German Emperor Conrad III (r.1138–52) entering the city. Odo of Deuil, a monk of the French Abbey of St. Denis, in an excerpt translated by Greti Dinkova-Bruun, refers to the engaging beauty of the park and the attitude of the Crusaders towards the place in which they are hosted (I.5.9 in this volume). John Kinnamos, a Byzantine propagandist, in an excerpt from his history translated by Michael Grünbart (I.5.10 in this volume), pinpoints the Byzantine perception of that same place, explains its name, and, like Odo of Deuil, admires its beauty.

⁷ The number of studies on antique statuary in Constantinople is vast; see, e.g., James 1996; Bassett 1991, 2004; Mango 1963. The subject is also discussed in I.7 in this volume.

An unattributed text from a Slavic *florilegium* gives a unique twelfth-century perspective on an eleventh-century view of Constantinople. A fairly complete eleventh-century fresco with scenes from the Constantinopolitan Hippodrome can still be found inside the Cathedral of Saint Sophia in Kyiv. The late twelfth-century Slavic text translated and discussed by Robert Romanchuk, Brad Hostetler, Matthew W. Herrington, Christopher Timm, and Sarah Simmons (I.5.8 in this volume) is an exceptional *ekphrasis* that animates these frescoes and brings the lively Komnenian Hippodrome to Kyiv.

The contribution by Elizabeth Jeffreys (I.5.11 in this volume) brings the reader away from the *realia* of Constantinople and into the world of fantasy. The passage from the popular story of Digenis Akritis describes an imaginary palace that may bear many similarities to existing ones.⁸ It elaborates upon the rhetorical trope of the *locus amoenus* which, literarily, refers to a “pleasant place,” an idealized space that offers safety and/or security for its inhabitants. The space is presented in lieu of a body, as it implies the heroine’s guarded virginity. The detailed description of the frescoes of the palace encourages the reader to compare them with existing ones, such as those described in another passage taken from John Kinnamos’ *History* and translated by Alicia Walker below (I.5.12). Kinnamos, with a pen guided by his political agenda, discusses frescoes that he understands to come from the Muslim artistic tradition and uses his description to elaborate on the ethos of their commissioner.

Seeing spaces beyond Constantinople is the overarching subject of the following three contributions. Michèle Mulchahey introduces an excerpt from a thirteenth-century guide for future missionaries penned by Riccoldo di Montecroce (I.5.13 in this volume). The text is about the ultimate place of pilgrimage: the Holy Land. Riccoldo looks at the Byzantine mosaic of Christ in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem (no longer surviving) and is an example of a medieval response to Byzantine art. Riccoldo also offers a medieval account of the perception of space in Holy Cities, since he understands relics to be part of the structural net of a building.⁹

A letter addressed to John Tornikes by the thirteenth-century author George Akropolites, translated by Paul Magdalino and discussed by Divna Manolova, includes a praise of the city (I.5.14 in this volume). This text highlights the resurgence of the rhetorical genre of the “encomia” (praises) of cities at this time (more examples can be found later in I.8 in this volume).¹⁰ Akropolites does not offer a lengthy description of the city, instead he criticizes his contemporaries for not giving enough emphasis to the built environment and for focusing solely on the encompassing natural beauty of a given place.

The final text comes from a familiar pen, that of John Apokaukos, the thirteenth-century metropolitan of Nafpaktos. In the letter translated by Alicia Walker and Foteini

8 For different examples of description of spaces that exist only in the world of fantasy see K. Stewart, I.8.16 and A. Walker, I.3.11 in this volume.

9 For a Byzantine taking of the Holy Land see John “Phocas,” *Itinerary to the Holy Land*, discussed by K. Chrysogelos, II.2.3 in this volume; see also Kuelzer 2002.

10 See, e.g., I.8.1, I.8.2, I.8.3.

Spingou, Apokaukos complains about the erection of a structure that has a Muslim-inspired design (I.5.15 in this volume). The form of the structure remains unclear: is it a kind of impressive piece of furniture, or a new room? The description blurs the evidence and gives only vague impressions of an extant built environment. Regardless of this vagueness, Apokaukos finds it an adequate proof of the commissioner's poor character, in that he has chosen to build what the author considers to be "Muslim architecture" (as was also the case in Kinnamos' description).

As becomes apparent from these texts, the medieval viewer was not simply reactive in the manner in which he or she viewed space, but was rather proactive. Perception could be actively shaped to interpret its subject in religious, political, or social terms. Pre-modern space defined power and character and thus it is not surprising that it was often discussed in light of these considerations.

Before closing this Introduction, the reader should be warned – once more – about the partial nature of the material included in this volume. This chapter gives only a small taste of well-developed literary traditions. For instance, Antony of Novgorod's text is only one of the many writings by pilgrims, especially from Novgorod, written in Slavic. The pilgrimage tale is a literary genre exclusively developed in this language. The best and most influential example of this genre is the "Pilgrimage of Prior Daniel" that was written in the first years of the twelfth century and it has been transmitted in no less than 150 manuscripts.¹¹ Similarly, Al-Harawī's work is part of a sizeable tradition of geographical descriptions written in Arabic.¹² The numerous accounts of the deeds of the Crusaders written in Latin should be added to this provisional list of views on the Byzantine built environment.¹³ The reader may wish to refer to the works by Fulcher of Chartres, the French nobleman Geoffrey of Villehardouin, the rather humble knight Robert de Clari, and William of Tyre for their accounts of Constantinople. It should be noted that although an excerpt of Odo de Deuil's *History* is included in this volume, his account of Constantinople is in fact much more extensive.¹⁴

Constantinople was not viewed by travelers and its conquerors alone, but also by its inhabitants. The events of 1204 were witnessed by Byzantines. The most remarkable of all these accounts is perhaps that by Niketas Choniates. Choniates describes the destruction of the statues in the Hippodrome. His vivid (and heart-breaking) description stands as an appendix to his *History* and modern scholars have named it *De Signis*.¹⁵ Theodore

11 See Majeska 1984: 6–8, transl. Ryan in Wilkinson *et al.* 1988: 120–71 (where for "Son (of David)" read "Tower (of David)," with special thanks to Robert Romanchuk for the reference and the correction). The transmission of further Pilgrim tales can be found also in Majeska 1984. For a list of texts on travel and pilgrimage in Slavic see Franklin 2007: 178–79.

12 El Cheikh 2004: 8–10; see also 199–213 for views on Constantinople written in Arabic, and Berger 2002: 179–191.

13 See Riley-Smith in Whitby 2007: 14–17.

14 For references to and discussion of the relevant passages and further bibliography see Macrides 2002b: 193–212; for a general introduction to western travelers in Byzantium see Ciggaar 1996.

15 Choniates, *History*, ed. van Dieten, 647–55, transl. Magoulias, p. 357–62. For a discussion with further bibliography see Chatterjee 2011 (esp. nn. 5 and 7, p. 405); Spingou forthcoming.

Metochites and Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos wrote famous *ekphraseis* about the beauties of the city after the recovery.¹⁶ Nonetheless, Constantinople was not the only concern for Byzantine authors. Metochites – as did many other authors – wrote a beautiful description of Nicaea in his so-called “Nicene Oration.”¹⁷ The delights of Pergamon are considered in a letter by Theodore Laskaris.¹⁸ A description of Corfu by Basil Padiadites is also discussed later in the volume.¹⁹

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16 See I. Polemis (I.8.1) and A. Alexakis (I.2.3 and I.8.2) in this volume.

17 See Foss and Tulchin 1996: 164–95 for text and trans; see also Theodore Doukas Laskaris, *In Praise of the Great City of Nicaea*; also Foss and Tulchin 1996: 133–54.

18 See D. Angelov, I.8.3 in this volume.

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I.5.1 Author Unknown (twelfth century)/Constantine Laskaris (1434–1501)

A Latin Description of Constantinople by an Englishman, and its Greek Translation by Constantine Laskaris

EFTHYMIOS RIZOS

Ed.: K. N. Ciggaar, “Une description anonyme de Constantinople du XII^e s.,” *REB* 31 (1973), 338–41 (Latin and Greek texts); other editions: S. Lambros, *NE* 3 (1906), 249–50 (Greek text); T. Martínez Manzano, *Konstantinos Laskaris: Humanist, Philologe, Lehrer, Kopist*, Meletemata 4 (Hamburg, 1994), 118–19 (Greek text)

MSS:¹ Latin: London, The British Library, Cotton MS Vitellius A.XX (s. XIII med.), f. 239r

Greek: Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, N.87 suppl. = Martini-Bassi 547 (a. 1462–65), ff. 32r–v

Other Translations: None

Significance

This text is a succinct testimony of the way foreign Christian visitors experienced Constantinople in the Komnenian period, and of the narratives they were told about the city. The four stations of the itinerary are Saint Sophia, the imperial monastery of the Pantokrator, the Holy Apostles, and the Pharos Church within the imperial palace. Closely related to the emperor, these four shrines conveyed the message that Constantinople was a holy city, indeed a New Jerusalem. This was expressed by their architecture and lavish decoration, the legends surrounding their origins, and their collections of relics.

The Author

The Latin text of this brief description of Constantinople was discovered in a volume of the British Library (Cotton, Vitellius A.XX), which is a compilation of manuscript texts coming from the libraries of two dissolved Benedictine houses in England, Saint Alban's Abbey and Tynemouth Priory.² Our text belongs to a manuscript coming from Tynemouth, which is a mid fourteenth-century copy of two important twelfth-century texts from England: the *Chronicle of Roger of Howden*, written in 1191–1201 (ff. 133r–238v in the manuscript), and the *Miracles of the Holy Fathers who rest in Hexham Church*, composed by Aelred of Rievaulx in 1154 (ff. 239v–242r in the manuscript).³ Our text occupies one

1 Both consulted. Special thanks to Andrea Capra and Edward Coghill for their help with the manuscripts in the Ambrosian Library and the British Library, respectively.

2 Watson 1979 no. 576; Hasluck 1905–06: 203–04.

3 *BHL* 3749; on Aelred of Rievaulx see Lawrence-Mathers 2003: 240.

single page between them (f. 238r), under the title *Description of Constantinopole*, which was added by a seventeenth-century hand.⁴

Virtually nothing is known about the author and provenance of the *Description of Constantinople*, but its chronology, as we can securely infer from the content, ranges from the period between 1136 and 1185. Given its presence in a manuscript of English provenance, between two texts by English authors, our source has also been attributed to an Englishman. The reasons for its inclusion in the manuscript are unknown, but they may be associated with the Chronicle of Roger of Howden, which precedes it. Roger's account contains extensive chapters about events in Constantinople and the Byzantine Empire under the Komnenian dynasty, especially in the 1170s and 1180s.⁵ It is possible that our text represents a piece of the source material that was in circulation in England and was used by the chroniclers of the time.⁶

Although believed to be of English origins and only known from the British Library manuscript, the *Description of Constantinople* seems to have had a wider circulation, since it was available in Italy in the fifteenth century. This is demonstrated by the Greek version, which is a translation of the same text produced in Milan in 1462/5, by the Byzantine émigré Constantine Laskaris (1434–1501).⁷ Laskaris was a Constantinopolitan scholar who migrated to Italy after the conquest of the Byzantine capital by the Ottomans in 1453.⁸ From 1458 to 1465, Laskaris was employed as a tutor of Greek at the court of the duke of Milan Francesco I Sforza (1447–66), and later he taught at Naples and Messina. Now kept at the Biblioteca Ambrosiana of Milan,⁹ our manuscript is a small compilation of thirty-two folios, containing copies of three Greek philological tracts¹⁰ and three autograph texts by Laskaris himself.¹¹ Laskaris' texts are his letter to Bartolomeo da Sulmona (ff. 23r–24v),

4 For a full discussion of the manuscript, with edition of Laskaris' three texts, see Martínez Manzano 1994: 103–19.

5 Ed. Stubbs, vol. 2, 102–04, 201–09.

6 Our text is not the only case of a text related to Constantinople being collated with other historical texts in thirteenth-century England. In the same period, a monk of Coggeshall Abbey added a summary note on the reign of Justinian and the building of Saint Sophia at the end of a chronicle of English history of the years 1114–58. This text was collated in the same manuscript with the Chronicles of Ralph Niger and Ralph of Coggeshall: British Library, Cotton MS Vespasian D X (s. XIII), ff. 40r–45r; the note on Justinian occupies f. 44v–45r. The text can be found in: *The Chronicles of Ralph Niger*, ed. Anstruther, 189–90; on the manuscript see www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Cotton_MS_Vespasian_D_X (accessed December 2020).

7 The text has received three editions by S. Lambros, K. Ciggaar, and T. Martínez Manzano. Lambros and Ciggaar were unaware of the fact that the manuscript is an autograph of Constantine Laskaris. Ciggaar ascribed it to an Italian translator of the sixteenth century. Martínez Manzano edited it among Laskaris' works, apparently being unaware of the earlier editions by Lambros and Ciggaar, and of the fact that Laskaris' text is a translation from Latin. She discusses it as an original *Ekphrasis* composed by Laskaris.

8 On the life and works of Laskaris see Martínez Manzano 1994, 1998.

9 The manuscript previously belonged to the collection of the Milanese scholar and bibliophile Cesare Rovida (c.1556–1591), on whom see Rozzo and Ferrari 1984: 81–115.

10 These are: Maximos Planoudes, *De Constructione Verborum* (ff. 1r–18v); pseudo-Moschopoulos, *De Dialectis Linguae Graecae sine de Proprietatibus* (ff. 19r–22v); a brief anonymous tract on the epic Hexameter, *De metro heroico* (31r).

11 For a full discussion of the manuscript, including an edition of the three texts of Laskaris it contains, see Martínez Manzano 1994: 103–19.

his *Answers to Questions* (ff. 25r–30v), and his Greek translation of our *Description of Constantinople* (ff. 32r–v). The letter to Bartolomeo da Sulmona allows us to date the manuscript to the years after Laskaris' appointment as tutor of Greek in Milan in 1462, and before his departure for Naples in 1465. The presence of the translation among texts of his personal correspondence may suggest that it was part of Laskaris' communication with other scholars. Laskaris is known to have written a number of translations of Latin texts into Greek and vice versa, but their purpose remains unknown. Perhaps they were produced for teaching purposes, demonstrating the correspondence between Greek and Latin grammatical constructions.¹²

Text and Context

In the twelfth century, Constantinople attracted merchants, pilgrims, clerics, nobles, and soldiers from all over Christendom, and it developed a flourishing community of Latin (Roman Catholic) Christians, either staying as temporary visitors or living there permanently. Englishmen were a major group among them, reaching Constantinople as pilgrims, merchants, ambassadors to the Byzantine court, and mercenary warriors recruited for the Byzantine army, especially the imperial bodyguard known as the Varangian Guard.¹³ The intensity of contacts between England and Byzantium is reflected in the extensive knowledge about Byzantine matters in English chroniclers of the late twelfth century, such as Ralph de Diceto (d.1202) and Roger of Howden (d.1201). The latter's chronicle (written in 1192–1201) precedes our *Description of Constantinople* in the Latin manuscript, and it includes a detailed account of events in Constantinople during the tumultuous reign of Andronikos I (1183–85). Roger of Howden participated in the Third Crusade (1189–92), following Richard the Lionheart in the East, but he is not known to have visited Constantinople. His information concerning events in the Byzantine capital may have been obtained from a Westerner visiting or resident in it in the early 1180s.¹⁴

Constantinople was a center of pilgrimage, as it possessed a great collection of relics, including objects associated with Christ and the Virgin Mary, corporeal relics of John the Baptist and other biblical figures, martyrs, and saints. Like Rome and the Holy Land, a series of descriptive texts on Constantinople was written or translated by/for its pilgrims in Latin, Slavonic, and Armenian. Two of the Latin descriptions known from the twelfth century are thought to have been written by Englishmen: our text and the probably earlier anonymous description published by S. G. Mercati (hence its author is known in scholarship as Anonymous Mercati).¹⁵ The Anonymous Mercati description is the Latin translation of an extensive eleventh-century Greek guide for pilgrims which describes several shrines, focusing exclusively on hagiographic information and relics. By contrast, the text

12 Martínez Manzano 1998: 197–98.

13 Ciggaar 1996: 129–60.

14 See n. 4.

15 Ciggaar 1976.

of our *Description of Constantinople* is merely a brief memoir summarizing the impressions of a guided visit. This is reflected in the concluding phrase of the Greek version, which must belong to the original Latin text: *and we saw many other holy things there, the names of which we ignore, but we kept a note of these, so that we may not commend them to oblivion.*¹⁶ The fact that the author speaks in the first person plural could suggest that he was a part of a group of people, perhaps pilgrims or envoys.¹⁷ The possibility of his visit having been with an official delegation is perhaps suggested by the interests of the author, which focus on curiosities and practical facts (e.g. the administration of the Byzantine Church) rather than hagiographic stories and relics, and by the fact that his itinerary is confined to the imperial shrines of Saint Sophia, the Pantokrator, the Holy Apostles, and the Pharos Church.

The text begins with the description of Saint Sophia, which occupies the greatest part of the account. The anonymous author focuses on the sheer size, technical sophistication, and sumptuousness of the building, which he treats as a wonder per se. He mentions the legend about the angel instructing the builders of Saint Sophia, and refers to the precious materials and the numbers of its columns, doors, windows, and lamps, as well as the numbers of its clergy and the administrative structure of the Patriarchate.

Subsequently the author turns to the Church of the Pantokrator, which he merely mentions, without describing it. Located on the east slopes of the Third Hill at the center of Constantinople (today's Zeyrek Camii), the Pantokrator, or monastery of Christ the Almighty, was a new addition to the sacred topography of the city in the twelfth century, founded by emperor John II Komnenos (r.1118–43) and his wife Eirene in 1136. Thus, the reference to the Pantokrator provides a *terminus post quem* for the dating of the *Description*.

From the Pantokrator, our author moves to the neighboring shrine of the Holy Apostles, the second largest and most important church of Constantinople, which stood at the top of the Fourth Hill. The Holy Apostles was the imperial mausoleum of the capital, but it also housed an important collection of relics. Once again, it is remarkable that the author does not refer to them at all, but rather focuses on the tombs of Constantine and Julian the Apostate.

At the Holy Apostles, the Latin text switches abruptly to an enumeration of relics kept at the church of the Virgin Mary Oikokyra or Church of the Pharos (the “Lighthouse”), adjoining the palace complex of Boukoleon. The translation of Laskaris confirms that there is a small *lacuna* in the Latin text, and that indeed these relics were seen “in the emperor’s palace.” This means that the narrative now moves from the imperial mausolea of the Third Hill to the imperial chapel on the eastern coast of the Peninsula. The author gives no information about the palace complex or about the church, but focuses only on the relics. The list is incomplete in both the Latin and the Greek versions, suggesting that

16 καὶ πολλὰ ἄλλα ἄγία <έκει> εἶδομεν. ὧν τὰ ὀνόματα ἀγνοοῦμεν. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα ἐσημειώσαμεθα ἵνα μὴ λήθη ἐπιδῶμεν.

17 Ciggaar 1973: 338.

Laskaris' source text was not devoid of lacunae. The relics of the Pharos Church were related to the Passion of Christ and the Virgin Mary. Laskaris mentions among them Christ's autograph letter to Abgar, which is known to have disappeared during a riot following the fall of Andronikos I in 1185.¹⁸ Thus, the year 1185 is a *terminus ante quem* for the *Description of Constantinople*.¹⁹

In its extant form, the Latin text is preserved incomplete, with several phrases having been omitted by the fourteenth-century copyist. Unlike the description of the Anonymous Mercati, with its numerous Greek influences in vocabulary and syntax, the language and style of this text provide very little evidence to suggest that it relied on a Greek source of some kind. The Greek words in it are either terms of Greek origin widely used in the Latin Church (e.g. *chorus*, *hebdomas*, *archiepiscopus*, *chlamys coccinea*), or terms and names derived from oral usage rather than from a Greek written source (e.g. *Agie Sophie*, *metropoli*, *Pantocratori*). The latter are always accompanied by a gloss in Latin, for the help of the Latin reader ("agie sophie, id est s(anct)e sapientie"; "metropolos, id est archiepiscopos"; "Pantocratori, id est omnipotentis dei"). When referring to the Byzantine clergy, the author uses terms pertinent to the institutional organization of the Latin Church, such as *praebendarius* and *suffraganeus*. All these details suggest that the author was a Latin Christian, perhaps a clergyman, recording his impressions directly, and without any other source.²⁰

As all the editors have noticed, Laskaris' text of the *Description of Constantinople* contains several revisions of words by the hand of the author, suggesting that it is an autograph translation. If not always successfully, Constantine Laskaris clearly aimed to produce a translation as literal as possible, and he is unlikely to have made substantive changes in the text. The fact that his version of the text is more extensive than the Latin one indicates that he consulted the *Description* in a more complete form.

Laskaris understandably omits the Latin glosses for "Hagia Sophia," "Pantokrator," and "metropolitan," since they are totally unnecessary for a Greek reader. Similarly, in the phrase ὁ πατριάρχης δὲ ἔχει ἐν τῇ πόλει ("the patriarch has in the city..."), Laskaris may be consciously correcting the somewhat derogatory or misinformed wording of the Latin text, which calls the Patriarch of Constantinople "Patriarch of Saint Sophia" (*Patriarcha autem Agie Sophie habet...*). In general, Laskaris clearly aims to keep the syntax and wording of the Latin text and, in some cases, his translation is so literal that it reads awkwardly or even inaccurately. Most characteristic is his use of the term Ἁγία Μαρία ("Saint Mary") for the Virgin Mary: a Greek reader would have wondered which Saint Mary he means. This expression led the first editor, Ciggaar, to the conclusion that the translator cannot have been Greek.²¹ The same mentality can be found in the rendering of *chorus* as χορός, which is a semantic inaccuracy: *chorus* in the Latin tradition, and indeed in our text, refers to the chancel (choir) of the church, whilst χορός in the Greek tradition

18 Choniates, *History*, Andron. II, 347 20–23, ed. van Dieten, transl. Magoulias, 191–92.

19 Ciggaar 1973: 352.

20 Ciggaar 1973: 348–49.

21 Ciggaar 1973: 336.

means only the choir of singers. A more proper way of translating *chorus* in Byzantine terms would have been βῆμα/*bema*. Elsewhere, Laskaris is confronted with the specifically Western terminology of the source text: the twelfth-century author refers to the clerics of Saint Sophia as prebendaries (*praebendarii sacerdotes*), even though, strictly speaking, prebendaries were an aspect of the institutional organization of Western cathedrals and collegiate churches, unknown in the East. Laskaris translates *praebendarii sacerdotes* very literally as ἱερεῖς μισθωτοί (“waged priests”), practically inventing the term. In the Greek ecclesiastical tradition one might have used the word ἐφημέριος.²²

Yet Laskaris is not unaware of the pitfalls of the translation process: while translating *lampates*, he initially uses the homonymous word μανάλια λαμπάδων (“candelabra”) but, realizing the error, he corrects it into κανδύλαι (“hanging lamps”). The same awareness is shown by his translation of *suffraganeus* as ἐπίσκοπος (“bishop”): the structure of a metropolitan province of the Byzantine Church corresponded roughly to that of a Latin archbishopric, but suffragans were called just bishops in Greek. Laskaris also avoids the gloss of his Latin source text, which explains metropolitan as *archiepiscopus*, since the title “archbishop” had a different meaning in the structure of the Byzantine church: an archbishop could either be a regional primate (as in the Latin Church), or a senior local bishop without suffragans under his jurisdiction, and without a metropolitan above him (the so-called “autocephalous archbishops”).²³

²² Ciggaar 1973: 347–48.

²³ Konidares 1934.

Text

I. Latin Text

Descriptio Constantinopolis

Vidimus Constantinopolim illam egregiam civitatem miro et ineffabili opere fundatam. In qua vidimus ecclesiam sanctam agie sophie, id est s(anct)e sapientie, angelo dei visibiliter docente artifices fabricatam. Sub qua continentur cisternis suis quedam dulces aque, quedam salse, quedam pluviales. Hec autem ecclesia sustinetur inferius CLXXIII marmoreis columnis superius CCXLVI. Circa chorum argento deaurato a summo usque deorsum teguntur. Habet autem chorus ille altare mirificum lapidibus pretiosis undique stellatum. In ecclesia sunt lampates ex argento et auro purissimo, quarum numerus est ineffabilis. Aperitur ecclesia et clauditur DCCLII hostiis biforibus, et fenestrarum non est numerus. Sunt ibi DCC prebendarii sacerdotes ex quibus CCCL per ebdomadam serviunt. Patriarcha autem Agie Sophie habet in civitate illa C metropolos, id est archiepiscopos, et quisque metropolis habet in eadem civitate VII suffraganeos. Est ibi ecclesia Pantocratori, id est omnipotentis dei, et ecclesia Apostolorum in qua Constantinus imperator iacet et omnes imperatores usque hodie. Sepelitur et ibi Julianus Apostata de cuius tumba fluit teterrimus liquor ut pix cum fetore. Vidimus ibi clavum Domini et spineam coronam adhuc virentem et floridam et ferream catenam qua ligatus erat Dominus et clamidem coccineam qua erat indutus et lintheum quo erat precinctus quando lavit pedes discipulorum et sanguinem Domini que exivit de latere eius, et lanceam qua perforatum est latus eius et sandalia pedum suorum et camiseam sancte Marie et cingulum eius et brachium sancti Georgii integrum et incarnatum et multa alia.

Qui scripsit carmen sit benedictus. AMEN.

II. Greek Text

+ Ἐωράκαμεν τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν ἐκείνην τὴν ἐξοχωτάτην πόλιν θαυμαστῶ καὶ ἀτιμήτῳ ἀπὸ παλαιοῦ ἔργῳ θεμελιωμένην, ἐν ἧ εἶδομεν πολλὰ λείψανα τῶν ἁγίων καὶ πολλοὺς τόπους ἀξίους τῷ Θεῷ καὶ σεβασμίους.¹ εἶδομεν τὴν μητέρα τοῦ κόσμου, τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἡγουν τὴν ἁγίαν Σοφίαν, ἀγγέλου τοῦ Θεοῦ ὀρατῶς τοὺς τεχνίτας διδάσκοντος ἐκτισμένην. ὑφ' ἧς περιέχονται πολλὰ ὕδατα δεξαμεναῖς, τὰ μὲν γλυκέα, τὰ δὲ ἄλμυρά, ἄλλα δὲ² ὑετώδη. αὕτη δὲ ἡ ἐκκλησία βαστάζεται ὑποκάτω ἑκατὸν καὶ πεντήκοντα καὶ τρισὶ κίοσι μαρμαρέοις. ἐπάνω δὲ διακοσίοις τεσσαράκοντα καὶ ἕξ, ὧν δεκαῆς περὶ τὸν χορὸν ἀργύρῳ κεχρυσωμένῳ ἀπὸ ἄνωθεν ἕως κάτω κεκαλυμμένα. ἔχει ὁ χορὸς ἐκεῖνος θυσιαστήριον θαυμαστὸν ἐκλάμπρῳ σμαραγδίνῳ λίθῳ κεχωνευμένον. λίθοις τιμίοις καὶ ἀτιμήτοις μαργαρίταις πανταχοῦ κεκοσμημένον. ἔχει δὲ ἡ ἐκκλησία ἐναλλαγὰς κανδυλῶν³ τρεῖς, μίαν καθημερινήν, δευτέραν δὲ ἑορταστικὴν, τρίτην δὲ πασχαλινὴν καὶ πᾶσαι ἐκεῖναι αἱ κανδύλαι⁴ εἰσὶν ἀπὸ χρυσοῦ καὶ ἀργύρου καθαροῦ· ἀλλὰ ὁ ἀριθμὸς ἐκείνων ἐστὶν ἄφατος. ὅτι οὔτε στόμα οὔτε γλῶττα αὐτὰς ἀριθμῆσαι δύναται. ἀνοίγεται δὲ καὶ κλείεται ἡ ἐκκλησία διακοσίοις πεντήκοντα καὶ δυοὶ πύλαις διθύροις,⁵ ἀλλὰ τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῶν θυρίδων ἄνθρωπος οὐκ ἔγνω. ὑπηρετεῖται δὲ ἡ ἐκκλησία ἀπὸ ἐπτακοσίων ἱερέων μισθωτῶν. ἀφ' ὧν ὑπηρετοῦσι καθ' ἐκάστην ἑβδομάδα τριακόσιοι πεντήκοντα ὅτε οἱ ἄλλοι ἱκανοποιοῦσιν ἑαυτοῖς καὶ τῇ ἰδίᾳ

Translation

I. Latin Text

Description of Constantinople

We saw Constantinople, that most distinguished city, founded by wondrous and ineffable work. We saw at it the holy church of Agia Sophia, that is of the Holy Wisdom, which was built by an angel visibly instructing the craftsmen.⁶ Underneath it, water is stored in its cisterns, some sweet, some salty, and some of the rain.⁷ This church is supported by 173 marble columns in the lower part, and by 246 in the upper part. Around the choir they are covered by gilded silver from top to bottom.⁸ That choir⁹ has a marvellous altar, embellished with precious stones and pearls all over.¹⁰ In the church there are lamps of silver and the purest gold, the number of which is ineffable.¹¹ The church is opened and closed by 752 gates with double doors, and its windows are innumerable.¹² There are 700 prebendaries there, 350 of whom officiate every liturgical week.¹³ Now the Patriarch of Agia Sophia has in that city 100 *metropoli* (sic), that is archbishops, and each *metropolis* has seven suffragans in the same city.¹⁴ The church of the *Pantocratorus* (sic), that is of God Almighty, is there,¹⁵ and the church of the Apostles, in which the emperor Constantine rests, and all the emperors until today. Julian the Apostate is also buried there, from whose tomb flows a most repulsive liquid like pitch with stench.¹⁶ . . . We saw there¹⁷ the nail of the Lord, and the crown of thorns, still greening and blooming; and the iron chain by which the Lord was bound; and the red cloak, in which he was clad; and the towel he was girdled with, when he washed the feet of the disciples; and the blood of the Lord, which poured forth from his side; and the spear by which his side was pierced; and the sandals of his feet; and the tunic of Saint Mary, and her girdle; and the arm of Saint George, intact and with its flesh on;¹⁸ and many other things.

Blessed be he who wrote this work. Amen.

II. Greek Text

We saw Constantinople, that most distinguished city, founded of old by wondrous and invaluable work. We saw at it many relics of saints, and several places, worthy of God and venerable. We saw the mother of the world, namely the church of the Holy Wisdom, which was built by an angel visibly instructing the craftsmen.⁶ Underneath it, plenty of water is contained in cisterns, some sweet, some salty, some of the rain.⁷ This church is supported by one hundred and fifty-three marble columns in the lower part, and two hundred and forty-six in the upper part, sixteen of which, around the choir, are covered by gilded silver from top to bottom.⁸ That choir⁹ has a wonderful altar, cast of brilliant emerald stone, and decorated with precious stones and invaluable pearls all over.¹⁰ The church has three sets of lamps, one being ferial, the other festal, and the third paschal; and all these lamps are made of pure gold and silver, whereas their number is ineffable, for neither mouth nor tongue can count them.¹¹ The church is opened and closed by two hundred and fifty-two gates with double doors, but no man knows the number of windows.¹² The church is administered by seven hundred salaried priests, of whom

θελήσει. ἔστι <περιέχεται> δὲ ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ θησαυρὸς ἀτίμητος. καὶ λίθοι ἀσύγκριτοι καὶ πλοῦτος πλείων ἢ ἔχουσι πάντες οἱ ἄνθρωποι τοῦ λατινικοῦ γένους. ὁ πατριάρχης δὲ ἔχει ἐν τῇ πόλει ἑκατὸν μητροπολίτας καὶ πᾶς μητροπολίτης ἔχει ὑφ' ἑαυτὸν ἐπισκόπους ἑπτὰ. ἔτι εἶδομεν τὸν Παντοκράτορα καὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τῶν Ἁγίων Ἀποστόλων. ἐν ἧ Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ αὐτοκράτωρ τέθαπται ἐξοχώτατα ἐν τάφῳ πορφυρῷ καὶ πάντες οἱ αὐτοκράτορες ἐκεῖσε θάπτονται. τέθαπται δὲ ἐκεῖ καὶ ὁ Ἰουλιανὸς ὁ ἀποστάτης ἐν τάφῳ μαρμαρέῳ εἰς βλάβην ἑαυτοῦ. ἀφ' οὗ τάφου πανταχόθεν ῥέει φρικτὴ ὑγρότης καὶ πίσσα καὶ βρόμος. εἶδομεν καὶ ἐν τῷ παλατίῳ τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος καὶ ἠσπασάμεθα τὸν ἦλον ὧ ἐσταυρώθη ὁ δεσπότης ἡμῶν Χριστὸς καὶ τὸν ἀκάνθινον στέφανον ἔτι θάλλοντα καὶ ἀνθοῦντα καὶ τὴν κοκκίνην χλαμύδα ἧ ἐνδέδυτο. καὶ τὸ λεντίον ὧ ἦν ἐζωσμένος ὅτε τοὺς πόδας τῶν μαθητῶν ἐνίψατο. καὶ τὰ σανδάλια τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ. καὶ τὰ γράμματα ἐκεῖνα ἃ ὁ Κύριος οἰκεία χειρὶ ἔγραψε. καὶ τὴν ζώνην τῆς ἁγίας Μαρίας καὶ τὸν χιτῶνα. καὶ τὸν βραχίονα ἀκέραιον τοῦ ἁγίου Γεωργίου, καὶ σεσαρκωμένον. καὶ πολλὰ ἄλλα ἅγια <ἐκεῖ> εἶδομεν. ὧν τὰ ὀνόματα ἀγνοοῦμεν. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα ἐσημειωσάμεθα ἵνα μὴ λήθῃ ἐπιδῶμεν.

three hundred and fifty serve every week, while the rest do as they please, according to their own will.¹³ In the same church, there is (is contained) an invaluable treasure, and incomparable stones, and greater wealth than all the people of the Latin race have. The Patriarch has in this city one hundred metropolitans, and each metropolitan has under his jurisdiction seven bishops.¹⁴ We also saw the Pantokrator¹⁵ and the church of the Holy Apostles, where the emperor Constantine is buried in a most distinguished way in a purple [i.e. porphyry] tomb, and all the emperors are buried there. Julian the Apostate is also buried in a marble tomb, to his own detriment. Terrible damp, and pitch, and stench flow all over from this tomb.¹⁶ And at the palace of the emperor,¹⁷ we saw and venerated the nail by which our Lord Christ was crucified, and the crown of thorns, still greening and blooming. And the red cloak he was clad with; and the towel he was belted with when he washed the feet of the disciples; and the sandals of his feet; and those letters which the Lord wrote by his own hand; and the girdle of Saint Mary, and the tunic; and the arm of Saint George, intact and with its flesh on;¹⁸ and we saw many other holy things there the names of which we ignore, but we have noted down these things, so that we may not commend them to oblivion.

Commentary

1. The author initially uses the word σεμνούς, which he replaces with σεβασμίους. This phrase is missing from the extant version of the Latin text.
2. Initially written as τὰ δὲ.
3. Initially written as μανάλια λαμπάδων.
4. Initially written as αἱ λαμπάδες.
5. Initially written as θύραις διπτύχοις.
6. The reference to the angel instructing the building of the church suggests that the story told to our author during his visit to Saint Sophia was the legend known as the *Diegesis* (“Narrative”) about the Construction of Saint Sophia. This text was composed by the late tenth century, when a version of it was included in the text known as the *Patria* of Constantinople.²⁴ Having completely overshadowed the historical memory recorded in the late antique *ekphraseis* on Saint Sophia by Procopius and Paul the Silentiary,²⁵ the largely apocryphal *Diegesis* was established as the prevailing narrative for the great cathedral in the medieval period. It is remarkable that our text makes no reference to the significant religious relics kept and venerated in Saint Sophia, but only focuses on aspects of the architecture and decoration of the building – as opposed to the Anonymous Mercati, who talks exclusively about them and says nothing about the building.²⁶ This confirms the heavy reliance of the author on the *Diegesis* as the only aspect of the “hagiography” of Saint Sophia he knew or was impressed by. It seems that the story of the *Diegesis* was widely known in twelfth-century England, since it is mentioned quite extensively by Ralph de Diceto and the thirteenth-century chronicler of Coggeshall.²⁷ It is therefore plausible to assume that a Latin recension of the Greek legend was in wide circulation, having reached England from Constantinople.
7. The author – or rather the *Diegesis*, which he follows – seems to be understanding Saint Sophia as a complex, and therefore it is difficult to assess how the data he gives about cisterns, columns, doors, etc., relate to reality. The complex of Saint Sophia comprised not only the building of the church proper, which is still standing today, but also buildings that are no longer extant, such as the Patriarchate, the atrium, the baptistery, and the Hospice of Sampson. Recent research under the floor of Saint Sophia located a network of waterworks, but the church does not seem to be standing atop a cistern. Some of the other buildings of the cathedral and the patriarchal complex, however, did have underground cisterns, while immediately west of the atrium there was the massive Basilica Cistern which, in Ottoman Times, was thought to have

²⁴ *Patria* 4, ed. Berger; on the *Diegesis* see Vitti 1986; Mango 1992: 41–56; Dagron 1984: 191–96, 211–314; Brubaker 2011: 80–87.

²⁵ Procopius, *On Buildings*, 1.1, ed. and transl. Dewing. Paul the Silentiary, *Description of Saint Sophia*, ed. de Stefani, 1–71, English transl.: Mango, *Art*, 80–91 and Bell 189–212. See also Macrides and Magdalino 1988: 47–82; Whitby 2000a: 45–57; Whitby 2000b: 59–66; Webb 2001: 67–71; Jeffreys 2000: 73–79; Cameron 1985.

²⁶ Anon. Mercati 3, ed. Ciggaar 1976: 246–48.

²⁷ Ralph de Diceto, *Abbreviationes Chroniconum*, anno 532 (dxxxii), ed. Stubbs, 90–93.

extended under the cathedral and the Hippodrome. Other legends report about three underground cisterns communicating with one another.²⁸ The existence of a network of waterways connecting these reservoirs with the water supply network of the city is plausible to assume, but has not yet been documented.

8. It is unknown which structure is meant by the claim that the church is supported by 173 columns in the basement (153 in the Greek version). If this refers to the Basilica Cistern, it is an understatement, since the structure has 336 columns. By contrast, the number of columns mentioned for the upper part (246) is either exaggerated or it takes account of buildings which are no longer extant. The church proper has 112 columns (52 on ground level and 60 in the galleries). The only securely accurate numbers in the text are the sixteen plated and gilded columns of the altar space (mentioned only in the Greek version), which refer to the twelve columns of the chancel screen and the four of the ciborium over the altar table.²⁹
9. The space defined by the Western term *chorus/choros* (= choir), in both the Greek and the Latin versions, corresponds to the altar space, which the *Diegesis* calls by the term *θυσιαστήριον/thysiasterion*. Located under the eastern semi-dome, in front of the central east apse, the sanctuary was a small space secluded by a screen of twelve columns bearing an epistyle, which contained the altar table and its ciborium, four silver tables, four columns, and a semi-circular *synthronon* with seven rows of seats for the priests and a throne for the bishop. All these elements were plated and gilded.³⁰ The sanctuary was linked by a parapet corridor (the *solea*) to the large and ornate *ambo* (pulpit) in the center of the church. The *Diegesis* reports that both the *ambo* and *solea* were destroyed by the collapse of the first dome and replaced, but it does not mention whether that disaster also damaged the sanctuary.³¹ It is probable that the original Justinianic fixtures of the altar space were still in place during the twelfth century.
10. The altar table, called by our text *altare* and translated by Laskaris as *θυσιαστήριον*, is called *ἁγία τράπεζα* (“holy table”) by the *Diegesis*. Laskaris’ use of the participle *κεχωνευμένον* (“cast”) is probably a reference to the story recounted by the *Diegesis*, according to which Justinian wished the altar of his cathedral to be more precious than gold, and he therefore had a special alloy produced for its construction by the amalgamation of various precious metals and stones. This material was cast into a spectacularly iridescent slab, which was placed atop nine golden colonnettes. Its rim was covered with gold and pearls, bearing the inscription “*Thine own of thine own*,

28 Mamboury and Wiegand 1934: 54–69; Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 283–85; Ciggaar 1973: 343–44.

29 *Patria* 4.16; Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 465.

30 *Patria* 4.16.

31 *Patria* 4.28.

*we, Justinian and Theodora, offer unto thee, Lord.*³² The altar stood under a ciborium made of *niello* silver, which was crowned with a golden cupola.³³

11. The interior of Saint Sophia was lit by tens of *polycandela* (artistically perforated discs holding multiple glass-lamps or candles), hanging by chains from the cornice of the dome, and suspended just above the heads of the congregation. The spectacle they offered is described by a number of sources, including Paul the Silentiary, and the Russian pilgrim Anthony of Novgorod (c.1200) who saw eighty of them.³⁴ According to our text, there was a prescribed order of use for these lights, some of which were lit only on festal and paschal days. This practice is widely attested in monastic *typika*, notably those of the imperial monasteries of the Kecharitomene (1110–16) and the Pantokrator in Constantinople (1136).³⁵ These texts include detailed instructions on how the churches were to be lit on various feasts and occasions. The purpose of these arrangements was to regulate the use of the considerable resources (oil and wax) needed for the illumination of these large buildings. Thus lighting was directly linked to the finances of each ecclesiastical institution, and was assigned by the *typika* to the responsibility of the *eklesiarches* (the church manager). Characteristically, lighting arrangements were accompanied in these texts by instructions concerning the kinds and quantities of alms distributed on different feasts. This can also be seen in the *Diegesis*, which mentions the numerous estates with which Justinian endowed the cathedral, and the generous quantities of alms prescribed for festivals, right after referring to the precious lights and candelabra of the church.³⁶
12. The number of the gates mentioned by the text (752 in the Latin, and 252 in the Greek version) apparently echoes the claim of the *Diegesis* that the building had 365 gates (345 in its Latin recension) made of various precious materials and of wood from Noah's Ark.³⁷ It is unknown how far these numbers relate to reality. They may refer to door panels rather than gateways and, as we have said already, the precise number of the gates in the complex of Saint Sophia cannot be estimated, since it included structures that no longer survive.
13. Saint Sophia was the largest cathedral of the Byzantine world, not only by the size of its building, but also by the vast number of its clergy, which our account estimates at 700, while the *Diegesis* talks of 1000 members of staff, including the clergy, auxiliary personnel, and a choir of 100 women.³⁸ At the time of its dedication by Justinian, the

32 The making of the precious altar is described in *Patria* 4.17. The version of the *Diegesis* recorded by Ralph de Diceto mentions the dedicatory inscription of Justinian and Theodora on the altar table: *Posuit ergo in sancta mensa in circuitu labia aurea cum margaritis et lapidibus, et sunt subscripta sic, "Tua de tuis tibi offerimus, Domine, Justinianus et Theodora."* Ralph de Diceto, *Abbreviationes Chronicorum*, ed. Stubbs, 93.

33 *Patria* 4.16.

34 Paul the Silentiary, *Description of Hagia Sophia*, 806–94; Mango, *Art*, 89–91. For Antony of Novgorod see G. Majeska, I.5.3 in this volume, and also De Khitrowo 1889: 1.1.91; on the lighting in Saint Sophia, and several pictures of Byzantine *polycandela*, see Bouras and Parani 2008: 31–36; Fobelli 2005: 193–207.

35 *Kecharitomene Typikon*, 59–63, 66–68; *Pantokrator Typikon*, 6, 7, 29.

36 *Patria* 4.23.

37 *Patria* 4.18; Ralph de Diceto, *Abbreviationes Chronicorum*, anno 532 (dxxxii), ed. Stubbs, 93.

38 *Patria* 4.23.

church was assigned 425 clerics, comprising 60 priests, 100 deacons, 40 deaconesses, 90 subdeacons, 110 lectors, and 25 singers. This personnel served the two cathedrals of Saint Sophia and Saint Eirene, and the neighbouring churches of the Virgin in the Chalkoprateia and Saint Theodore in the quarter of Sphorakios.³⁹ Constant appointments, however, inflated the number of the clergy of Saint Sophia, so that several emperors were compelled to impose limitations (under Heraclius to 525). Both our text and the *Diegesis* agree that the clergy of Saint Sophia was divided into two groups serving interchangeably every second week. As said above, the terminology employed by our author here indicates his understanding of the function of Saint Sophia in terms of a Western cathedral, since he refers to the priests as prebendaries, and to the liturgical week by the Latin ecclesiastical term *hebdomas*. The division of the clergy of Saint Sophia into two *hebdomades* is also mentioned in the Greek and Latin recensions of the *Diegesis*.⁴⁰ The number of Saint Sophia's staff was inextricably linked to the finances of the church as an institution, and this explains why it is mentioned alongside references to the sumptuous lighting arrangements, and to the vast treasure kept at the cathedral. The phrase of the translation of Laskaris that there is no such wealth in the Latin world is probably a matter-of-fact conclusion of our twelfth-century author: no ecclesiastical institution in the West was so well endowed as to afford such a vast number of staff. In the mid twelfth century, the wealth of Saint Sophia in treasures and landed property had probably reached one of its highest points. The most recent bequest, by the emperor John II Komnenos (r.1118–43), was commemorated by the mosaic portrait of him with his wife Eirene and their son Alexios, which is preserved in the south gallery.

14. From the previous comments, it is evident that our author derived his information on Saint Sophia from a most probably oral source closely following the legend recounted by the *Diegesis*. His rather extensive reference to the administrative structure of the Byzantine Church, however, comes from a different source of information. The author's interest in the administration of the Byzantine Church may suggest that he was a cleric himself. Saint Sophia was the headquarters of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which was housed in a complex of buildings at the south part of the cathedral complex.⁴¹ The jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople covered the whole of the Byzantine Empire extending, in theory at least, into the Anatolian provinces lost to the Seljuks, the Greek communities of Sicily and Italy under the Normans, and the churches of Kyivan Rus' and Georgia.⁴² For most of the twelfth century, the Chalcedonian Patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem also resided in Constantinople, so that the Byzantine capital was *de facto* the ecclesiastical center of all the Greek Orthodox populations of the Eastern Mediterranean. Several metropolitans spent

³⁹ *Nov. Just.* 3; Janin *ÉglisesCP*, 469.

⁴⁰ *Patria* 4.23.

⁴¹ Janin 1962: 131–55; Cormack and Hawkins 1977: 175–251; Dark and Kostenc 2006: 113–30; Dark 2014: 33–40.

⁴² Darrouzès 1981, *Notitiae* 11, 12.

long periods or lived permanently in Constantinople instead of their sees, participating in the so-called “Resident Council” (σύνοδος ἐνδημοῦσα), which was the main governing body of the Byzantine Church.⁴³ The function of Saint Sophia as the heart of the Byzantine Church was also expressed in the decisions of ecclesiastical councils, the texts of which were inscribed and displayed in the narthexes and atrium of the church. An imperial edict concerning a council convened under Manuel I in 1162, for example, was carved on a long inscription and set up in the narthex.⁴⁴

15. The ecclesiastical compound of the Pantokrator (still extant, mod. Zeyrek Camii) is the largest known church of the Komnenian period. It was a complex of three buildings, comprising the main church of Christ the Almighty, a funerary chapel, which housed the imperial tombs of the Komnenoi, and a church dedicated to the Theotokos Eleousa (Mother of God, the Merciful). All of them are linked by a common narthex, in the form of an oblong corridor that once housed several aristocratic tombs. During the conquest of 1204, the Pantokrator was thoroughly looted, and parts of its riches were taken to Venice. The splendid Pala d’Oro in Saint Mark’s basilica includes seven panels from an iconostasis of the Pantokrator, which are among the finest works of Byzantine enamelled gold-work painting.⁴⁵
16. The shrine of the Holy Apostles stood on the most prominent site of Constantinople, the top of the Fourth Hill. The shrine was part of the original urban project of Constantine I, founded as his imperial mausoleum.⁴⁶ Nowadays nothing survives of the Holy Apostles. The building was demolished in 1462, in order to make way for the construction of the mosque and mausoleum of Sultan Mehmet II the Conqueror (Fatih Camii). It is remarkable that the author mentions none of the important relics kept at the Holy Apostles, namely the remains of the Apostles Andrew, Timothy, Luke, and Matthew, the column of Christ’s flagellation, and several relics of saints, including John Chrysostom and Gregory of Nazianzos.⁴⁷ Much like Saint Sophia, there were legends about the building of the Holy Apostles, aspects of which are recorded by the author of the *Patria*, appended to the *Diegesis on the Construction of Saint Sophia*.⁴⁸

Since its foundation, the shrine of the Holy Apostles served as the imperial mausoleum of Constantinople. From the death of Constantine I in 337 to the eleventh century, emperors and members of the imperial family were buried in funerary chapels, including the circular mausoleum of Constantine, the cruciform mausoleum of Justinian, and the so-called *stoai*. By the late ninth century, the building must have been so congested with tombs that burials became sporadic, and by the twelfth they must have ceased completely. None of the Komnenoi, the reigning dynasty at the time of our author’s visit, was buried in the Holy Apostles. The profusion of imperial tombs

43 Darrouzès 1973: 307–17.

44 Mango 1963: 317–30.

45 Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 515–23; Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 209–15; Megaw 1963: 333–71.

46 Johnson 2009: 119–29.

47 Downey 1957: 855–924; Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 41–50.

48 *Patria* 4.32.

was the most distinguishing aspect of the church. The visitor's attention was attracted by the sumptuous sarcophagi made of various kinds and colors of stone (porphyry, *verde antico*, onyx, etc.). In the Greek translation, our text mentions that the tomb of Constantine was made of porphyry, while that of Julian was of marble, implying a more modest monument.⁴⁹ Roman tradition dictated the use of Egyptian porphyry for imperial monuments, but its availability was affected by the closure of its quarries in Egypt and, from the mid fifth century on, other stones were used. In Ottoman times, some of the surviving imperial sarcophagi were transferred to the palace of Top Kapı, and can now be seen in the courtyard of the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul and in the atrium of Hagia Eirene.⁵⁰

The impression of polychrome variety and the splendour of the stones was combined with the variety of the stories about the emperors who were variously remembered as pious rulers (e.g. Constantine and Theodosius I), heroic champions of the empire (e.g. Justinian, Heraclius), or heretics (e.g. Anastasius, Theophilos).⁵¹ The contrasts of this disparate company which housed the saint Constantine I (r.306–337) together with the apostate Julian (r.360–363) are expressed in the account of our author. Julian was originally buried in a mausoleum at Tarsus in Cilicia, but his body was later transferred and re-buried with the other emperors in the Holy Apostles. His sarcophagus stood in the so-called North Stoa, which also housed the tombs of the Theodosian emperors.⁵² Legends about the abomination of his body circulated among the Christians immediately after the emperor's death.⁵³ The pitch flowing from the tomb of Julian was presumably a sign of the eternal punishment the emperor suffered for his impiety: while the tombs of saints could be recognized by the miraculous flow of fragrant oil, the tomb of so great a sinner was marked by a stinking, impure effluent. This legend was probably widely known in twelfth-century England, since it is also mentioned by the chronicler Ralph Niger.⁵⁴

17. The last section of the text refers to the collection of relics kept in the small but sumptuous palace church of the Mother of God of the Pharos (the Lighthouse) by the Boukoleon palace complex.⁵⁵ Its existence is first attested in 769, and by the eleventh century it had become the main church of the palace with a treasury that held a collection of relics related to Christ and Mary (the true Cross, the spear, the sponge, the reed, a nail, the crown of thorns, the iron whip, the red cloak, the towel of the Last Supper, traces of the blood of Christ, the spear of the Crucifixion, Christ's sandals, the stone of unction, pieces of his shrouds, a piece of the stone of the Holy Sepulcher,

49 This is probably inaccurate; Julian's sarcophagus was known to be of porphyry see Asutay-Effenberger 2006: 12.

50 *Ibid.*, passim; Bardill 2012: 187–94.

51 On which see Nikolaos Mesarites, *Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles*, 39–40, ed. Downey.

52 Johnson 2008: 254–60.

53 Gregory of Nazianzos, *Oration* 5.15–18, ed. Bernardi, 1983; *Oration* 21.33, ed. Mossay, 1980.

54 Ralph Niger, *Chronicle* II, 5560 (vmdlx), ed. Anstruther, 126.

55 The Latin text contains a small lacuna which makes the section read like a part of the description of the Holy Apostles; the Greek translation, however, confirms that it refers to the palace area.

Christ's autograph letter to Abgar, and the tunic of Mary).⁵⁶ Since both the bodies of Jesus and Mary were believed to be in heaven, these objects were supposed to be the closest physical remains of the two holiest figures of the Christian religion. In the eyes of many, their presence in Constantinople rendered the Byzantine capital a New Jerusalem. Keeping objects connected to the King and Queen of Heaven at the palace of the emperor was probably one of the ways of presenting his authority as a divine ruler. The Pharos Church, the "Sainte Chapelle" of the Byzantine palace, was among the *loca sancta* shown to foreign visitors to Constantinople, such as King Louis VII of France in 1147.⁵⁷ During a riot following the fall of Andronikos I in 1185, a mob entered the palace and managed to plunder the Pharos Church. During these events, the vessel containing the letter of Christ to Abgar disappeared.⁵⁸ In 1238, the Crown of Thorns was offered by the Latin emperor of Constantinople Baldwin of Flanders to King Louis IX of France, who built the Sainte Chapelle in Paris for it.⁵⁹ It is now kept at the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris.

18. The reference to the relic of Saint George's arm is a remarkable detail, which Ciggaar interprets as an expression of the special devotion of the English author to the patron saint of England. Relics of this martyr were kept at the monastery of the Mangana, not far from the Pharos Church.⁶⁰ It is possible that our author visited the Mangana as part of a tour of the palace shrines. An alternative explanation could be that our author, in fact, saw the right arm of John the Baptist, one of the most important pieces of the palace collection of relics, ascribing it to George by mistake.⁶¹

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56 For catalogue of relics see Nikolaos Mesarites, *The Account of the Usurpation of John Komnenos "the Fat,"* 13–14, ed. A. Heisenberg, 29–32, transl. Michael Featherstone, I.6.6 in this volume. See also Anonymous Mercati, 1 (Ciggaar 1976: 245–46); Studies on the Pharos Church: Magdalino 2004: 15–30; Klein 2006: 79–99; Magdalino 2015: 201–12; Kalavrezou 1997: 55–57.

57 Odo de Deul, *The Crusade of Louis VII*, p. 44.

58 Choniates, *History*, Andron. II, 347 20–23, transl. Magoulias, 191; Ciggaar 1973: 352.

59 Riant 1877, vol. 2, 241.

60 Anonymous Mercati 7 (Ciggaar 1976: 250); Janin, *Églises* CP, 70–76; Ciggaar 1973: 353.

61 John Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, Const. VII iterum, 14, ed. Thurn, transl. Wortley, p. 236.

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I.5.2 Ralph of Coggeshall (d. after 1218)

Description of Constantinople

ALEX J. NOVIKOFF

Ed.: J. Stevenson, *Radulphi de Coggeshall Chronicon Anglicanum*, in *Rolls Series* (London, 1875), vol. 66, 149–51

MS.:¹ London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian D.X (first quarter of thirteenth century), ff. 102v–103v

Other Translations: *Contemporary Sources for the Fourth Crusade*, ed. and transl. A. J. Andrea and Brett E. Whalen (Leiden, 2008), 285–86

Significance

The *Chronicon Anglicanum* of Ralph of Coggeshall is one of the most fascinating chronicles produced in England in the early thirteenth century. Using contemporary documents, the author provides a vivid commentary and intriguing details about the exploits of Western crusaders during the ill-fated Fourth Crusade (1204). His version of the fate of Emperor Alexios V “Morkulfus” includes an especially detailed description of the city’s wealth and grandeur, as well as a moral (if biased) tale of how Byzantium was rightfully captured in accordance with the prophecies of its own buildings.

The Author

See Text and Context, below.

Text and Context

Very little is known of the English chronicler Ralph of Coggeshall. He was abbot of the small Cistercian house of Coggeshall in Essex from 1206 until his retirement in 1218 and he is credited with having completed the bulk of a composition that is known simply as the *Chronicon Anglicanum*.² The chronicle spans the history of the English from the Norman Conquest of 1066 until the end of the first quarter of the thirteenth century. Although Ralph was not an eyewitness to the Crusader sack of Constantinople in 1204, he was a contemporary of those events and in composing his chronicle he seems to have

¹ Not consulted.

² For the background on Ralph and his Chronicle, but with a focus on earlier events, see Carpenter 1998: 1210–30; a modern critical edition of the *Chronicon* remains a desideratum.

had access to some first-hand accounts, including letters by the participants. Moreover, the Cistercians were actively involved in the financing of the crusading efforts and they benefitted enormously from the fall of Constantinople; in the decades following 1204 no fewer than six Cistercian houses and two nunneries were founded in crusader Greece.³ There were thus good reasons for Ralph to devote space to the events of the Fourth Crusade. In the passage below, he provides an intriguing description first of the city and its wealth and second of an ancient column that (according to Ralph's interpretation) foretold the transference of Byzantine power to the West.⁴ While the *Chronicon* cannot be trusted for all the details that it provides, it does encapsulate the Western view of Byzantine art and aesthetics at a crucial moment in Greek–Latin relations.

³ Andrea 2008: 268.

⁴ See the Commentary, n. 8.

Text

[p. 149] Urbs vero Constantinopolis quasi triangula esse videtur, habens in latitudine sex millaria, ut dicunt; circuitus autem civitatis est quasi xviii. milliariorum, scilicet, ab angulo in angulum sex millaria continens. Altitudo murorum est quinquaginta pedum; turrets autem in circuitu super muros distant ab invicem spatio vicenorum pedum. Est in ea quodam praeclarum palatium imperiale quod dicitur Blakerna, et palatium Constantini, et palatium Boamundi. Infra hanc urbem continetur illa incomparabilis ecclesia, scilicet Agyos Sophyae, quam Justinianus aedificavit: [p. 150] de cujus constructionis amplitudine et divitiarum nobilitate tam mira et incredibilia narrari solent. Hanc ecclesiam praedictus imperator amplis redditibus ditaverat, statuens in ea nongentos quinquaginta canonicos. Asserunt pro certo, qui hujus civitatis habitacula noverunt, quod plures habeat habitatores quam habitent ab Eboracensi civitate usque ad Tamisiae fluvium.

Adepta igitur civitate, communi consilio factus est imperator Baldewinus, comes Flandrensis, fugiente Morkulfo; qui statim tertiam partem imperialis thesauri inter principes et exercitum Latinorum magnifice distribuit, quae tertia pars continebat xviii. centena millia marcarum argenti. Quae infinita pecunia apud nos, sicut et caetera quae de Graecorum divitiis et constructione praedictae civitatis et Agyae Sophyae narrantur, incredibilia esse videntur. Denique dicunt redeuntes, quod quotidianus redditus imperatoris continet xxx. millia perpres; Perpre vero est nummus aureus, et valet tres solidos argenti. Dignitates autem et honores, et multa praeclara xenia, principibus et aliis qui erant cum eo magnifice largitus est. Regi Philippo, quondam domino suo, transmisit quamdam carbunculam, lapidem pretiosissimum, qui rutilanti fulgore totum palatium potest illustrare, et duo indumenta regalia auro et lapidibus pretiosis mirabiliter intexta.

In Constantinopoli quaedam columna antiquitus a quodam divino, arte mechanica, ut ferunt, erecta est, cujus basis semper est in motu; super capitellum vero columnae tres imagines imperatorum locatae sunt, una quarum respicit versus Asiam, alia ad Europam, tertia ad Africam. Super capita imaginum circulus apparet, in quo Graecis literis exaratum videtur, quod, postquam tres imperatores Alexis vocati in Graecia imperaverint, regnum Graecorum finem sortietur, atque ad alienigenam gentem imperium transferetur. Unde et super [p. 151] circulum illum stat quarta imago, scilicet, super capita caeterarum, caeteris imaginibus eminentior atque sublimior, quae respicere videtur versus occidentalem orbis plagam, manumque protendit ad occidentem.

Translation

[p. 149] It is said that the city of Constantinople has an almost triangular appearance, with a breadth of six miles and a circumference of almost eighteen miles (being six miles from corner to corner).¹ The height of the walls is fifty feet, and the towers that [complete the] circuit above the walls are separated from each other by a distance of twenty feet. Inside [the city] there is a certain magnificent imperial palace known as the Blachernai,² which served as the palace of Constantine [the Great] and the palace of [prince] Bohemond.³ Contained within this city is that incomparable church, namely Hagia Sophia, that Justinian built. So many wonderful and unbelievable things have been related about the grandeur and noble wealth of this building. The above-mentioned emperor [Justinian] enriched this church with great revenues, placing in it nine hundred and fifty canons. Those who know the city dwellings well affirm with confidence that there are more inhabitants in the city than there are who live in the area from the city of York to the River Thames.⁴

Once the city was taken, with Morkulfus⁵ escaping, the general consensus was to make Count Baldwin of Flanders the emperor.⁶ He immediately and generously distributed one third of the imperial treasure among the Latin princes and the army, this third part amounting to eighteen hundred thousand marks of silver. This infinite wealth seems to us as impossible to believe as are the other things that have been reported concerning Greek wealth and the construction of the above-mentioned Hagia Sophia. Indeed, those returning [to the city] say that the emperor's daily income amounts to thirty thousand *perpres*.⁷ A *perpre* is a gold coin worth three [in fact closer to nine] silver *solidi*. In addition, he munificently bestowed titles, honors, and many splendid gifts on the princes and other [guests] who had been with him. He sent to King Philip, his former lord, a certain carbuncle, a very precious gem, which was able to illuminate the entire palace with its reddish sparkle, and two royal garments marvelously embroidered with gold and precious stones.

In ancient Constantinople, a certain column whose base was always in motion was erected by one soothsayer who was skilled in the mechanical arts, or so it is said.⁸ Atop the column's capital were placed the images of three emperors: one of whom looked toward Asia, another toward Europe, and the third toward Africa. Above the heads of the images appears a circle on which can be seen an inscription in Greek letters stating that after three emperors named Alexios have ruled Greece, the reign of the Greeks is fated to end and the empire will be transferred to a foreign people. And atop this circle is a fourth image, one more prominent and beautiful than the others, which appears to look toward the western quarter of the globe and extends its hand toward the West.

Commentary

1. Indeed, medieval Constantinople was often depicted on Late Medieval and Early Modern maps as a triangular city.⁵
2. Note the confusion between the Great Palace which was in the center of Constantinople and the Blachernai Palace on the northwest corner of the City. Although the ceremonial imperial palace remained the Great Palace in the very heart of the city, the Blachernai Palace acquired particular importance during the Komnenian dynasty.⁶
3. That is, Bohemond IV of Antioch, Count of Tripoli from 1187 to 1233.
4. It has been estimated that Constantinople had around 400,000 inhabitants just before the Fourth Crusade.⁷
5. Alexios V Doukas, nicknamed “Mourtzouphlos,” Byzantine emperor between February 5 and April 12, 1204.
6. Baldwin I (r.1204–05) the first king of the Latin Empire of Constantinople established after the Fourth Crusade.
7. Corrupted type for “hyperpyron” (meaning “cooked” or “refined by fire”), the Byzantine golden coin from after the time of Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118). This coin was the dominant currency of the time and contained 20.5 carats of gold.⁸
8. Other contemporary sources make similar, but by no means identical, claims about the existence of an ancient and symbolic column. Niketas Choniates, for instance, mentions an ancient statue of Athena that appeared to be looking westward as if beckoning the Western crusaders. Geoffrey of Villehardouin and Robert of Clari, two of the best-known eyewitness testimonies of the Fourth Crusade, each note that the column from which Alexios V was thrown to his death was inscribed with prophetic images that foretold the capture of Constantinople.⁹ Ralph is unusual among Western sources, however, in that he embeds the story of the prophetic column not within a narrative of the emperor’s violent death (indeed, Alexios V is described as taking flight), but within a report of the opulence and aesthetics of the city itself.

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5 See, e.g., Cristoforo Buondelmonti, *Liber insularum archipelagi*, c.1450, e.g. map reproduced in Magdalino 2000: 534.

6 For a discussion of the palace and its relation with the Great Palace see Macrides 2015: 159–67.

7 Magdalino 2000: 535.

8 See Morrisson 2002, esp. 909–66, 932–33.

9 See Choniates, *History*, transl. Magoulias, 305–06; Joinville and Villehardouin, *Chronicles of the Crusades*, transl. C. Smith, 83; Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, transl. E. Holmes McNeal, 124; see also Andrea 2008: 286 n. 41.

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I.5.3 Antony, Archbishop of Novgorod (d.1232)

The Pilgrim Book

† GEORGE P. MAJESKA (INTRODUCTION, EDITION AND TRANSLATION), CHARLES BARBER (COMMENTARY)

Ed.: G. P. Majeska; previous ed. *Kniga Palomnik*, “Skazanie mest sviatykh vo Tsaregrade Antonia Arkhiepiskopa Novgorodskogo v 1200 godu,” ed. Kh. Loparev, *Pravoslavnyi Palestinskii Sbornik* 17.3 [51] (St. Petersburg, 1899)

MS.:¹ Moscow, State Historical Museum, Zabelin 416 (s. XVI)

Other Translations: The Latin translation in vol. II of P. Riant, *Exuviae sacrae Constantinopolitanae* (Geneva, 1876), as well as the French version in S. Khitrovo [B. de Khitrowo], *Itinéraires russes en Orient* (Geneva, 1889), are not reliable; besides modern Russian translations, there is a good French translation by M. Ehrhard, *Romania* 58 (1932), 44–65; and now a German translation (with a reconstructed edition of the text) in A. Jouravel, *Die Kniga palomnik des Antonij von Novgorod. Edition, Übersetzung. Kommentar, Images Medii Aevi* 47 (Wiesbaden, 2019)

Significance

The special significance of the Pilgrim Book would seem to be threefold. First, the description of the city dates from the year 1200, a mere four years before the Latin conquest changed the religious configuration of Constantinople. Second, the text is one of the most detailed descriptions of the Byzantine capital preserved today. Third, the description of the shrines and relics of the city is especially useful because it was penned by a member of the Eastern Christian church who was therefore already familiar from his religious background with the traditions and stories associated with the sacred monuments and relics he describes in the city.

The Author

When Archbishop Antony of Novgorod visited Constantinople in 1200 (there seems to be no reason to doubt the date that he gives in the text), he was still the layman Dobrynia Iadrekovich. He was the scion of a wealthy family active in the trading center of Novgorod in northwest Russia. We do not know why he visited Constantinople. The normal assumption is that his trip was a pilgrimage, but given the important role his family played in Novgorodian politics, it is not impossible that his visit had a diplomatic purpose. Perhaps he was working for more ecclesiastical independence for Novgorod

¹ Consulted.

from the central administration of the Rus' church in the Suzdal area of northeast Rus'. The diplomatic interpretation of Dobrynia's journey would explain the great success he had in viewing religious treasures in Constantinople and in acquiring relics that he eventually brought back to Novgorod. Some are still preserved in the Novgorod Museum.

Dobrynia must have spent a considerable amount of time in Constantinople given the many monuments and shrines he seems to have visited in the city and even in its suburbs, but we do not know how long he stayed. In any case, he eventually returned to Novgorod where he took monastic vows in the Khutyn Monastery, a foundation with ties to his family. Soon, however, in 1211, he was elected archbishop of the city, the second highest position in the Russian church. His election, not surprisingly, coincided with the enthronement of a new ruling "contract" prince in the city. In Novgorod, princes were chosen by the city assembly and "invited" to rule; they could also be fired by the city. This is what happened in 1219: Archbishop Antony was retired along with his princely patron. In this period, Novgorod's princes were chosen either from a southern Rus' dynastic line of princes or from the northeast Rus' Suzdal (later Moscow) dynasty. Antony represented the backers of the southern Rus' line in Novgorod.

During his Novgorodian retirement, Antony was temporarily appointed bishop of the southern Rus' principality of Peremysl, a territory only recently retrieved by Rus' from Hungarian rule. In 1225, however, Antony was back in Novgorod and had been reinstated as ruling archbishop, mirroring the return of the anti-Suzdal line of princes. He remained in office only until 1228, however, when he lost his ability to speak and retired to the Khutyn Monastery where he had originally taken his monastic vows. When he died in 1232, he was interred as an archbishop in the Novgorod Cathedral of St. Sophia.

During his rule, Antony had presided over many ecclesiastical building projects and seems to have been highly regarded. By the fifteenth century, the period of attacks on Novgorod by the principality of Moscow, Suzdal's successor, Antony was considered a saint, and perhaps even canonized, at least in the Novgorod church, probably because of his anti-Suzdal (now seen as anti-Moscow) stance.

Text and Context

The translation of the Pilgrim Book presented below reflects the oldest, and apparently least contaminated, text of the work preserved today. A later, "second edition," of the Pilgrim Book is included in several medieval Rus' chronicles where the work has been reworked to reflect the Crusader capture of Constantinople in 1204. The chronicle version might be a revision by the original author or might also, more likely, be simply the work of a chronicle compiler.

Text

Книга паломникъ.

Зъ богомъ починаемъ.

Сказанье мѣстъ святыхъ во Царѣградѣ.

Господи, благослови отче!

Се язъ недостойный, многогрѣшный Антоней, архиепископъ Новгородскый, Божьимъ милосердьемъ и помощью святыя Софїи, иже глаголется Премудрость, Присносущное Слово, приидохомъ въ Царѣградъ.

Преже поклонихомся святѣй Софїи и пресвятаго Гроба Господня двѣ досцѣ цѣлвахомъ и печати гробныя, и икону пресвятую Богородицю, держащую Христа: въ того Христа жидовинъ ударилъ ножемъ въ горло, и изошла кровь.

А кровь же Господню, изышедшую изъ иконы, целовали есмя во олтари маломъ. Ту же во святой Софїи во олтари томъ же кровь и молоко святаго Пантелѣймона въ единой вѣти не смятшися, и глава его; и глава

Кондрата апостола и инѣхъ святыхъ мощи, и глава Ермолы и Стратоника; и Германову руку, ею же ставятся патриарси, и икону святаго Спаса, юже послалъ святыи Германъ чресъ моря безъ корабля посолствомъ въ Римъ, и блюдо мало мороморяно, на немъ же Христось вечерялъ со ученики своими въ великий четвергъ, и пелены Христовы и дароносивыя сосуды златы, иже принесоша Христу съ дары волсви, и блюдо велико злато служебное Олгы Руской, коли взяла дань, ходивши къ Царюграду. Городокъ малъ есть Цариградъ на Испиганьской сторонѣ, по странѣ жидовъ. Въ блюдѣ же Олжинѣ камень дорогой, на томъ же камени написанъ Христось; и отъ того Христа емлють печати людье на все добро. У того же блюда все по верхови жемчюгомъ учинено. То же во святой Софїи въ маломъ олтари. Ту же есть телѣга серебряна Константина и Елены и иныхъ служебныхъ золотыхъ блюдъ съ камнемъ дорогимъ и женчюгомъ чиненыхъ и серебряныхъ множество различныхъ, яжъ износятся на службу на всяку недѣлю и въ Господския праздники. Ту же есть во олтари вода, и приведена по трубамъ исъ колодезий. И въ неи двери олтаря малаго стоитъ крестъ мѣрный, колико былъ Христось возвышенъ плотью на земли; и за тѣмъ крестъ лежитъ Аньна, иже давала дворъ свой святѣй Софїи (на немъ же и поставленъ малый олтарь), и того ради положена бысть ту.

И отъ того же олтаря недалече Мироносица поють; и стоитъ предъ ними икона велика пречистая Богородица, держащи Христа; и шлы слезы отъ очью ей на очи Христа Бога нашего; и дають воду отъ ней на помазание всѣмъ челоуѣкомъ.

И оттолѣ на той же сторонѣ церкви есть святаго апостола Петра; а въ ней Феофанида святая лежитъ, ижъ ключъ держала святѣй Софїи; ты же ключи целуютъ. Ту же есть во церкви коверъ святаго Николы висить; ту же внесять Петровыхъ веригъ желѣзо, вковано въ золоту икону; на праздникъ же Петровыхъ веригъ цѣлуеть патриархъ и вси людье. А оттолѣ же во другой церкви лежитъ предний амвонъ храсаленъ, его же избилъ верхъ святѣй Софїи падся.

Translation

The Pilgrim Book

With God's help, let us begin.

The Tale of the Holy Places in Constantinople.

Lord Father, give the blessing!

Lo, I, most sinful Antony, unworthy Archbishop of Novgorod, by the grace of God and with the aid of St. Sophia, that is to say, of Wisdom, the eternal Word, came we [*sic*] to Constantinople.

First of all, we venerated St. Sophia and kissed the two slabs of the most holy tomb of the Lord, the tomb seals, and an icon of the most holy Mother of God holding Christ. It was this [image of] Christ that a Jew struck in the neck with a knife and blood came forth.¹

Now, in the chapel of preparation we kissed the Lord's blood that came forth from the icon.² Also there in the same chapel at St. Sophia are the blood and milk of St. Panteleimon, unmixed in a single vial, his head, the head of Kodratos the Apostle, and relics of other saints. The heads of Hermylos and Stratonikos and the hand of Germanos with which patriarchs are installed [are also there], and an icon of the holy Savior that St. Germanos sent without a boat across the sea as an ambassador to Rome. There is also a small marble dish on which Christ supped with his disciples on Holy Thursday, Christ's swaddling clothes, the gold offerings of plate that the magi brought as gifts to Christ, and the large gold liturgical plate of Olga the Russian [c.890–969] from [the time] when she came to Constantinople to receive tribute.³ (On the *Eis Pegas* side, Constantinople has a small town, the Jewish quarter.) On Olga's plate is a precious stone and Christ is depicted on this stone; people take an imprint of this [image of] Christ for good luck. The upper side of the plate is completely decorated with pearls; it is also in the chapel of preparation at St. Sophia. The silver coach of Constantine and Helena is also there and many golden liturgical vessels decorated with pearls and precious stones, and also many various silver items that are brought out for the services every Sunday and for the feasts of the Lord. The chapel of preparation also has water that is brought in from a spring by pipes. A "measuring cross," the height of Christ when he was on earth in the flesh, is found at the external door of the chapel of preparation. Behind this cross lies Anna who gave up her mansion to St. Sophia; the chapel of preparation was erected on that piece of land, which is why she was laid there.

Not far from that chapel of preparation, the Myrrh-bearing Women sing;⁴ and in front of them stands a large icon of the all-pure Mother of God holding Christ. Tears flowed from her eyes on to the eyes of Christ our God, and the water with which people are anointed comes from this [icon].⁵

And then, on the same side of the church, is [the chapel of] St. Peter the Apostle; and St. Theophanida, who kept the key to St. Sophia, is buried in it.⁶ One kisses these keys. The tapestry of St. Nicholas also hangs in that church. Metal from Peter's chains is also kept there, set in a golden icon that the patriarch and all the people kiss on the feast of Peter's chains. In a different church lies the earlier ambo; it is crystal and it broke when the roof of St. Sophia fell.

Отъ Мироносиць же близъ дне во святой Софѣи есть гробъ малъ дѣтища святаго Анфиногена. Понеже посла Богъ по душу аггела: служащу Анфиногену со дѣтищемъ во церкви и пришедъ аггелъ Господень во церковь, ста глаголя и рече Анфиногену: се мя Богъ послалъ по душу отрочища сего, да ю восприиму. И глагола святой Анфиногенъ ко аггелу: пожди, дондеже со дѣтищемъ скончаю святую службу сию Богу твоему и моему, Творцю небеси и земли, пославшему Сынъ свой къ намъ недостойнымъ и многгрѣшнымъ на очищенье грѣховъ и на спасенье душъ нашихъ и на пождание обращающимся отъ грѣховъ и кающимся ко Господеву. И то глагола смиреныи. Слышавъ аггелъ Господень отъ Анфиногена восприимъ послушаниемъ и ста, службѣ его жды, дондеже скончаетъ жертву. И свершивъ Анфиногенъ службу со дѣтищемъ, и емъ за руку дѣтища и поклонився аггелу Господню и да его; аггелъ же Господень, примимъ душу дѣтища, и иде къ Богу радуясь и веселяся и славу возда Богу о спасении души отрочати. И инѣхъ же гробовъ во святѣй Софѣи нѣсть развѣ того. И у того гроба есть кандило, палося съ масломъ на мороморя и не разъбилось; то же мѣсто огорожено есть дровомъ, да на не человекъ не вѣступятъ.

И оттолѣ же столпъ есть, идучи ко дверемъ святаго Григорья чудотворца, обить досками мѣдяными; у того столпа явился святой Григорей; и народъ мужъ и женъ целующе и трутся персьми и плечима около столпа на исцѣленье болѣзнемъ; и ту стоитъ икона святаго Григорья и ту же у столпа на память его празднуеть патриархъ, положивъ мощи его. И оттоле же утверди на степени написанъ Спасъ великъ мусеею; и одного перста у правой руцѣ не написалъ палца; а весь написавъ, рекль писецъ, зря нанъ: Господи, какъ еси живъ былъ, како же тя есми написал! И рекль къ нему написанныи Христосъ: а коли мя еси видѣлъ? И тогда писецъ онемѣвъ умре; и то перстъ не пишюче, но сребрянъ позолочень скованъ.

Странъ же и райскіи двери горѣ стоитъ икона велика, а на ней написанъ царь Корлѣи о софосъ и у него камень дорогой въ челѣ, и свѣтитъ въ ночь по святой Софѣи. Той же царь Корлѣи вземъ грамоту во гробѣ у святаго пророка Данила и переписалъ ю философскіи, кому царемъ быти во Царѣгородѣ. Дондеже стоитъ Царѣградъ. У райскихъ дверей же есть мѣдянъ романистъ, рекше наровъ, въ ню же замычють и заключивають райскіи двери; ту же наровъ накладывають у воротъ мужи и жены, да аще кто будетъ ядъ змиины снѣлъ или отравленье каково, то не можетъ его выняти изо рта, дондеже вся злоба изыдетъ слинами изо рта.

У олтаря же великаго на лѣвой странѣ мѣсто, идѣ же глагола аггелъ Господень ко отрочищу: не иду отъ мѣста сего, дондеже стоитъ святая Софѣя. На томъ же мѣстѣ три иконы поставлены, а на нихъ написано три аггели; и множество ту народа Бога молить. И оттолѣ близъ муро священное варять иконами ветхими, иже не знати святыхъ, и тѣмъ же миромъ дѣти крестять. На той же на лѣвой сторонѣ горѣ у терема у великаго сошита пазуха золотомъ, золота же вышло чистого 4 капи. Въ велицемъ же теремѣ паникандиль 80, вся сребряна, и на праздники Господьскія новая измѣняють; а инѣхъ паникадиль по всей святѣй Софѣи сребрянныхъ много, а кобоковъ златыхъ множество.

The little grave of the child of Athenogenes is inside St. Sophia, near the Myrrh-bearing Women.⁷ God once sent an angel for the soul [of the child] while Athenogenes was serving in the church with the child. The angel of the Lord came into the church, went up to Athenogenes, spoke to him and said, “Lo, God sent me for the soul of the child. Let me take it.” Then St. Athenogenes said to the angel, “Wait until the child and I complete this holy service to thy God and mine, the Creator of heaven and earth, who sent His Son for us, unworthy and most sinful people, for the cleansing of our sins and the salvation of our souls and for the postponement [of punishment] for those who turn from [their] sins and repent before the Lord.” He said this very humbly, and the angel of the Lord listened to Athenogenes, agreed, and stood waiting for him to complete the sacrifice. When Athenogenes and the child had finished the service, he took the child by the hand, bowed to the angel of the Lord, and gave him [the child]. The angel of the Lord took the child’s soul and went to God with rejoicing and gladness, praising God for the salvation of the child’s soul. There are no other tombs in St. Sophia except this one. There is a lamp full of oil at this tomb that fell onto the marble but did not break. A wooden railing around this area keeps people from walking on it.

And then, as one heads toward the doors, there is the column of St. Gregory the Wonderworker, covered with bronze panels.⁸ St. Gregory [once] appeared at this column, and people, both men and women, kiss it and rub their chests and shoulders against the column to cure sickness. An icon of St. Gregory stands at the column where the patriarch celebrates his [St. Gregory’s] holiday after he has placed the [St. Gregory’s] relics there.

A large mosaic depiction of the Savior is affixed to the wall [step?], but the artist did not portray one digit, a finger on the right hand, and when he had finished the picture, he gazed at it and said, “Lord, I have painted You just as You were in life.” Then the painted Christ said to him, “When did you see Me?” The artist then lost his voice and died, and this finger is still not portrayed, but is replaced with gilded silver.⁹

Emperor *Kyr Leo o Sophos* [Greek mean., Lord Leo the Wise, r.886–912] is depicted on a large icon that stands high up on the side of the celestial doors so that a precious stone in his forehead shines at night in St. Sophia.¹⁰ The same emperor, *Kyr Leo*, took a document that was in the tomb of the holy prophet Daniel and transcribed it philosophically; it listed the emperors destined to be in Constantinople as long as Constantinople stands.

There is a brass bolt at the celestial doors called a *romanist* with which the celestial doors are closed and locked. There, at the door, men and women put this bolt [in their mouths], such that if anyone has taken serpent venom or another kind of poison, he does not take it [the bolt] out of his mouth until all the poison has gone out of his mouth with the spit.

On the left side of the great altar is the place where the angel of the Lord told a youth, “I will not leave this place as long as St. Sophia stands.”¹¹ Three icons with angels depicted on them are placed on this spot, and many people pray to God here. Nearby the sacred chrism is cooked [on a fire made of] old icons on which the saints are not recognizable; children are baptized with this chrism. On the same left side, high up at the great dome, is a vault covered in gold that took four *kapis* of pure gold [to cover]. Eighty lamps are in the great dome, all are silver, and on feasts of the Lord they are replaced with new ones. There are many other silver lamps throughout St. Sophia, and many golden bowls.

Во олтари же великомъ надъ святою трапезою великою на средѣ ея подѣ катапезмоу повѣшенъ Костянтиновъ вѣнецъ, с драгимъ каменемъ и съ жемчюгомъ чиненъ, а у него повѣшенъ крестъ, подѣ крестомъ голубъ златъ; а инѣхъ царевъ вѣнци около катапезмы висятъ. Та же катапезма вся сребромъ и златомъ чинена, а столпия олтарния и амьбонъ все сребряно, а у катапезмы повѣшены вѣнци малы, 30 ихъ, въ память всѣмъ христьяномъ и въ незабыть Июдиныхъ ради 30 сребряникъ, на нихъ же Господа Бога Христа преда.

Тѣмъ же речено есть: яды хлѣбъ мой возвеличилъ есть на мя леств. Да, разумѣвше вси христьяне, блюдутся Июдинаго злаго и неправеднаго сребролюбства.

Прежние же святители служаху завѣсоу паволочитою повѣсивше катапезму. Чего же ради та бысть? — видѣния ради женска и всего народа, да не мутнымъ умомъ и сердцемъ Богу вышнему творцю небеси и земли службу вошлють. И потомъ же еретици паки взявше тѣло Господне и кровь, не вѣдуще никому же завѣсы ради, выплевавше воступаху ногами; ту же ересь увѣдавшѣ святии отци Духомъ, привязавше завѣсы ты ко столпомъ катапезмы и ко патриарху, и ко митрополиту, и къ епискупу и приставиша протодьякона, да зреть, да безъ ереси праведно служатъ Богу. Тѣмъ же та завѣса во распятѣ Господне раздрася до долу безакония ради жидовска и тма бысть по всей земли, гроби отверзошася и мертвыхъ телеса востаха, да бывше, видѣвше чудо то, познали сына Божия; зависти же ради и гордости не покоришася, ни покаяшеся, ни поклонишася сыну Божью каменносердый родъ еврейский, да тѣмъ чудомъ обличени будутъ во страшное судище не токмо жидове но и вси невѣрнии, зане же видятъ чудо то, бывшее о сынѣ Божья, и не вѣруютъ вонь. Христоръ бо велико милосердье имѣ на жидѣхъ, той чудо створи, да бывше, видѣвше и слышавше, познали сына Божья и покаялися о безаконнѣмъ своемъ убийствѣ. Жидове же познася о чудеси сына Божия, но ни покоришася, ни покаяшеся завѣсти ради и гордости. Про зависть бо и про горестъ аггели со небесе сметани бывше и впретворишася въ бѣси. Что бо ради печаловашеся Иисусъ, идя ко кресту? Слыши бо, что рече во иеуагельи Христоръ: яко печална есть душа моя до смерти. Се же рече Христоръ: яко печалую, не зане умрети хочю, но зане Израильти свои быша, и ти хотятъ мя распяти, и того ради отверщися имъ царствия Божия.

Въ святой жѣ Софѣи схоронены бысть скрыжали Моисѣва закона и кивотъ, а въ немъ манна. Аллилуиа же поюще на амвонѣ: падьяци держатъ скрыжали во Моисѣвыхъ мѣсто, а переносъ поютъ скопци, а падьяци переже и потомъ поеть чернецъ единъ; и тогда дары Господня понесутъ во переносъ много поповъ и дьяконовъ, бываетъ же тогда плачь и умиленье и смиренье велико отъ всего народа челоуѣческаго не токмо днесъ во святой Софѣи, но и на полатахъ. Какъ же ли тогда страхъ и смиренье, и умиление епископи, попове и дьякони имѣютъ въ той честнѣй службѣ? какы ли изрядныя дароносивыя златыя сосуды каменемъ и женчюгомъ украшены и сребряныя понесутъ? какъ же ли и свѣтозарный ерусалимъ и рипидии тогда понесутъ? како въздыханье и плачь бываетъ людемъ о грѣсѣ тогда? Чииль жѣ умъ или какова душа, иже не помянетъ тогда о царствии небеснѣмъ и о жизни безконечной? И во какой же ли чти и во смиреннии патриархъ

The crown of Constantine, decorated with pearls and precious stones, hangs in the center of the ciborium over the large holy table in the great chancel. A cross hangs from it [the crown] with a golden dove under the cross. The crowns of other emperors are also hung around the ciborium. This ciborium is decorated with silver and gold, and the altar columns and ambo are [also decorated] in silver. The thirty small crowns that hang around the ciborium are to remind all Christians not to forget the thirty pieces of silver for which Judas betrayed Christ the Lord God. Thus it is said, "He that eateth my bread has raised up a conspiracy against me." Let all Christians comprehend and eschew Judas' evil and iniquitous love of money.

Previous hierarchs served [behind] a curtain of costly material suspended from the ciborium. Why was this? So that the hierarchs could offer the service to the most high God, Creator of heaven and earth, with hearts and minds untroubled by the sight of women and the whole congregation. But heretics afterwards took the body and blood of the Lord, spit it out and ground it underfoot, and no one knew about this because of the curtains. The holy fathers learned of this heresy by [the inspiration of] the [Holy] Spirit and tied the curtains to the columns of the ciborium, and they appointed a protodeacon to [watch over every] patriarch, metropolitan, and bishop, to observe that they served God righteously and without heresy. It was at the Lord's crucifixion that the veil [of the temple] was rent from top to bottom on account of the transgressions of the Jews; there was darkness over all the earth, the graves were opened, and the bodies of the dead rose so that those who were there would see this miracle and recognize the Son of God. But out of envy and pride, the stone-hearted Hebrew nation did not submit, did not repent, and did not worship the Son of God. Hence at the Last Judgment, not only the Jews, but all non-believers will be reproached with this miracle: that they saw a wonder [proclaiming] the Son of God and did not believe in Him. Out of His great compassion for the Jews, Christ performed this miracle so that through seeing and hearing those who were there might recognize the Son of God and repent their unjust murder. The Jews recognized the miracle of the Son of God, but out of envy and pride they did not submit and repent. It was because of envy and pride that angels were expelled from heaven and transformed into demons. Why was Christ saddened on His way to the cross? Hear then what Christ said in the Gospel: "For my soul is sad unto death." Christ spoke thus: "It is not because I am to die that I am saddened, but because the Israelites, who were mine, will crucify Me. It is because of this that they will be denied the kingdom of God."

The tables of the law of Moses and the ark [of the covenant] with the manna in it are preserved in St. Sophia too. But instead of the tables of Moses, subdeacons hold [similar ones] on the ambo while they sing the alleluia. The eunuchs sing the [hymn of] transferal after the subdeacons [have sung], and then a lone monk intones it [the hymn] and many priests and deacons bear the oblations of the Lord in procession. Then there is great weeping, emotion, and humility on the part of all the people in the congregation, both those below in the church of St. Sophia and those in the galleries. What fear, humility, and emotion the bishops, priests, and deacons must have during this venerable service! What extraordinary gold and silver eucharistic plate decorated with [precious] stones and pearls they bear! How they carry the shining tabernacle and the flabella! How people

службу совершаеть! се же, братье, поминающе, поревнуемъ такоже во службѣ быти страхомъ, да получимъ добрую жизнь въ сий въ вѣкъ и въ будущий.

И се же паки чудно и страшно и свято явленье. Во святой Софѣи въ олтари великомъ за святымъ престоломъ стоитъ крестъ золотъ выше двою человекъ отъ земля, съ каменемъ драгимъ чиненъ и со женчюгомъ, а передъ нимъ виситъ крестъ златъ палатора лохти; водлѣ трехъ вѣтей повѣшена 3 кандила злата, а горитъ въ нихъ масло, а четвертую вѣтви отъ верху повержено. Та же кандила со крестомъ учинилъ великий царь Иустиянъ, иже святую Софѣю поставилъ. Та же 3 кандила со крестомъ Духомъ Святымъ вознеслася горѣ выше великаго креста и зошла паки доловъ тихо, не угасла; то же было вознесенье по заутрени, предъ початьемъ литургии, попомъ во олтари видящимъ и людемъ во церкви зрящимъ всѣмъ со страхомъ и великою радостью и ркущимъ: уже насъ хрестьянъ посѣтилъ Богъ милостью своею и молитвами пречистыя Богородица, и святѣй Софѣи Премудрости Божьи и молитвами царя Костянтина и матери его Елены хочеть ны дати Богъ жития, якоже при Костянтинѣ было и болѣ нынѣ того будетъ. Приведеть Богъ поганыя жидове во крещенье и будутъ хрестьяне и во единой любви, не имущи рати межю собою, но токмо на тѣхъ имуть воевати, кто не взхоцеть во крещенье внидти. Да и волею и неволею принудить ихъ Богъ внити во крещенье. Обилья жъ и всего добра на земли будетъ множество и правда, и святымъ житьемъ начнутъ житии людье, обиды же не будетъ; земля изнесеть плодъ отъ себѣ Божьимъ повелѣньемъ, аки медъ и млеко, добраго ради жития хрестьянскаго. Се же чудо свято и честно явилъ Богъ въ лѣто 6708, при моемъ животѣ мѣсяца маіа на память святаго царя Костянтина и матери его Елены, въ 21 въ день недѣльный по заутрени, а при царствѣ Олексѣевѣ и при патриарсѣ Иванѣ на сборъ святыхъ отецъ Зоо и 18, а при посольствѣ Твердягине Остромирица, иже приѣха посольствомъ отъ великаго князя Романа ко царю Алексѣю со Неданомъ и со Дмажиромъ, и со Дмитреемъ, и съ Негваромъ посломъ.

Въ святой же Софѣи у олтаря на правой сторонѣ ту есть мороморъ багрянъ и ту поставляютъ престолъ златъ и на престолѣ поставляютъ царя на царство, и по сторонѣ того мѣста есть мѣсто огорожено мѣдью и да на не человекъ не вступять, но то мѣсто цѣлуютъ мужи и жены: на томъ бо мѣстѣ молилася стоящи святая Богородица ко Сыну своему и Богу нашему за родъ хрестьянский; то же видѣлъ святы попъ въ ночь, сторожъ нощный. И на той же сторонѣ поставлена икона велика святый Борисъ и Глѣбъ, и ту иконы мѣняють писци. И горѣ на полатахъ стоитъ патриархъ, коли служить. Во притворѣ же за великимъ олтаремъ вчинены во стенѣ гроба Господня верхняя доска и посохъ желѣзень; туже и свердлы и пилы, ими же чиненъ крестъ Господень и уже желѣзно во двѣрѣхъ Петровы темница, и древо, иже на ши у Христа подъ желѣзомъ было, тоже вчинено во икону крестомъ. Въ томъ же притворѣ надъ дверьми горѣ написанъ Стефанъ первомученикъ, предъ нимъ жо возволочивають кандило; и кому очи болятъ, обвивають главу тѣмъ ужемъ, и здрави бывають очима. Ту же икона есть, въ ню же уразилъ жидовинъ ножемъ Христа въ горло, изшла кровь. И ту же есть трубѣ двѣ мѣдянѣ Ерихонскаго взятія Иисуса Навгина. И ту же есть камень мороморянъ, издолбенъ

sigh and weep over their sins at that moment! What mind or soul does not think about the kingdom of heaven and life everlasting during this time? How honorably and humbly the patriarch celebrates the service! Let us be mindful of this, my brothers, and let us also be zealous in assisting at the service with fear [of God] so that we may have an edifying life in this world and in the world to come.

A holy and awesome miraculous event: behind the holy table in the main chancel of St. Sophia stands a golden cross encrusted with pearls and precious stones that is taller than two men. In front of this [cross] hangs another gold cross one-and-a-half cubits high, with a golden lamp in which oil burns hanging from each of the three arms – it is hung from above by the fourth arm. Emperor Justinian the Great, who built St. Sophia, set up those lamps and the cross. These three lamps and the cross were raised by the Holy Spirit high above the large cross and lowered again gently without [the lamps] being extinguished. This raising occurred during matins, before the beginning of the liturgy, and the priests in the sanctuary and the people in the church saw it and said, with awe and great joy, “In his mercy God has now visited us Christians by the intercession of the all-pure Mother of God, of St. Sophia the Divine Wisdom, and by the prayers of Emperor Constantine and of Helena, his mother. God desires to grant us life as it was under Constantine. And now it [life] will be even higher, for God will lead the pagan Jews to baptism, and Christians will be united in love, with no disputes among them. They will only have to combat those who do not desire to enter into baptism. May God force them, willing or unwilling, to enter into baptism, and then there will be an abundance of every good, justice upon the earth, and people will begin to lead holy lives and wrong will be no more. By the will of God and because of the righteous lives of Christians, the earth will bring forth fruit by itself, like milk and honey.” God revealed this holy and venerable wonder in my lifetime, during matins on Sunday, the twenty-first day of May, the feast of the holy emperor Constantine and of his mother Helena, in the year 6708 [1200 CE], while Alexis [Alexios III Angelos, r.1195–1204] was emperor and John [John X Kamateros, 1198–1206] was patriarch, on the feast of the Council of the Three Hundred and Eighteen Holy Fathers [at Nicaea], and during the embassy of Tverdiatin Ostromiritsa, coming as an embassy from Grand Prince Roman to Emperor Alexis, along with Nedan, Dmazhir, Dmetrii, and Negvar, the ambassador.

To the right of the sanctuary in St. Sophia, where the golden throne is placed for the installation of the emperor over the empire, there is a purple marble [pavement]. The area is surrounded by a brass [railing] so that people do not walk on it. In fact, men and women kiss this place, for one night a holy priest who was the night watchman saw the holy Mother of God standing in prayer to her Son and our God for the Christian people. A large icon of Sts. Boris and Gleb is set up on the same side [of the church], and there painters trade in icons. During services the patriarch stands high up in the galleries.

Now in a vestibule behind the main altar, embedded in the wall are the top slab of the Lord’s tomb and an iron staff.¹² The drills and saws with which the Lord’s cross was made and likewise iron from the doors of Peter’s prison are also there. In addition, the wood that was under the fetter on the neck of Christ is also there, embedded in the cross on an icon. [A depiction of the] Protomartyr Stephen is painted high up over the doors of this vestibule. A lamp hangs in front of him. People with eye afflictions bind their heads with

аки кадь, кладязя Самарѣйска: у него же глаголаь Христось ко самаряныни: дай же ми воды пити. Всквозѣ бо той камень самарянынѣ черпаху во(д)у.

А оттолѣ святой Аверкий и Григорей великия Армения, и Селевестръ лежать, и Кира, Иоанна двѣ главѣ ту же, и иныхъ святыхъ мощий много во святой Софѣи, и преображенье святаго Николы во притворѣ ту же.

И хрестителница водная, и написанъ въ ней Христось: во Иерданѣ крестится отъ Иоанна, со дѣяньемъ написанъ: и какъ Иоаннъ учить народы, и какъ ли млади дѣти мечются во Иерданъ и людье, тоже все Пауль хитрый писецъ при моемъ животѣ писалъ,—и нету тако писмяни. И ту же есть древа, и чинить въ нихъ патриархъ икону святаго Спаса, зо лакоть возвышѣ; и Павелъ Христа преже написалъ со женчюгомъ и со драгимъ камнемъ, вапѣи стеръ на одномъ мѣстѣ. У святѣи же Софии стояти той иконы днесь.

И егда же заутренюю пѣти хотятъ у Софѣи святой, та же преже поють предъ райскими дверми, во притворѣ, такоже Мироносици поють, и потомъ райския двери отворятъ и вышедше поють посреди церкви и третья поють у олтаря. А въ недѣлный же день ставаетъ патриархъ на утрени и на обѣднѣи же, и во Господьския праздники, и тогда благословляетъ пѣвецъ съ полатъ; они же, оставлеше пѣнье, понихронию кличють, и потомъ начнутъ пѣнье красное и сладкое, аки аггели, и тако поють до обѣднии, а кончавше утреню и разволокъшесь вышедѣ вонъ, возмутъ у патриарха благословенье службы дѣля литургии, а по заутрении чтуть Прилогъ до обѣднии, на омбонъ вошедше, и егда кончаютъ Прологъ, и тогда почнутъ литургию.

А службу кончавше, молитву дорную молвить попъ старийший во олтари, а другой попъ молвить ту же молитву за амбономъ нареди церкви; и кончавше молитву кождо ею благословя люди. Такоже рано во святой Софѣи вечерню починають; а колокола не держать во святой Софѣи, но билце мало въ рущѣ держа клеплють на заутрении, а на обѣдни и на вечерни не клеплють; а по инымъ церквамъ клеплють а на обѣдни и на вечерни; било же дрѣжать по аггелову учению, а въ колоколы латына звонять.

И есть въ Царѣградѣ Неусыпающий монастырь: по всю бо недѣлю по церквамъ неизмѣнно стоятъ чресъ ночь до свѣта молящи Бога, и паки наставшей недѣли по церквамъ стоятъ, и тако творятъ по вся дни живота своего. Покаяльныхъ отцевъ бѣлцовъ не держать, но черньцовъ старыхъ, умѣющихъ научити закону Господню.

Се же во Царскихъ златыхъ палатахъ крестъ честный и вѣнецъ, губа, гвозды, кровь же лежаше иная, багряница, копие, трость, повой святѣи Богородицы, поясъ и сорочка Господня, платъ шейный и леонти, и калыги Господня, голова Паулова и Филипа апостола тѣло, и Епимахова голова, и Федора Тирона мощи, рука Ивана Крестителя правая, и тою царя поставляютъ на царство, и посохъ желѣзень, а на немъ крестъ Иоанна Крестителя, и благословляютъ на царство, и убрусь, на немъ же образъ Господень, и керемидѣ двѣ, и лоханя Господня мороморана, и другая лоханя меньшая мороморяна же, въ ней же Христось умывалъ нозѣ ученикомъ, и креста два велика честная. Се же все во единой церкви въ малей во святой Богородици.

the rope [that is used for the lamp], and their eyes are healed. Also there is the icon whose Christ was stabbed in the neck by a Jew with a knife, and blood flowed. There, too, are the two bronze trumpets of Joshua, son of Nun, [that come] from the battle of Jericho. A piece of marble is also there, hollowed out like a bucket. [It is] from the well of Samaria at which Christ said to the Samaritan woman, “Give me water to drink.” The Samaritans used to draw water with this stone.

Nearby, St. Abercius, Gregory of Great Armenia, and Sylvester repose, and also there are two heads, those of Cyrus and John. St. Sophia also holds relics of many other saints as well as a likeness of St. Nicholas, which is found in a vestibule.

Also [located] there is a baptistery with water, where Christ is depicted being baptized by John in the Jordan with the whole story depicted: how John teaches the people and how young children and others rush into the Jordan. The talented painter Paul painted all these during my lifetime, and there are no better paintings. Here also are wooden [supports] on which the patriarch places an icon of the holy Savior which is thirty cubits high. Grinding the pigments on the spot, Paul depicted Christ in pearls and precious stones. These two icons remain in St. Sophia up to the present time.

When the chanting of matins begins at St. Sophia, they sing first in the vestibule in front of the celestial doors. The Myrrh-bearing Women sing in the same way. Then they open the celestial doors and enter to sing in the center of the church. The third time they sing at the sanctuary. On Sundays and feasts of the Lord, the patriarch remains in the galleries for matins and the pre-liturgy and [from there] he blesses a singer and the singing is interrupted to cry *polychronion* [Greek: long life]. Then begins the beautiful sweet chant reminiscent of angels and the singing continues thus until the liturgy. Once matins is finished, [the singers] change garb and go to receive the patriarch’s blessing for the service of the liturgy. After matins, someone goes up onto the ambo to read the prologue until [it is time for] the liturgy. When the prologue [reading for the day] is finished, the liturgy begins. At the end of the liturgy, the senior priest recites “the prayer below the sanctuary” inside the sanctuary while another priest recites the same prayer below the ambo in the center of the church. When the prayer is ended, each [priest] blesses the congregation, and, early as it is, vespers begins in St. Sophia.

There are no bells in St. Sophia, but a small clapper held in the hand is struck for matins. They do not strike [this clapper] for liturgy and vespers [at St. Sophia], but at other churches they sound it for the liturgy and for vespers. They use this clapper because of an angel’s command; but the Latins ring bells.

Constantinople is home to a “sleepless” monastery, where all week long [the monks] remain in church through the whole night praying to God until dawn. As each new week begins, they once again remain in church, and this they do all the days of their lives. [This monastery] does not have secular priests [there] as penitents, only older monks adept at teaching the law of God.

In the Golden Palace of the emperor [are kept] the venerable cross and crown [of thorns], the sponge, the nails [from the crucifixion], (but [Christ’s] blood preserved there is different), the purple robe, the lance, the reed, the veil of the holy Mother of God, the Lord’s girdle and tunic, the scarf, laces and sandals of the Lord, the head of Paul, the body of the apostle

Во великой же церкви у святого Михаила въ тѣхъ же полатахъ Костянтиновъ крестъ верху олтарныхъ дверей стоитъ, с нимъ же на рать ѣздилъ. Тужъ и труба Иисуса Навгина Ерихоньскаго взятыя; и ту есть во олтари Аврамова овня рога: въ тужъ въ трубу и въ та рога вострубятъ аггели во второе пришествие Господне. Ту же есть Самоиловъ рогъ, изъ него же масло излиялъ на Давида царя, и палица Моисѣева, еюжъ море раздѣли и люди проведе въсквозъ Черное море, а Фараона потопа въ Черномъ мори со Египтяны въ пучинѣ морьстѣй; той же посохъ и рогъ окованъ со драгимъ каменемъ. И въ малемъ олтари за святою трапезою покрыта трапеза, на ней жъ Авраамъ со святою Троицею хлѣбъ ѣлъ; и ту стоитъ крестъ въ лозѣ Ноевъ учиненъ, юже по потопѣ насади, и сучецъ масличенъ туто же, его же голубъ внесе, въ той же лозѣ есть.

А у стороннихъ же дверей во притворѣ на стѣнѣ написанъ Христосъ мусеею, великъ стоящъ, и попъ предъ нимъ кандило жеглъ по вся дни и нощи; и бысть ему кадящую темьяномъ и проглагола Христосъ къ попови: испола ити дѣспода. И потомъ на третъи день поставленъ бысть патриархомъ. Смотримъ же, братье, какъ ти добродѣтель доводитъ чти и сана великаго въ сей въ вѣкъ и въ будущий.

На перегородѣ у олтаря у великаго вчиненъ щитъ Костянтиновъ, и на немъ ставятъ агнецъ на обою страну и дають причащенье людемъ. Тужъ есть во олтари Ильины милоти часть и пояса Ильина. Церковь же мощена краснымъ мороморомъ, а подъ нею дуплено, и подходятъ челоуѣци; и учинено сквозъ мороморъ продухи; и егда внидеть царь во церковь ту, тогда понесутъ подъ исподъ много ксилолоя темьяна и кладутъ на углие, и исходитъ воня продухи тѣми во церковь на воздухъ велико благоуханье воня и родосто моя лють всѣхъ людии и наполнится воня тоя вся церкви; пѣние же воспуютъ калуфани, аки аггели, и тогда будетъ стояти во церкви той аки на небеси или яко въ раю. Духъ же Святой наполняетъ душу и сердце радости и веселия правовѣрнымъ челоуѣкомъ. Подъ райскими же дверми въ при стоитъ столпъ мороморянь, у него же привязанъ былъ святы мученикъ Сидоръ, и съ темъ столпомъ вышелъ есть изъ моря; и мощи его ту суть, и инѣхъ святыхъ мощей много. Во Златыхъ полатахъ целовали же есме святую Богородицю великую Диогитрею, ею же Лука святой иеуаггелистъ апостоль написалъ.

Иже ходитъ по градъ и Пятерицю, къ ней же хотя водить и Лахѣрну святую, къ ней же Духъ Святой сходитъ. Въ той же церкви риза святѣй Богородицѣ и посохъ Богородицинъ, сребромъ окованъ, и поясъ святѣй Богородици во прикупной рацѣ лежить. Ту есть во прикупной святой Спасъ, его же въ поруцѣ далъ хрестьянинъ Феодоръ жидовину Аврамию; тужъ есть Семиона Богоприимца гробъ; въ той же церкви подъ трапезою святой Яковъ братъ Господень лежить; тужъ и святой пророкъ Захария лежить; въ той же церкви младенецъ половина лежить во столпѣ, а половина во Ерусалимѣ. Тужъ въ церкви 12 коша хлѣбовъ исполнено Христовымъ благословеньемъ, ихъжъ Господь ѣлъ со ученики своими; тѣ же хлѣбы во стѣнѣ запечатаны суть.

И оттолѣ святяя Фетиньи самарянинѣ церкви и ту очи ея и перси, и мощи лежать. А оттолѣ же святяя Козмы и Дамьяна церкви велика; ту святяго Анкидина

Philip, the head of Epimachos, and the relics of Theodore Tyron. The right hand of John the Baptist with which they install the emperor [is there], as is the iron staff of John the Baptist with a cross on it with which [the emperor] is blessed for ruling. [Also there, are] the towel that carries the Lord's image and two vessels, one the Lord's marble basin, the other, a smaller marble vessel, in which Christ washed the feet of his disciples. Two large venerable crosses [are there too]. All these items are in a single small church, that of the holy Mother of God.¹³

In the large church of St. Michael in the same palace, the cross with which Constantine went into battle stands above the sanctuary doors.¹⁴ The trumpet of Joshua, son of Nun, from the capture of Jericho is there, and the ram's horn of Moses is there in the sanctuary [too]; on this trumpet and on this horn the angels will herald the second coming of the Lord. The horn from which Solomon poured oil on King David is also there, as is the rod with which Moses divided the Red Sea when he led the people through it (but Pharaoh and the Egyptians drowned in the depths of the Red Sea). The staff and horn are covered with precious stones. In the chapel of preparation, located behind the holy altar, stands the covered table at which Abraham ate bread with the Holy Trinity. A cross made from a stick that Noah planted after the flood is also there; in it is an olive branch that a dove brought [back to the ark]. On the wall in a vestibule at the side doors is a large, full-length mosaic of Christ. A priest once burned a lamp in front of this mosaic day and night, and while the priest was censuring [the mosaic] with incense, the Christ [in the mosaic] prophesized to the priest, "*Eis polla eti despota!*" [Greek: many years, oh master!], and within three days [the priest] was installed as patriarch. Consider, brothers, how virtue leads to honor and high rank in this world and in the world to come! The shield of Constantine is attached to the railing around the main altar. The host is placed on it, and communion is distributed to people on both sides [of it]. Elias' girdle and a piece of Elias' sheepskin are also in the sanctuary. The church is paved in beautiful marble, and below [the floor] is a crypt where people come. Vents are cut into the marble, and when the emperor comes into this church a large amount of aloes incense is placed on coals below the floor, and a heavy sweet-smelling fragrance escapes into the air of the church and joyfully encompasses the whole congregation; thus all the church is filled with the odor. The chant is sung *kalophone* [Greek: sounding beautiful] like angels, and being in this church is like being in heaven or in paradise, for the Holy Spirit fills the hearts and souls of the true-believing people with joy and gladness. In the vestibule, in front of the celestial doors, stands the marble column to which the holy martyr Isidore was bound; he came out of the sea with this column [still attached]. His relics are there, as are many relics of other saints.

In the Golden Palace we both [*sic*] also kissed the great *Hodegetria* [icon] of the holy Mother of God, which the apostle and evangelist Luke painted.

When one walks around the city in the direction of *Pyateritsa*, one is led to the holy [Church of] *Blachernai* on which the Holy Spirit descends.¹⁵ The robe of the holy Mother of God and the staff of the Mother of God are in this church, covered in silver.

The girdle of the holy Mother of God reposes in a special coffer. The [image of] the holy Savior that the Christian Theodore gave as security to the Jew Abraham is in a chapel.

лобъ и Кузминъ, окованъ сребромъ. Дале же оттолъ, къ морю идуче, святая Анна дѣвица въ тѣлѣ, аки жива, лежитъ, скручена, и преображенья святого Дмитрея доле надъ моремъ. И оттолъ надъ моремъ же святой Никола Новый въ тѣлѣ лежитъ.

А у Лахѣрны во Царевыхъ полатахъ святой Федоръ Стратилать лежитъ, и щить его, и мечъ его туто же; надъ нимъ же стоитъ икона Иоанна Крестителя, въ ней же замчены и запечатано царевою печатью волосы Иоана Крестителя (верхъ же Иоанна Крестителя главы и перси, и персть его, и зубъ его у святого Феодора во Студийскомъ монастыри; тужъ въ монастыри святой Федоръ и братъ его Иосифъ Селуньский епископъ во единомъ гробѣ лежита). Свитку же святого Феодора, яже была отъ тѣла, въ ней же мучень, покладывають на гробъ на праздникъ его; и у мене ризы тоя есть. И тужъ и глава Захарьи пророка и святого Вавила и иныхъ святыхъ мощи въ той же церкви лежать въ монастыри. Святого же Иоана Крестителя лице лежитъ въ Маганскомъ въ монастыри у святого Геогрия во церкви; тужъ и верхъ главы святого Геогрия и рука святого Прокопья мученика и иныхъ святыхъ мощи ту лежать. А олтарь же чинень у тое же церкви со драгимъ камениемъ; надъ нимъ икона, написанъ Христосъ со самарянынею, какъ глаголалъ у кладязя. А внѣ того притвора церкви святого Николы, и ту вскитѣ въ кадило млеко.

А коли дѣлаючи святую Софию, во олтарныя стѣны клали святыхъ мощи. А колодязи мнози во святой Софѣи. А на полатахъ кодызии, огородъ у патриарха и церкви мнози; овощъ же патриарху всяки: дынеи и яблока, груши держа въ кладязи, повержено ужищемъ въ коши; и коли ѣсти патриарху, и тогда вынимають, есть студено; такоже и царь ѣсть. И баня патриархова на полатахъ. Воды же по трубамъ возведены, а другая дождевая. И на полатахъ же исписани патриарси вси и цари, колико ихъ было во Царѣградѣ и кто ихъ ересь держалъ. На полатахъ во церкви 5 головъ лежитъ со женчюгомъ окованы, а кивотъ всъ сребрянъ.

А по амьболу, ко Коневому Торгу идущи, по лѣвой странѣ есть церковь святая Богородица, и ту есть трапеза Господня мороморяна, на ней же вечеряль Господь со ученики своими въ великий четвергъ.

А у святое же Апостольской церкви Костянтинъ царь со матерью Еленою во единомъ гробѣ лежита; за тѣмъ же гробомъ лежитъ мароморъ, а въ немъ стопа святого апостола Петра, — аки во воскъ воступилъ; тойжъ камень изъ Рима принесенъ; въ той церкви во олтари лежитъ святы Иоаннъ Златаустъ, Григорей Богословъ; на олтарней же перегородѣ святыхъ мощи. Ту же есть и безмѣздникъ 3 раки сребряны и главы апостоль Иякова брата Господня и Матфѣева глава (а тѣло въ селѣ внѣ града лежитъ) и инѣхъ апостоль мощи у Апостольской церкви лежать. А подъ трапезою святой Андрѣй и Лука, и Тимофѣй лежитъ. А порты Апостольские во олтари за трапезою въ рацѣ лежать. Олтарь же посреди церкви, а передъ олтаремъ стоитъ столпъ мораморянъ, у него же Христосъ привязанъ бысть (а доска Господня во Понтократарѣ монастырѣ: на той бо положенъ бысть Господь сонемше и со креста, и тогда святая Богородица плакалася, осязавшеи Христа, исшли слезы ея дне во доску ту, и суть бѣлы видѣньемъ, ака капля воцанья).

The tomb of St. Symeon, the Receiver of God, is there, and St. James, the brother of the Lord, is buried under the altar in this church.¹⁶ The holy prophet Zacharias is also buried there, and one half of the children [the holy innocents] are immured in a column in this church (the other half are in Jerusalem). In the church are the twelve baskets that Christ's blessing filled with the bread that the Lord and his disciples ate; these same breads are sealed into the wall.¹⁷

The Church of St. Phteine the Samaritan is nearby, and her [the saint's] eyes, breast, and relics are there.¹⁸

The silver covered skulls of St. Akyndinos and of Cosmas are nearby in the large church of Saints Cosmas and Damian.¹⁹ The life-like body of St. Anna the Virgin who was strangled is beyond that [church], toward the sea. Farther on, overlooking the sea, [stands the Church of] the Apparition of St. Demetrius, while the body of St. Nicholas the Younger overlooks the sea farther on.

St. Theodore Stratelates is buried in the imperial palace at *Blachernai*, where his shield and sword are also found. Above them stands an icon of John the Forerunner in which hair of John the Forerunner is enclosed, sealed with the imperial seal.

However, the top of John the Forerunner's head, his chest, a finger and a tooth are in the Studite Monastery of St. Theodore.²⁰ St. Theodore and his brother, Joseph, Bishop of Thessaloniki, rest in a single grave at this monastery. On his feast the tunic that was taken from St. Theodore's body when he was martyred is laid on the grave. (And I have a piece of this robe.) The head of Zacharias the Prophet and relics of St. Babylas are in this same monastery church, as are relics of other saints.

The face of St. John the Forerunner, however, is in St. George's Church at the Mangana Monastery, and the top of St. George's head, the hand of St. Procopius the Martyr, and relics of other saints are also there.²¹ The altar in this church is decorated with precious stones, and above it is an icon depicting Christ speaking with the Samaritan woman at the well. The Chapel of St. Nicholas where milk [once] bubbled in a censer is outside this church.

When St. Sophia was being built, relics of saints were placed in the sanctuary wall. St. Sophia has many cisterns, even cisterns in the galleries, along with many chapels and the patriarch's precinct. The patriarch's fruits of all sorts (melons, apples, and pears) are kept in a basket hung in a cistern by a cord and are taken out when the patriarch dines; the emperor dines in the same fashion. The patriarchal bath is [also] in the galleries; some of the water is brought in through pipes, but the rest is rainwater. In addition, all of the patriarchs and emperors that there have ever been in Constantinople are portrayed in the galleries, even those who upheld heresy. Five heads covered with pearls repose in a chapel in the galleries that has a solid silver baldachino.

As one goes along the *Embolos* [Greek: street] in the direction of the horse market, on the left is a Church of the Mother of God where can be found the Lord's marble table, the one at which the Lord supped with his disciples on Holy Thursday.

Emperor Constantine and his mother Helena repose in a single tomb at the Church of the Holy Apostles.²² Behind this tomb is a piece of marble with the footprint of St. Peter the Apostle on it, as if he had stepped in wax; this stone was brought from Rome. Sts John Chrysostom and Gregory the Theologian rest in the sanctuary of this church, and there

Ту же во церкви святаго Спиридона галова (а рука его и мощи его у святѣй Богородици у Одегитрии во монастыри подѣ олтаремъ лежать) и святаго Феодора персть въ той же церкви.

А во Калуяновѣ монастырѣ святаго Власья глава, и у мене мощи святаго Власья, – и иныхъ святыхъ Богъ вѣдаетъ. А во Филатроповѣ монастырѣ гвоздь Господень и кресты честныя и мощи святыхъ. Въ Пандопафтии же монастыри гвозда Господня, честь имуща святыхъ. А у Златыхъ вратъ святѣй Диомидъ, мощи его лежать. А оттолѣ мощи святаго Мамонта; тужъ есть и монастырь его. А оттолѣ же святая Карпи и Папула въ женскомъ монастыри во единомъ гробѣ лежита; а ту церковь поставилъ Костянтинъ царь. Сторонъ жъ того Трояндофилица монастыре и ту множество мощей святыхъ, и Ильины милоти ту часть есть; той же монастырь грады и селы, и златомъ богатѣе инѣхъ всѣхъ монастырей во Цариградѣ. А оттолѣ святѣй Стефанъ Новый во монастыри лежить, и на память его главу приносятъ къ погребу, идѣже сидѣлъ ввержень; главу же его носить епархъ чресъ всю ночь со множествомъ людий со свѣщами зовуща: „Кирелѣсу“. А оттолѣ святая Богородица Вергетри метохие, и ту же во церкви посохъ стоитъ желѣзнъ со крестомъ святаго Андрѣя апостола, и въ томъ монастырѣ живеть вышедше исъ святой горѣ Сава сербьскій князь. И близъ того монастырь женскій, въ немъ же лежать во единомъ гробѣ 10 мученикъ и дѣвица царевна въ тѣлѣ на верху лежить; тѣхъ же всѣхъ мучилъ Купронимъ поганый царь. А оттолѣ же святаго Мокия монастырь, а въ немъ церкви велика и въ той же церкви подѣ олтаремъ лежить Мокий и святѣй Самсонъ; отъ гроба его вода идетъ. Недалече отъ монастыря того новый отецъ Еуфимей лежить, иже оковався въ желѣзехъ ходилъ. Оттолѣ же Кира, Иоанна мощи. И странъ того церкви святаго Луки есть, идѣже всѣхъ умершихъ погребають. Въ той же церкви святы Анастасий безъ главы есть, а главу его украли. А оттолѣ святы Дмитрей лежить въ тѣлѣ бѣлецъ, а образъ его аки святаго Мины. А отъ него въ монастыри мужскомъ святаго Дия глава и мощи. И у, столпа посторонъ, Богородицина монастыря лежить Новый Евдокимъ во серебрянѣ гробѣ, аки живъ.

И у Романовыхъ вратъ святѣй великий пророкъ Даниль лежить и Романъ святѣй, и Никита. Странъ жъ того мѣста при стѣнѣ граднѣй святая Настасия дѣвица въ тѣлѣ лежить, и оттолѣ святая Фроль и Лаверь въ тѣлѣ лежать. Странъ жъ ея церкви святаго Никиты, и нога святаго Никиты ту. Близъ же того церкви святѣй Георгий; у обою жъ сею церквью множество мучимо бываетъ. И оттуду святѣй Феодоръ преобразилъ въ корытѣ, мѣсящи тѣсто въ корытѣ черницѣ. И близъ же того святѣй Никифоръ патриархъ Царегородскій лежить. И есть же монастырь, ко Лахѣрнѣ идучи, святаго Иоана Крестителя и ту выпускають люди на праздникъ и на великъ день, 3-же годъ до года, и кормятъ всѣхъ, а черницъ не испущаятъ изъ монастыря никогда же; черницъ же есть двѣстѣ; а сель не держать, но Божьею благодатью и пощеньемъ и молитвами Иоанна питаемы суть. Странъ того монастырь святаго Георгия, и ту лежить святѣй Феодоръ Секиотъ въ тѣлѣ въ серебрянѣ гробѣ, и ту крестъ его на желѣзнѣ пососѣ, съ нимъ же ходилъ на гору ко святому Георгию молится; еже есть ту и потырь его мороморянъ, съ нею

are [other] relics of saints in the altar enclosure. The silver caskets of three unmercenaries and the heads of the apostles James, the brother of the Lord, and of Matthew [are there]. (But his [St. Matthew's] body reposes in a village outside the city.) Relics of the other apostles are [also there] in the Apostles Church; Sts Andrew, Luke, and Timothy are buried under the altar. The robes of the apostles are in a casket in the sanctuary, behind the altar, which is in the middle of the church. The marble column to which Christ was bound stands in front of the altar. The Board of the Lord on which Christ was laid when He was taken down from the cross is in the Pantokrator Monastery.²³ It was at that time that the Mother of God wept as she touched Christ, and the tears fell down onto this board where they are still visible like drops of white wax. The head of St. Spyridon is also in this church [the Holy Apostles], but his relics and hand lie beneath the altar of the Hodegetria Monastery of the Mother of God. A finger of St. Theodore is also in this same church.

The head of St. Blasios is in the *Kaloian* Monastery. (I have relics of St. Blasios and of other saints known to God.) In the *Philanthropos* Monastery is a nail of the Lord, venerable crosses, and relics of saints. The honorable nails of the Lord venerated by the saints are at *Pandopopte* Monastery. The relics of St. Diomedes are at the Golden Gate, and relics of St. Mamontos are nearby in his monastery.²⁴ Saints Karpos and Papylos are buried in a single tomb in a female monastery in that neighbourhood, where Constantine built the church. There are many saints' relics next door in the *Troandofilitsa* Monastery, including part of Elias' sheepskin. This monastery is richer than any of the other monasteries in Constantinople in terms of towns, villages, and gold. St. Stephen the Younger is buried in a monastery nearby, and on his feast day his head is brought to the prison where he was imprisoned.²⁵ The eparch [of the city] carries his head all night long accompanied by many people holding candles and singing "*Kyrie eleison*" [Greek: Lord have mercy]. Farther on is the church of the *metochion* [Greek: monastery daughter house] of the Mother of God *Evergetis*, where there is St. Andrew the Apostle's iron staff with a cross on it.²⁶ The Serbian prince Sava has been living in this monastery since he left the Holy Mountain.²⁷ A female monastery is located near this monastery. In this monastery ten martyrs are buried in a single tomb, with the body of a virgin princess on top; they were all martyred by the pagan emperor *Copronymos*.²⁸ The Monastery of St. Mokios is near this spot, with a large church in it. Buried under the altar in this church are Mokios and St. Samson; from the latter's tomb flows water. Not far from this monastery is the grave of Father Euphemios the Younger who walked about covered in iron, and farther on are the relics of Kyros and John. Next door is St. Luke's Church, from which all the dead are buried. St. Anastasios is in this church, but headless since his head was stolen. Nearby, St. Demetrios the layman is buried; his image is like that of St. Minos. The head and relics of St. Dios are in a men's monastery near there. Eudokimos the Younger is laid out as if alive in a silver coffin at a column next to a monastery of the Mother of God.²⁹

The great holy Prophet Daniel is buried at the Gates of Romanos, as are Saints Romanos and Niketas.³⁰ The holy virgin Anastasia is buried to one side of this place, at the city walls, and not far away lie the bodies of Saints Floros and Lauros. The church of St. Niketas is next to them, and the foot of St. Niketas is there. The St. George [Church] is quite near this church, and many punishments happen in these two churches. It was in

же служилъ, и многа исцѣления болнымъ отъ него бывають пиющимъ воду исъ потира отъ креста.

И отъ святаго Полиекта бываетъ исцѣленье злуницамъ и инымъ болѣзнемъ.

Странь жъ Апостольской церкви Всѣхъ есть церковъ, и ту глава святаго апостола Филипа и иныхъ святыхъ мощи.

А во Кузмидемьяновѣ монастырѣ Кузма Демьяновѣ главѣ и мощи ихъ. Тужъ и святая Еуфимья въ тѣлѣ лежитъ. Се же отъ сего 10-е лѣто явившися отъ земля плотию; не вѣдяху бо ея, кдѣ положена; святии бо отци таю Еуфимьею препрѣша еретиковъ.

А святая Феодосья въ женскомъ монастыри въ тѣлѣ лежитъ въ сребрянѣ гробѣ; и на переносъ выносятъ ю и на чловѣки поставляютъ, и болнымъ исцѣления отъ нея бывають. И оттолѣ близъ святы Исаіа пророкъ подъ трапезою лежитъ. Странь же того церкви есть святаго Лаврентия, и ту мощи его. А оттолѣ, горѣ идучи, святой Антоней отецъ лежитъ. А отъ него святой Павелъ бѣлецъ на Лугаревѣ. Святой Иоаннъ Кушникъ лежитъ у вратъ двора своего и крестъ его на желѣзнѣ пососѣ.

А у святаго Воскресения Господня на Черномъ великомъ уболѣ, идѣ же свѣща вожигается на великий день, тужъ лежитъ святы отецъ Ауксентей, иже жилъ на холмѣ со святымъ Стефаномъ Новымъ. Ту же и Маркель святой, ижъ ту церковъ поставилъ вельми гораздну и мудру, – преже святѣй Софии та церкви поставлена; тужъ страстии Господни жъ гвоздь и крови Господни и празднують во великую пятницу; во великую же пятницу не служатъ по имъ церквямъ, ни у святѣй Софии, но мыють церкви въ той день и бѣбиовомъ листвиемъ настилають во церкви.

На томъ же уболѣ святыхъ Маковѣй главы и мощи. А оттолѣ на уболѣ святаго Георгия святы Леонтий попъ руси лежитъ, въ тѣлѣ великъ чловѣкъ; той бо Леонтий 3-жъ во Ерусалимъ пѣшь ходилъ. Странь же того церковъ есть святаго Платона и ту мощи его и святы Иоаннъ Милостивый, и Боринъ ту въ тѣлѣ лежитъ. На томъ же уболѣ святаго Паула исповѣдника домъ; ту же его мощи подъ тряпезою и омофоръ подъ тряпезою, патрахиль его цѣлуютъ.

Конецъ же Рускаго убола церковъ святыхъ 40 мученикъ и мощи ихъ ту лежать (а инья мощи въ Севастии); и святаго Аникия глава ту жъ. И оттолѣ церковъ Прокопья святаго, и туто же лобъ его.

У Понтократара же монастыря у заднихъ вратъ святой Костянтинъ царь чернецъ въ тѣлѣ, аки живъ лежитъ, а у переднихъ вратъ святѣй Изаиле мощи. А странъ той церкви мученици Анастасии дѣвици ту лежитъ: всякое волхвованье и потворы открываетъ. А святой Варварѣ во церкви мощи ея и отъ сесцю шла кровь и млеко на землю, и учинилъ Богъ камень сочець. А у Благовѣщенья жъ святѣй Богородици Романъ пѣвецъ лежитъ. А оттолѣ святаго Василья монастырь, и ту патрахиль его и кость ручная святаго Семиона Богоприимца. И оттолѣ святаго Стефана первомученика церковъ, а въ ней есть Стефановъ лобъ, избить камении и нынѣ съшитъ есть, и иныхъ святыхъ мощи много ту. А у Плакоты же церковъ

this area that St. Theodore appeared in a trough to a nun who was kneading dough in the trough. St. Nikephoros, the patriarch of Constantinople, is also buried near here.

The Monastery of St. John the Forerunner is located on the way to Blachernai. People are allowed in three times a year – on the two feasts [of the patron saint] and on the Great Day [Easter] – and everyone is fed. Two hundred nuns live there, and they are never allowed to leave this monastery. This monastery possesses no villages, but [the nuns] are fed by God's beneficence and through the protection and intercession of St. John. Next to this monastery is the Monastery of St. George that houses the body of St. Theodore of Sykeon in a silver tomb; his cross is also there on the iron staff with which he walked to the mountain to pray to St. George. There also is the marble chalice with which he [Theodore] served [the liturgy]. Healing often comes from him to the sick, who drink water from the chalice and healing also comes from his cross.

From St. Polyeuktos comes healing for fevers and other maladies.

The head of St. Philip the Apostle and relics of other saints are in the Church of All [Saints], next to the Church of the Apostles. The heads and relics of Kosmas and Damian, as well as the body of St. Euphemia, are in the Kosmas and Damian Monastery. It was only ten years ago that Euphemia's remains were uncovered in the ground, for people did not know where she had been buried. It was with this Euphemia that the holy fathers menaced heretics.

The body of St. Theodosia reposes in a female monastery.³¹ It is in a silver casket that is carried in procession and laid upon sick people to cure them. The holy prophet Isaiah is buried under an altar not far from there, right next to the Church of St. Lawrence, where his relics are. The holy father Antony is buried farther up, and beyond this, in *Lugarevo*, Paul the layman [is buried]. St. John *Kalybites* is buried at the gate of his house, and his cross is [there] on an iron staff.

Holy father Auxentius, who lived on a hill with St. Stephen the Younger, is buried at the [Church of] the Resurrection of the Lord on Great Black Street; there the candles are lighted on Easter. St. Markellos, who built this exquisite large church, is also there. This church was built before the Church of St. Sophia [was built], and relics of the Lord's passion are there, namely, a nail and the Lord's blood. The patronal feast [of the church] is Good Friday. There are no services in the other churches on Good Friday, not even in St. Sophia. Rather on that day the churches are washed down and violet leaves are spread about in the churches.

On the same street are the heads and relics of the holy Maccabees. Not far from there on St. George Street lies the body of a tall man, St. Leontios, a Russian priest, who went to Jerusalem on foot three times. Next to here is the Church of St. Plato, where lie his relics, St. John the Merciful, and the body of Borinos. The house of St. Paul the Confessor is on the same street. His relics and omophorion are beneath the altar, but people kiss his stole.

At the end of Russian Street is the Church of the Forty Holy Martyrs. The martyrs' relics are there, but there are other relics in [the city of] Sebaste. Also found there is the head of St. Anikios. The nearby Church of St. Prokopios has his skull.

The body of St. Constantine, the emperor-monk, lies life-like at the rear gates of the Pantokrator Monastery, and the relics of St. Izaile are preserved at the front gates. Next to this church lies the Virgin Martyr Anastasia. She reveals every sort of witchcraft and sorcery. The relics of St. Barbara are in her church; blood and milk flowed from her breast

Гурия, Самона и Авива, ту же и мощи ихъ. И странъ того церкви святого Анисима, Паулова ученика; туто же и мощи его. А за Пятерицею мощи святого Иульяна и Кирика, и Улиты, и святыя Феклы. А оттолѣ святого Агафоника церковь, и мощи его ту жъ. Близъ же Плакоты церковь въ монастыри святого пророка Ильи, въ той же церкви множество мощей святыхъ по всей церкви: около поставляютъ столы на праздникъ, полны мощей святыхъ, развѣе во Троандофилицѣ монастыри такожь много. И есть же церковь велика святого Акакия, южь поставилъ Костянтинъ царь, туто же суть и мощи его и за олтаремъ той церкви святого Митрофана гробъ, перваго патриарха Царегородскаго, и ту патрахиль его и глава, а тѣла его, бивъ батоги, исжегль Купронимъ, поганый царь.

За Подромиемъ же церковь святого Сергия и Ивахка, и главы тою ту лежата; и рука Сергиева и кровь и святого Епимаха кровь тоже въ рацѣ.

У Подромия же церковь святыхъ Еуфимы; тужъ и гробъ ея тощъ, серебромъ окованъ. Въ той же церкви святый Георгий лежитъ. Сторонъ же о Безькоимитами святая мученица Иульяна въ тѣлѣ лежитъ. Въ бозници же святого Самсона посохъ его и патрахиль, и ризы его ту же, и сковрада, на ней же мученъ Арестъ святой. У святого же Анкудина святого Анофрия глава и Фомина нога цѣла (а лобъ святого апостола Фомы за Пятерицею).

А у святой же Софии близъ есть церкви на Подрумьемъ близъ святого Иоанна Богослова, ту же есть и камень, иже подложенъ былъ подъ главу во гробъ Иоанновъ; тойжъ камень и у мене есть. В той же церкви въ притворѣ святы Георгий лежитъ: той бо Георгий, мертву ему сущю и несому, и не дася нести мимо ту церковь, но ста на единомъ мѣстѣ, ту же и положенъ бысть, и много исцѣленъе болнымъ отъ него бываетъ.

А Христова странъ святой Софии, и тужъ множество народа приходяще Бога молятъ о спасенъи душъ своихъ и за всъ родъ христьяньский.

И иныхъ много святыхъ не писалъ есмь, иже суть дне во Царѣградѣ. Се же извону града. По Суду святой же Федоръ въ добѣ преобразилъ; ту же есть монастырь и церковь его. За Испигасомъ Олофтири мощи и кровь и святой отецъ Милостивый лежитъ въ тѣлѣ и у Спига. А въ Испигасѣ дне есть градъ церковь Бориса и Глѣба; и при мнѣ было прощенье; ту же во Испигасѣ вотаи явившеса Борисъ и Глѣбъ дали стороннику ногу. Въ Испигасѣ же во святѣй Богородици во церкви святы Иоаннъ написанъ на стенѣ, и выросло у него исъ чела трояндофиловъ цвѣтъ въ сыропусную недѣлю, аки сыръ бѣло, и шель всъ градъ на видѣнье и на поклоненье; стояло то знаменъе крестаобразно до Костяньтина и Елены.

Во Испигасѣ же церковь святого Николы греческая, и странъ ея жилъ Костянтинъ царь. И есть въ тѣлѣ явился цареву, и повелѣ патриарху царь внести его во градъ дне и создати церковь во имя его и монастырь; и есть тая церкви у Понтократяря монастыря. А той Костянтинъ первое жидовинъ былъ и крестился есть и наученъ отъ Стефана Новаго. Во Испигасѣ церковь есть его. Странъ же Испигаса и святѣй Софии мощей много лежитъ. А оттолѣ святая Анастия въ тѣлѣ лежитъ; та же замужемъ была, но милостынею и добрымъ житьемъ спасла есть. И

onto the ground and God made her breast stone. Romanos the Melode is buried at the Annunciation [Church] of the Mother of God, and St. Basil's stole is not far away in the monastery named after him, where also is the hand bone of St. Symeon the Receiver of God. The Church of St. Stephen the Protomartyr is nearby and holds Stephen's skull [house?], once smashed by a rock but now restored, and also the relics of many other saints. The relics of Gourias, Samon, and Habib are in their church at *Plakota*, and next to this church is the Church of St. Anesimos, which houses his relics; he was a disciple of Paul. The relics of St. Julian and of Kyrikos, Julitta, and St. Thekla are beyond *Pyateritsa*, near the church and relics of St. Agathonikos. Near *Plakota* there is a church in the Monastery of the Holy Prophet Elias where there is a large number of relics of saints all around the church. On the patronal feast of the church, tables covered with the relics of saints are placed all around the church. Only at the *Troandofilitsa* Monastery are there as many [relics of saints]. Emperor Constantine built the large Church of St. Akakios, where the saint's relics are. The grave of St. Metrophanes, the first patriarch of Constantinople, is behind the altar of this church; his stole and head are there. His body, however, was scourged with whips and burned by the pagan emperor *Copronymus*.

The Church of Sts. Sergius and Bacchus is beyond the Hippodrome; preserved there are their heads, Sergius' hand and blood, and, in a reliquary, the blood of St. Epimachos.

The Church of St. Euphemia at the Hippodrome contains her empty silver-covered tomb; St. George reposes in the same church. The body of the holy martyr Juliana is next to the "unsleeping" monastery, and the staff, stole, and vestments of St. Samson are in his chapel along with the grill on which St. Orestes was martyred. The head of St. Onouphrios and the complete leg of St. Thomas are at St. Akindynos [Church] (but the skull of St. Thomas the Apostle is outside *Pyateritsa*).

The Church of St. John the Theologian is at the Hippodrome, near St. Sophia. There one finds the rock that was placed under John's head in the tomb. (I have a piece of that rock.) St. George reposes in the narthex of this church, because when George died and was being borne away it was impossible to carry him beyond this church because he always stopped in [this] one place. Hence, he was laid there, and many of the sick receive cures from him.

Across from St. Sophia is a Christ [icon], where many people come to pray to God for the salvation of their souls and for all the Christian people.

There are many other holy things within [the city of] Constantinople that I have not described. The following, however, are outside the city. The Monastery and Church of St. Theodore are at the gulf where [the saint] appeared in an oak [tree]. Eleutherios' relics and blood are preserved beyond *Eis Pegas*, and it is at *Eis Pegas* that the body of the holy father [John?] the Merciful is found. There is a Church of Boris and Gleb inside the town of *Eis Pegas*, and while I was there a miracle occurred: Boris and Gleb appeared in *Eis Pegas* and gave their shirts to a naked wanderer. St. John is portrayed on the wall of the Church of the Holy Mother of God in *Eis Pegas*. During Cheesefare Week, a rose blossom, white as cheese, grew out of his forehead. The whole city came out to see and venerate it; it was cross-shaped and [the blossom] lasted until [the feast of] Constantine and Helena.

The Greek Church of St. Nicholas in *Eis Pegas* is next to where the Emperor Constantine lived. After [Nicholas] appeared to the emperor in the flesh, the emperor ordered the patri-

есть церковь, а въ ней 7 апостоловъ лежить, Урванова чадь, а тая церковь преже Царяграда поставлена, и суть черныѣ. И странъ того женескъ монастырь святаго Якова перскаго; ту лежить святая Мария дѣвица въ тѣлѣ и поставляютъ ю на человекѣки. И оттолѣ есть церковь святыя Ирины велика, ту же и мощи ея лежать. А оттолѣ же въ женскомъ монастырѣ Ирииньина глава.

А во трудоватицѣхъ за Испигасомъ на горѣ святой Зотикъ лежить. Тому бо Зотику повелѣлъ царь полаты здати, и онъ же возмя злата и раздалъ я нищимъ. Царь же повелѣлъ его привязати ко хвостомъ двѣма конема, да его разнесутъ; она же разомъчавша по полю и пришедшеста ста на единомъ мѣстѣ въ лѣсѣ; ту же и положенъ бысть; и церковь учиниша трудоватымъ и хромымъ; ту же и храмы поставиша; дають милостыню хрестьяне и царевѣ. Отъ него же Лазарь, писецъ иконный; той бо первое написалъ во святой Софѣии во Царѣградѣ во олтари святую Богородицу, держащую Христа и 2 агела. Отъ того жъ монастырь: святы апостоль Ананья лежить; тужъ глава и мощи его. А оттолѣ святой Рока коръ. А въ Мачюковѣ монастырѣ святы Насонъ лежить.

А оттолѣ монастырь есть Кирсака царя святой Михаилъ и въ томъ монастыри есть икона, а на ней написанъ Христосъ, къ нему же пошелъ былъ человекъ ротѣ не по правдѣ, и обратилъ Христосъ лице своего отъ человекѣка того на страну. А оттолѣ же святой Данилъ столпникъ на горѣ въ тѣлѣ лежить. А по Данилѣ на томъ же столпѣ сидѣлъ Акакий и той тужъ лежить во церкви. Въ той же церкви лежить блаженная княгини Брачиславля Аксины. А оттолѣ святии отци 300 и 18, туто жъ и мощи ихъ. А оттолѣ, въ лѣсѣ идуче, монастырь есть Иверьскый, въ немъ лежить святаго Илария глава, долѣ же на Судѣ. Въ мужескомъ монастыри святая София дѣвица царевна въ тѣлѣ лежить; отъ иного бо злаго царя лежала сохранена 100 лѣтъ и явилася потомъ. А оттолѣ святой Тарасей патриархъ въ женскомъ монастыри лежить.

Есть же монастырь за Испигасомъ на горѣ святая Богородица; на столпѣ чернецъ сидѣлъ и поставилъ монастырь той. А сель нѣтъ у него; и явилася игумену святая Богородица и повелѣла даяти милостыню, и игумень той и умирая написалъ грамоту: даяти милостыню, донележе и монастырь стоитъ; и нынѣ дають всякому человекѣку хлѣбъ и вариво и по чаши вина; всякъ иже русинъ идетъ во Иерусалимъ или изъ Ерусалима, то ту по вся дни ядятъ, и Гръци, кто ни приидеть, ѣсть хлѣбъ, а святая Богородица болѣ имъ опеть даетъ.

А до святая же Пятница до Царяграда день пѣшему идти. А вне Златыхъ вратъ святой Никола пробилобъ; и покована вся икона сребромъ и позлачена, а коли царь придесть, тогда открываютъ сребро и целуетъ царь во главу, отнюду же кровь шла, и паки покрываютъ сребромъ. Не дошедшее же Пятници мало, святая Еуфимья въ тѣлѣ лежить и святая Пятница въ тѣлѣ лежить, и носятъ на переносѣ. Отъ нею святая Елена дѣвица лежить.

У Калиполя же святы отецъ Ефимъ лежить. А въ Хрусополии святой Василей Новый лежить. Той бо Василей святой о страшнѣмъ судѣ и о дни томъ глаголетъ:

arch to bring him [Nicholas] into the city and to found a church and monastery in his name. The church is located at the Pantokrator Monastery. This same Constantine had originally been a Jew, but he was baptized and instructed by Stephen the Younger. His church is in *Eis Pegas*. Many relics can be found near *Eis Pegas* (and near St. Sophia). Nearby [*Eis Pegas*] lies the body of St. Anastasia; she was married, but she was saved by her charity and by her moral life. The seven apostles who were children of Ourban are buried in a church [there]. This church was built before Constantinople [was founded] and there are monks there. Next to it is the female monastery of St. James the Persian; it holds the body of St. Mary the Virgin that is laid upon people [seeking cures]. The large Church of St. Eirene, which holds the saint's relics, is nearby, and Eirene's head is in a female monastery in that same area.

St. Zotikos is buried in a hospital on a mountain beyond *Eis Pegas*. An emperor once ordered Zotikos to build a palace, but instead he took the money and shared it among the poor. The emperor then ordered him to be tied to the tails of two horses, so that he would be dismembered. But the horses were inspired, and once they had dragged Zotikos across a field, they both came to the same spot in the forest and stopped. The saint was buried there, a church was established to serve the sick and the crippled, huts were erected, and both members of the imperial family and [simple] Christians distributed alms. Nearby to here is buried the icon-painter Lazaros, who originally painted the Holy Mother of God holding Christ, and also the two angels, in the sanctuary of St. Sophia in Constantinople. The holy apostle Ananias is buried in the nearby monastery, where his head and relics are kept. Farther on, St. Phokas the Innkeeper is buried, and St. Nason reposes in the *Machiukov* Monastery.

The St. Michael Monastery of Emperor *Kyr* [Greek: Lord] Isaac is near [the *Machiukov* Monastery]. In the St. Michael monastery is a painted icon of Christ to which a man once came speaking untruths and the Christ [in the icon] turned His face away from him. The body of St. Daniel the Stylite reposes on a hill in that same area, and Akakios, who lived on the pillar after Daniel, is also buried there in the church. This is the same church where the blessed Princess Xenia Brachislavna reposes. Relics of the three hundred and eighteen holy fathers [of the Council of Nicea] are also in that neighborhood while the Iberian Monastery, where St. Hilarion's head reposes, is further on, toward the forest; the gulf is still further on. The body of St. Sophia, the virgin daughter of an emperor, is housed in a male monastery; it [the body] lay concealed for a hundred years because the succeeding emperor was evil; it [the body] was only discovered later. Further on, Patriarch St. Tarasios reposes in a female monastery.

A monastery of the Holy Mother of God stands on a mountain beyond *Eis Pegas*. This monastery was founded by a monk who had lived on a column. He owned no villages, but because the holy Mother of God had appeared to him as he lay dying and ordered him to give alms, this prior wrote a letter counseling the monks to give alms as long as the monastery stood. They still give bread, gruel, and a cup of wine to all who come. All the Russians going to Jerusalem or [coming back] from Jerusalem eat there every day, and Greeks who are not travelers also come to eat the bread, but still the Holy Mother of God gives them even more in return [than they give in alms].

и егда Богъ сядеть на судъ воздати комуждо противу дѣломъ; много бо повѣдаеть, какъ убо прияти мзду праведнымъ и грѣшнымъ мученье.

Да потщимся, братья, въ животѣ будущаго сего свѣта убѣжати страшныхъ мукъ тѣхъ и поискати вѣчнаго живота, идѣ же быти со Христомъ и со архангелы весельемъ и со всѣми святыми радоватися; мы же, оставлеше всю злобу дьяволю и связавшеса любовию, и порѣвнуимъ тѣхъ святыхъ житию, ихъ же память есть написана здѣ: ти бо святии челоуѣци же были, якожъ и мы, но попраша всяку злобу житя сего и во умѣты вся мнѣша; мы же оставимъ та, отъ нихъ же хоцемъ разлучитися, и взищемъ тѣхъ, идѣ же ны подти радующися къ живому Богу въ жизнь вѣчную, не имущу конца.

Се же на увиденья и на память и на молитву благовѣрнымъ челоуѣкомъ еже есть во Царѣградѣ, по Суду, извну града: отъ многа ничто святыхъ мало написахъ или во градѣхъ, или во святой Софии и во Апостольской церкви, иже паки во Царѣградѣ.

Мануила царь испытывалъ по всей области греческой и повелѣлъ звати всѣхъ поповъ и давати имъ по реперу и манастырь. Колико есть отъ конецъ Суда и до другаго конца? Отъ Греческаго моря и до Русскаго моря есть поповъ сорокъ тысящъ, акромѣ манастырьскихъ, а монастыревъ 14 тысящъ, а у святой Софии 3 тысящи поповъ: пять жъ сотъ ругу емлютъ, а полтретьи тысящи не емлютъ; и егда же умереть попъ отъ пятисотъ, то отъ полутретьи тысящи входитъ попъ на мѣсто его, и спасаются служащей во церкви Богомъ и святою Богородицею, славяще святую Троицу Отца, и Сына, и святаго Духа купно и нераздѣлимо и хваляще пречистую Богородицу, тоя бо ради спасени бываемъ вси правовѣрнии хрестьяне, и получаютъ вѣчную жизнь и нынѣ и присно и въ вѣки ввѣкомъ, аминь.

The journey on foot between St. Paraskeve and Constantinople takes a day. St. Nicholas “Broken-Skull” is outside the Golden Gate, and that whole icon is covered with gilded silver. Whenever the emperor comes, the silver [cover] is opened and the emperor kisses [the icon] on the head where the blood flowed, and then the silver [cover] is closed again. The body of St. Euphemia is located a little before one reaches Paraskeve; the body of St. Paraskeve, which is carried in procession, reposes there [at Paraskeve]. St. Helena the Virgin is buried [still] farther on.

The holy father Euphemios is buried at Gallipoli, while St. Basil the Younger reposes at Chrysopolis. It was this St. Basil who spoke thus about the Last Judgment: “When God sits in judgment, He will give to each man according to his works, for He will announce many things and then shall the righteous receive their reward and the sinful their punishment.”³¹

Therefore, brothers, let us see to our future life while in this world and flee the temptations of passion, and rather seek eternal life where we shall be with Christ and the archangels in gladness, rejoicing with all the saints. United in love, let us imitate the lives of those saints whose memory is here recorded and leave behind all of the devil’s evil. For these saints were men like us, but they scorned every evil of this life, considering it all as trash. Let us then leave behind those things from which we wish to be separated and rather seek those things that will enable us to go rejoicing before the living God into the eternal life that has no end.

These things are what exists for the righteous to see, to remember, and to [inspire] prayer in Constantinople, along the gulf, and outside the city. But, I have described almost nothing of the multitude of sacred things in the palaces, in St. Sophia, and in the Apostles Church, or even in Constantinople.

Emperor Manuel [I Komnenos (1143–80)] sought out all the priests all over the Greek land and ordered each to be called and given a *hyperperon* [Byzantine coin] and similarly the monasteries. How many are there from one end of the gulf to the other? From the Greek Sea to the Russian Sea, there are forty thousand priests, besides the monastic [priests] and fourteen thousand monasteries. Three thousand priests serve at St. Sophia; five hundred of them receive a stipend, but two thousand five hundred do not receive [one]. Now when a priest of that five hundred dies, a priest from the two thousand five hundred [group] takes his place. They are saved by God and the holy Mother of God as they officiate in the church, praising the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, united and undivided, praising the all-pure Mother of God because of whom all true believing Christians will be saved and receive eternal life, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Commentary

1. This may have been displayed in the shrine of the Holy Well.²
2. Probably the *skeuophylakion* to the northeast of Hagia Sophia.
3. The visit to Constantinople took place in either 945 or 957.
4. This may be located in the northeast exedra.³

² Majeska 1984: 224–25, esp. 225 n. 136.

³ Majeska 1984: 227–28.

5. A weeping icon of the Mother of God is reported in a number of pilgrimage accounts.⁴
6. Located in the northeast corner of the naos.⁵
7. This may be located in the northeast exedra.⁶
8. This is the northwestmost free-standing column in the naos of Hagia Sophia. Gregory the Wonderworker was a third-century bishop from Neocaesarea in the Pontus. He was renowned for his numerous miracles.⁷
9. This icon may have been set above the imperial doors on the west wall of the naos.⁸
10. The celestial doors are the imperial doors that lead from the narthex into the naos of the church. A mosaic above these doors may be the reference here.
11. Numerous versions of this story exist. Here, the archangel Michael offers his protection to St. Sophia as he speaks to a youth responsible for guarding the tools used in the construction of the building. This conversation is normally placed in the vestibule at the southwest of the St. Sophia.⁹
12. For a summary discussion of this area see Majeska 1984: 223–26.
13. The Mother of God of the Pharos within the southern part of the Great Palace. Nicholas Mesarites offers a contemporary account of the numerous relics found at this site.¹⁰
14. The church is also known as the Nea Ekklesia or New Church.¹¹
15. Majeska 1984: 333–37.
16. There was a distinct church of St. James at the Chalkoprateia. This church also contained the relics of the holy innocents mentioned here.¹²
17. These baskets are usually identified with the porphyry column in the Forum of Constantine.
18. Cf. Talbot 1994: 103–12.
19. This monastery was beyond the walls of the city near the Blachernai complex.
20. The Stoudios Monastery of St. John the Forerunner.¹³
21. Majeska 1984: 366–71.
22. Majeska 1984: 299–306.
23. Majeska 1984: 289–95.
24. Majeska 1984: 313–14.
25. Probably the Dios monastery.¹⁴
26. Majeska 1984: 315–16.

4 Majeska 1984: 215–16.

5 Majeska 1984: 210.

6 Majeska 1984: 227–28.

7 Majeska 1984: 213–15.

8 Majeska 1984: 211.

9 See Majeska 1984: 200–06.

10 See Klein 2006; see also the contribution of M. Featherstone, I.6.6 in this volume.

11 Majeska 1984: 247–50.

12 Majeska 1984: 231.

13 Majeska 1984: 283–88.

14 Majeska 1984: 279 n. 81.

27. Sabbas (1174–1236) was the youngest son of the Serbian ruler Stefan Nemanja and is a fundamental Serbian saint. This visit to Constantinople is attested in 1235 (Majeska 1984: 316).
 28. The site is the convent of St. Aninas. Constantine V (r.741–775) is the emperor referenced by the term Copronymos. The saints are those who reputedly defended the icon of Christ at the Chalke Gate in 730.¹⁵
 29. Majeska 1984: 316–18.
 30. Majeska 1984: 326–29.
 31. Majeska 1984: 346–51.
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¹⁵ Majeska 1984: 282.

I.5.4 Author Unknown (late 1310s)

History of Mār Yahballāhā and of Rabban Ṣawmā

THOMAS A. CARLSON

Ed.: P. G. Borbone, ed., *Tash'ītha d-Mār Yahballāhā wa-d-Rabban Ṣawmā* (Raleigh, N.C., 2009)

MSS.:¹ London, British Library, Or. 3636 (dated 29 November 1888)

Cambridge, Mass., Andover-Harvard Theological Library, Ms. 327 (copied 1885?)²

Other Translations: E. A. W. Budge, *The Monks of Kùblāi Khān, Emperor of China, or The History of the Life and Travels of Rabban Sāwmā, Envoy and Plenipotentiary of the Mongol Khāns to the Kings of Europe, and Markôs Who as Mār Yahbh-Allāhā III Became Patriarch of the Nestorian Church in Asia* (London, 1928); J. A. Montgomery, *The History of Yaballaha III, Nestorian Patriarch, and of his Vicar, Bar Sauma, Mongol Ambassador to the Frankish Courts at the End of the Thirteenth Century*, Records of Civilization: Sources and Studies 8 (New York, 1927) (English); P. G. Borbone, *Un ambassadeur du Khan Argun en Occident: Histoire de Mar Yahballaha III et de Rabban Sauma (1281–1317)*, Peuples et cultures de l'Orient, transl. E. Alexandre (Paris, 2008) [transl. of Borbone, *Storia di Mar Yahballaha e di Rabban Sauma*, see below]; J. B. Chabot, *Histoire de Mar Jabalaha III, patriarche des Nestoriens (1281–1317), et du moine Rabban Ṣauma, ambassadeur du roi Argoun en Occident (1287), traduite de syriaque e annotée* (Paris, 1895) (French); P. G. Borbone, *Storia di Mar Yahballaha e di Rabban Sauma: Un orientale in Occidente ai tempi di Marco Polo* (Torino, 2000) (Italian); A. Toepel, *Die Mönche des Kublai Khan: Die Reise der Pilger Mar Yahballaha und Rabban Sauma nach Europa* (Darmstadt, 2008) (German); N. V. Pigulevskaya, *Istoriya Mar Yabalakhi III i Rabban Saumy: Iccledovaniye, perevod s siriyskogo i primechaniya* (Moscow, 1958) (Russian).

Significance

This text presents a description of some of the most prominent relics and *loca sancta* in Constantinople during the early reign of Andronikos II (r.1283–1328) from a Christian perspective that originates further to the east.

¹ Not consulted.

² According to Goshen-Gottstein 1979: 116. The editor of a 2009 critical edition was unable to consult it: Borbone 2009: 4.

The Author

The text is anonymous, yet it provides certain clues as to its authorship. Borbone identifies the author as a very high-ranking cleric of the Church of the East (known to the Greeks and others as “Nestorians”)³ who was comfortable in both Syriac and Persian literary cultures.⁴ Borbone had earlier argued that the work was likely completed between 1317 and 1319.⁵

Murre-van den Berg has plausibly proposed an identification of the author with Timothy II, the successor of Mār Yahballāhā III as Katholikos Patriarch of the East.⁶ If this identification is correct, the author was earlier known as Yawsep, the Eastern Syriac Metropolitan of Mosul and later of Erbil, both in northern Iraq.⁷ In 1310, he failed to deflect a punitive massacre of the Christians of Erbil by the Mongols, in response to a revolt within the city.⁸ Elected Katholikos Patriarch in 1318, he immediately issued reformist canons to centralize the Church of the East and prevent factionalism.⁹ The date of his death is not known, though it must have occurred between 1328, the date of the latest extant manuscript colophon to name him as reigning patriarch, and 1336, when his successor was elected.¹⁰ He is also known as the author of an undated work on the seven sacraments.¹¹

Text and Context

Rabban Ṣawmā is known primarily from a double *vita* devoted to him and to his more famous disciple, who became Mār Yahballāhā III, Katholikos Patriarch of the Church of the East. Various diplomatic documents associated with his mission to Western Europe also name him.¹² His name is problematic, since the biography which is by far the most informative source for his life names him Ṣawmā (“fasting”), but all other sources, including non-Syriac sources, assign him the more usual Syriac name Bar Ṣawmā (“son of

3 See Brock 1996.

4 Borbone 2006: 103–04.

5 Borbone 2000: 16–17.

6 Murre-van den Berg 2006: 392–93; Murre-van den Berg’s suggestion was accepted and supported by Borbone 2006: 107.

7 Murre-van den Berg 2006: 393.

8 Murre-van den Berg 2006: 392.

9 Assemani 1725: 567–72; ed Mai 1838: 260–68.

10 Wilmshurst 2000: 18, 391.

11 To the citations given by Murre-van den Berg (2006: 393 n. 86) should be added the partial edition by Kadicheeni: Timothy II 1980.

12 The most complete collection of references to diplomatic documents is provided by Chabot 1894, with partial English transl. given by Moule 1930: 112–15; he is also mentioned with a physical description in Gismondi 1896: 123. These sources do not include additional biographical details, however, and so all biographical details are taken from the *History* itself.

fasting/Lent”).¹³ Ṣawmā was a Christian monk of eastern Turkic origin,¹⁴ born in what would later be known as Beijing. In the late 1260s or 1270s he traveled with a younger disciple on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem,¹⁵ although because of the political instability in the Eastern Mediterranean at the time, they never made it farther than Iraq. Rabban Ṣawmā became “visitor general” (*sā’ōrā gawāyā*), a type of ecclesiastical executive, for his younger traveling companion when the latter was elected Eastern Syriac Metropolitan for northern China in c.1279, but since they were prevented by intra-Mongol warfare from returning to the East, they remained in Iraq. The new Metropolitan was elected Katholikos Patriarch of the East in November 1281. In 1287 Rabban Ṣawmā was sent on a diplomatic mission by Arghun, the Mongol Ilkhan, to secure a military alliance between the Mongols and European Christians against the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt. Rabban Ṣawmā died in Baghdad in 1294.

The text of the *History of Mār Yahballāhā and Rabban Ṣawmā* states that during his diplomatic mission on behalf of the Mongol rulers of Iran Rabban Ṣawmā kept a travel diary in Persian. This lost source formed the basis for the Syriac account of the mission in the *History*. The Syriac account of Rabban Ṣawmā’s travels, including the description of Constantinople discussed here, is primarily concerned with ecclesiastical tourism, identifications of relics and saints, the people before whom Rabban Ṣawmā celebrated the Eucharist, and theological discussion. It is unknown, of course, whether these were likewise the emphasis of the original Persian travel diary, or whether these details have been selected from among others.¹⁶

¹³ See the sources cited in n. 12 above. Three hypotheses suggest themselves to resolve the issue. It is possible that his name was Bar Ṣawmā, which in the course of the long transmission of the *History* was corrupted to Ṣawmā. Because Ṣawmā is not typically used as a name, however, it is unlikely that this would have been corrupted in the same way in every instance of the name, but would rather have been quickly fixed. The second possibility is that his name was Ṣawmā, which was regularized to Bar Ṣawmā by other sources in light of standard Syriac usage. This faces the objection that the name is given as Bar Ṣawmā even in sources such as papal correspondence, written by westerners with no knowledge of Syriac, for which the traveler himself would have been a primary informant as to his name. The third hypothesis, perhaps the most likely, is that (Bar) Ṣawmā himself used both forms of the name.

¹⁴ His contemporary Gregory Bar ‘Ebroyo describes him as Uyghur see Bar Hebraeus 1877: 451; Bar Hebraeus 1890: 578; Bar Hebraeus 1932: I.492. For a presentation of the evidence, with citations of earlier arguments see Tang 2011: 38–40.

¹⁵ Their pilgrimage to Jerusalem is said to have been commanded by Kubilai Qa’an, the Mongol great khan, by Gismondi 1896: 123 and Bar Hebraeus 1877: 451.

¹⁶ Rossabi 2010: 101–02.

Translation

Rabban Ṣawmā departed, and some honored priests and deacons of the Cell¹ went with him. He arrived in the land of the Romans² on the near shores of the sea, and he saw the church that is there. He went down into a ship, and his companions with him. There were more than three hundred souls in the ship, and every day he was comforting them with the message about the faith. Most of those in the ship were Romans, and because of the discretion of his speech they were honoring him greatly. After some days, he arrived at the great city of Constantinople, and before they entered, he sent two young men to the king's court to announce that the ambassador of King Arghun had come. The king commanded some people to go out to meet him, and to bring them in with pomp and honor. When Rabban Ṣawmā had entered, he set aside for him a house, or rather a court, for his dwelling. After he had rested, he went to the king *basileus*.³ After he greeted him, the king asked him, "How are you, after the toils of the sea and the weariness of the road?" He answered, "With the sight of a Christian king, the weariness vanished and the toil departed, for I greatly longed for the sight of your kingdom. May our Lord establish it!"

After they were refreshed with eating and drinking, he requested from the king that he might see the churches and shrines⁴ of the patriarchate, and the relics of the saints that were there. The king entrusted Rabban Ṣawmā to the princes of his kingdom, and they showed him everything that was there. First, he entered the great church of *Agia Sophia*,⁵ which has three hundred and sixty gates,⁶ all of them finished with marble stones. As for the dome of the altar, no one could describe it to someone who had not seen it, and communicate the quality of its height and greatness. In the church there is an image of Lady Mary, which Luke the Evangelist painted.⁷ He also saw the hand of John the Baptist,⁸ also the relics of Lazarus and of Mary Magdalene, and also the stone that was placed against the tomb of our Lord, when Joseph the councilor took him down from the cross. Mary wept upon that stone, and until the present the place of her tears is moist. However much that moistness is wiped off, it gets moist again. He also saw the stone waterpot in which our Lord transformed water into wine in Cana of Galilee, also the coffin of one of the female saints⁹ (which was brought out every year and every sick person who was placed under it was healed), and the coffin of St. John Chrysostom.¹⁰ He saw the stone upon which Simon Peter sat when the rooster crowed, also the tomb of the victorious Emperor Constantine, which is something red, and also the tomb of Justinian, which is green stone. And also the tombs of the three hundred and eighteen fathers,¹¹ which are all placed in one great church, and their bodies had not decomposed, because they confirmed the faith. And also many shrines of the holy fathers, and he saw many talismans,¹² and an image which is composed from bronze and stone.¹³

Thus Rabban Ṣawmā entered into the presence of the king *basileus* and said, "May the King live forever! I am receiving the grace of our Lord because I was deemed worthy to see these sanctuaries. But now, if the king permits, I will depart to complete the command of King Arghun, for the command is that I enter the land of the Franks."¹⁴ Then, the king treated him well. Gifts of gold and of silver he gave to him.

And from there he departed to go down to the sea. He saw on the shore of the sea a monastery of the Romans.¹⁵ In their treasury were placed two silver reliquaries, in one of which was the head of John Chrysostom, and the other of that Lord Pope who baptized the Emperor Constantine. He went down to the sea...

Commentary

1. This is the standard Syriac way to refer to the household of the Katholikos Patriarch of the Church of the East.
2. It is unclear whether this vague phrase refers to Trebizond, to the Seljuk Sultanate of Rūm, or to Byzantine territory in Anatolia. Rabban Ṣawmā's subsequent reference to "the sight of a Christian king" may imply that he did not earlier see the ruler of Trebizond.
3. Although unnamed, the Byzantine Emperor at this time was Andronikos II (r.1283–1328).
4. The Syriac term *shkhīnāthā* can include relics, reliquaries, shrines, or tombs.
5. E.A.W. Budge translated the Syriac as ἡ Σωφία, but since intervocalic γ became pronounced -y- it could represent *Agia* (cf. Turkish "Aya").¹⁷
6. Although the Hagia Sophia did not have so many gates, Sebastian Brock cites numerous travelers who were apparently told that it did.¹⁸
7. Sebastian Brock suggested that the icon, although typically kept in the Hodegetria Monastery, might have been viewed in the imperial palace.¹⁹
8. Sebastian Brock suggested that the relic had not yet been moved to Peribleptos monastery.²⁰
9. Sebastian Brock speculates that the female saint might have been St. Euphemia or St. Theodosia.²¹
10. Among the Church of the East, John Chrysostom was well known, as was Constantine, conventionally titled "the victorious Emperor." The reference to Justinian is more surprising, since Eastern Syriac tradition did not much remember him. It is noteworthy that these are the only names of non-biblical saints recorded by Rabban Ṣawmā, and two were already well known to the Christians of Iraq. Sebastian Brock follows Jean-Baptiste Chabot in presuming the tomb of John Chrysostom was empty, but Wassilios Klein argues that in fact it was occupied.²²
11. "The 318 Fathers" is the typical Syriac phrase for referring to the Council of Nicaea in 325. According to Sebastian Brock, a Russian pilgrim who visited in 1200 likewise mentioned the remains of all 318 bishops from the Council in a church in Constantinople.²³

¹⁷ Budge 1928: 168.

¹⁸ Brock 1969: 247–48.

¹⁹ Brock 1969: 248–49.

²⁰ Brock 1969: 249–50.

²¹ Brock 1969: 250–51.

²² Brock 1969: 251, Klein 1995: 228–29, respectively.

²³ Brock 1969: 251–52.

12. Sebastian Brock describes figurines thought to possess magical properties in Constantinople.²⁴
13. The Syriac term *Ṣūrtā* is commonly used for both icons and statues, so it is unclear which is intended. Brock suggests it may refer to a statue upon a column.²⁵
14. In common with Arabic and Persian authors, Syriac authors called all Western Europeans “Franks.”
15. Sebastian Brock demonstrated that the term “Romans” is used inconsistently in the *History*, sometimes to refer to Greeks and sometimes to Latins.²⁶ The reference in this instance is unclear, in part because the monastery alluded to is not precisely identified.

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24 Brock 1969: 252.

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I.5.5 ‘Alī ibn Abī Bakr al-Harawī (d.611 AH/1215 CE)

Description of Constantinople, from the *Guidebook to Places of Pilgrimage* (*Kitāb al-ishārāt ilā ma’rifat al-ziyārāt*)

CECILIA PALOMBO

Ed.: J. Sourdel-Thomine, *Abū’l-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Harawī, mort à Alep en 611/1215: Guide des lieux de pèlerinage* (Damascus, 1953)¹

MSS:² Paris, BNF Arabe 5975 (697 AH/1298 CE)

Cambridge, CUL Qq. 92/1 (692 AH/1202 CE)

Istanbul, Eyüp Library, Beşir Ağa n. 109 (855 AH/1455 CE)

Cairo, NL Taymur n. 152 (977 AH/1569 CE)

Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Landberg n. 534 (1050 AH/1640 CE)

Oxford, Bodleian Library, E. D. Clark n. 17 (s. XV)

Damascus, al-Zāhiriyya Library n. 20 (1086 AH/1675–76 CE)

Cairo, Buldān Taymūr Library n. 63 (1310 AH/1892 CE)

Other Translations: J. Meri, *A Lonely Wayfarer’s Guide to Pilgrimage* (Princeton, N.J., 2004) (English);³ J. Sourdel-Thomine, *Guide des lieux de pèlerinage* (Damascus, 1957) (French)⁴

Significance

The selected passages offer access to the particular perspective of a Muslim learned traveler on Constantinople’s religious monuments, including monuments that he perceived as “spiritually charged.” It refers to Islamic holy sites and mosques in the city, and contains interesting information on the location and toponyms of ancient buildings. Lastly, it preserves traces of local beliefs related to buildings and shrines, including Saint Sophia.

The Author

‘Alī ibn Abī Bakr Taqī al-Dīn al-Harawī was a renowned Muslim ascetic, traveler, and diplomat.⁵ He was active between the late twelfth and the early thirteenth centuries at

1 A new critical edition, almost identical with Sourdel-Thomine’s, was published by Nawwāf ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Jaḥmah 2012.

2 These are the main manuscripts consulted by both Sourdel-Thomine and al-Jaḥmah. The present contribution was based on the critical edition, manuscripts were not consulted; for more witnesses and details on the manuscript tradition see Sourdel-Thomine 1953: iii–xxviii. Cf. Brockleman 1937–49: I/629–30, S.I/879; al-Ghunaym 2006.

3 Meri 2004 includes the Arabic text, according to Sourdel-Thomine’s edition, with only minor changes.

4 Partial translations can be found in Izeddin 1965: 86–88; Schéfer 1881: 588–609 (on Constantinople, p. 588–89). Some excerpts from the *Kitāb al-ziyārāt* are also included, in Le Strange 1890.

5 Sourdel-Thomine 2002; Sourdel-Thomine 1957: xi–xxviii; Meri 2006: 1/313; Meri 2002: xx–xxvi.

the court of the Abbasid caliph al-Nāṣir (r.1180–1225) and at those of several Ayyubid rulers, notably of Salāḥ al-Dīn (Saladin, r.1174–93), al-Malik al-Manṣūr (r.1198–1201) and al-Malik al-Zāhir Ghāzī (r.1186–1216). He was born in Mosul (modern Iraq) around the mid-twelfth century, although his name indicates that his family was originally from Herat (modern Afghanistan). A series of diplomatic missions, as well as his own scholarly and spiritual interests, led him to travel extensively in the Near East and the Mediterranean, from the center of the Abbasid caliphate in Iraq, to Iran, Arabia, Ayyubid-ruled Syria and Egypt, the Crusader states, North Africa, Norman Sicily and the Byzantine lands. In 1179 or 1180 he visited Constantinople, where, according to his own words, he was warmly welcomed by the emperor Manuel I (r.1143–80).⁶

Two works on political and military matters are attributed to al-Harawī, providing a precious inside look at the political tangle of the late-twelfth century in the Near East and the international struggle for the control of the Holy Land.⁷ More famously, he was the author of a travel book, an “itinerary” aimed at providing indications concerning notable shrines, tombs, reliquaries and mosques – monuments of religious significance collectively defined as *ziyārāt*. He died in Aleppo in the year 611 of the Islamic calendar (1215). His own mausoleum is decorated with tomb inscriptions and it was soon turned into a notable *mazār*: so the mausoleum bears witness to this author’s zeal for holy shrines.⁸

Text and Context

The *Kitāb al-ziyārāt* is a concise guidebook for pilgrims, a travel diary, and a window onto popular beliefs and customs in twelfth-century Mediterranean society. The book, based on notes that the author took in the course of his peregrinations, records his impressions of the sites he visited, to the benefit of future travelers, namely Muslim scholars and pilgrims. The “guide” includes descriptions of non-Muslim towns, monuments and devotional objects, in Islamic and Christian lands alike.⁹

In spite of its focus on pilgrimage sites, stylistically the *Kitāb al-ziyārāt* may be included in the genre of the *riḥla*, Arabic travel literature; it is, in fact, somewhat distant in style and content from classical “pilgrim guides.”¹⁰ As such, it abides by the conventions and register of the genre of *riḥla*, repeating some traditional themes and drawing on the accounts of previous travelers. This formal respect for the pre-existing tradition is a constant of medieval Arabic literature, and a key element to bear in mind when reading Islamic accounts of Constantinople. These, in fact, are often interdependent and linked to

6 al-Harawī, *Kitāb al-ziyārāt*: 56.

7 Meri 2006: 313.

8 Sourdél-Thomine 1957: xiv; a French translation of these epitaphs can be found in Sauvaget 1933: 116.

9 Al-Harawī’s description of Islamic, Jewish, and Christian monuments of Palestine, for instance, is discussed in Rosen Ayalon 1999: 326–46; see also the collection of sources transl. by Le Strange: 1890. More generally, for the importance of this book for the “sacred geography” of the Near East, see Meri 2002: 143–44, 251–52; Meri, “Ziyāra.”

10 Meri 2004: xxix–xxx; Meri 2009: 141–61; Sourdél-Thomine 1957: xxviii–xlii; cf. also Netton, “Riḥla,” and Maqbul, “Geography.”

one another by subtle cross-references. Indeed, although several Arabic Islamic descriptions of Constantinople have survived, not many Muslim authors seem to have actually visited the city in person.¹¹ In the *Kitāb al-ziyārāt*, one might thus find echoes of the famous description of the Byzantine capital attributed to the war prisoner Hārūn ibn Yaḥyā, who saw it in the ninth century, as recorded by the tenth-century geographer Ibn Rusta; in turn, al-Harawī's work would serve as an authoritative basis for later Arabic portrayals of the city.¹² In this sense, each account should be seen as the result of careful balancing between traditionalism and originality, respect of topical images and individual interests, the example provided by earlier authors and the effect of concrete historical changes.¹³

For the period treated in the present volume, al-Harawī's represents one of the most detailed Islamic accounts of Constantinople's monuments.¹⁴ His contribution to our appreciation of twelfth-century Byzantine art is unfortunately constrained by an overall sense of "sketchiness"; in fact, al-Harawī had it in mind to devote a separate book to the description of remarkable monuments and *mirabilia* (*'ajā'ib*), distinct from *ziyārāt*. When talking of Byzantine buildings, he repeatedly referred to the plan of this future book, listing only briefly the many topics that he intended to discuss in more detail. This second work, however, has not been identified; in fact, it is possible that it was never written.¹⁵ In addition, al-Harawī complains in the *Kitāb al-ziyārāt* about the loss of his original travel notes, which were partly lost during a shipwreck on his way back from Sicily, and partly confiscated by Crusader authorities in Palestine. These notes included, for instance, the measurements he had taken in Saint Sophia.¹⁶

Nevertheless, his comments on the beauty of Constantinople remain highly evocative. As shown by Glaire Anderson, the *Kitāb al-ziyārāt* is an invaluable source of information about the relations of the Byzantine court with its Muslim neighbours, and about the history of the city's relations with its Muslim inhabitants, as concretely displayed in architecture.¹⁷ Furthermore, this text is revelatory of how Constantinople's urban face could appear to the eyes of a learned Muslim visitor. What captured the attention of Muslim travelers and geographers? What did the audience of *riḥla* works expect to be informed of? And what is unique to al-Harawī's aesthetic taste and experience?

11 Izeddin 1965. Cf. for example the thirteenth-century description of Saint Sophia's mosaics attributed to a certain 'Abd Allāh al-Jazarī, which seems in fact to relate to the Great Mosque of Damascus, with the addition of fanciful details: see Izeddin 1958: 454–55.

12 Izeddin 1965: 85–93. Hārūn ibn Yaḥyā is not known from other sources, and no information has survived on his origins. On Ibn Rusta see, for example, Maqbul, A., "Ibn Rusta," *EI Sec. Ed.*; El-Cheikh 2004: 143–52; Hadj-Sadoq 2009: 1–150; Miquel 1967: 2/264–313, 334–68, 375–86.

13 On Arabic representations of Constantinople, see Miquel 1967: 2/381–481; El-Cheikh 2004: 139–52; El-Cheikh 2001: 56–68.

14 It seems in fact useful to make a distinction between Arabic accounts concerning Constantinople and accounts that dwell on the description of the city's buildings and artistic merits. Cf. the works mentioned in Izeddin 1965 and Mordtmann, "(al-)Qusṭantīniyya."

15 Meri 2004: xxii.

16 Meri 2004: xxii; Richter-Bernburg 2010: 120 and n.19. On *'ajā'ib*, see Richter-Bernburg 2010: 116–17, 2003: 300 ff.; Beckingham 1993: 86–94.

17 Anderson 2009: 87–88, 103–104, 113; cf. Reinert 1998: 140–48.

The first distinctive feature of the *Kitāb al-ziyārāt* in the context of *riḥla* literature is that it makes no mention of Constantinople's urban plan. Traditionally, authors of *riḥlas* focused on the relationship between military, political, and economic (namely commercial) institutions. Accordingly, they would pay attention to how these distinct spheres were physically embedded in the city's layout; which buildings, like arsenals and prisons, were most representative of military and diplomatic activities; how such buildings were arranged in relation to one another; what kind of specialized markets could be found, and what kind of merchants enjoyed a dedicated "quarter."¹⁸ By applying this descriptive model to Constantinople, Muslim geographers would follow the conventions of the genre, while at the same time framing the city within a recognizable urban scheme. One notes, in fact, a certain tendency in *riḥla* literature to inscribe non-Muslim cities into the (real or ideal) structure of Muslim ones, connecting unfamiliar urban elements to more familiar landscapes. Such a process usually goes hand in hand with a quest for the "Islamic character" of Christian towns. Some underlying questions are recurrent in Arabic discussions of non-Muslim cities: where do the Muslims live? How do the Christians treat them? Are they allowed to practice Islam openly? How many mosques are there, and where are they situated?¹⁹

The latter question prevails in al-Harawī's work. What significant monuments are accessible to Muslims? From the very opening of the brief chapter devoted to the Byzantine city, al-Harawī's Constantinople reveals her Islamic face in those monuments that have the spiritual and architectural quality of *ziyārāt*.²⁰ This obviously depends on the special focus of the "guidebook," but it also stems from the author's own sensibility regarding the religious value of urban buildings, regardless of their political or civic function. Moreover, as Richter-Bernburg has pointed out, al-Harawī shows a degree of aesthetic attention to architecture that is virtually unprecedented in earlier Arabic geographic literature.²¹

However, al-Harawī's concern for pilgrimage sites did not prevent him from admiring monuments of a different kind, such as statues. In particular, he shows himself to be fascinated by Constantinople's monumental columns, "wonders" of which he enthusiastically noted materials and shapes. Listing precious materials was a traditional way to convey the extent of a city's wealth and ostensible prosperity, and thereby to express the desirability that God might "open" it to Islamic rule. In the *Kitāb al-ziyārāt*, traditional lists of *mira-bilia* (Arabic *ʿajāʾib*, Greek *theama*) coexist with a singular attention to artistic details, in a way that combines originally classic motifs with the author's personal insight.²² To an extent, in the category of "wonders" should also be included the question of what talismans a city could vaunt – a question recurrent in travel works and almost ubiquitous in the

18 This applies generally to *riḥla* literature. See, for example, the descriptions of Constantinople in Izzeddin 1965; Anderson 2009: 91–98; Reinert 1998: 126–30; cf. also Constable 2003: 149–50. For a general view, a useful collection of Arabic descriptions of non-Muslim towns can be found in Amari 1880–81.

19 El-Cheikh 2001: 66–67.

20 El-Cheikh 2001: 67.

21 Richter-Bernburg 2003, 2010: 115–18, 145; Behrens-Abouseif 1999: 165–85.

22 Richter-Bernburg 2010: 121.

Kitāb al-ziyārāt.²³ It is often in connection with talismans, objects charged with a special power, that al-Harawī mentions popular beliefs, civic traditions, and folk stories, as well as people’s “disagreements” concerning the origin or meaning of a given *ziyāra*.²⁴ Thus, the *Kitāb al-ziyārāt* allows us to glimpse – if only askew – at how monuments and objects that we would characterize as artistic were understood, explained and experienced by people in medieval times.

²³ Miquel 1967: 2/427, 468–69; El-Cheikh 2001: 65.

²⁴ Meri 2002: 204–09.

Text

(٩٤) بل المنائر العجيبة بمدينة القسطنطينية. منها منارة موثوقة بالرصاص والحديد في البضرم وهو الميدان، إذا هبت الرياح تميلها شرقاً وغرباً وقبلةً وشمالاً من أصل كرسيها ويدخل الناس الخزف والجوز تحتها فتطحنه. ومنارة أيضاً في هذا الموضع من النحاس قد قلبت قطعة واحدة إلا أنها لا يدخل إليها. ومنارة قريبة من البيمارستان قد ألبست النحاس جميعها وعليها قبر قسطنطين وعلى قبره صورة فرس من النحاس وعلى الفرس صورته. وهو راكب على الفرس وقوائم الفرس محكمة بالرصاص على الصخر ما عدا يده اليمنى فأبها سائبة في الهواء كأنه سائر وقسطنطين على ظهره ويده اليمنى مرتفعة في الجوّ وقد فتح كفه وهو يشير نحو بلاد الإسلام ويده اليسرى فيها كرة. وهذه المنارة تبين عن مسيرة بعض يوم للراكب في البحر وقد اختلفت أقاويل الناس فيها فمنهم من يقول: في يده طلسم يمنع العدو أن يقصد البلد. ومنهم من يقول: بل على الكرة مكتوب: ملك الدنيا حتى بقيت في يدي مثل هذه الكرة وخرجت منها هكذا لا أملك شيئاً. والله أعلم. ومنارة في سوق استيرين من الرخام الأبيض ومن أرضها إلى رأسها صور منبته نابتة من جسمها أعجب صنعة تكون ودرابزينها من النحاس قطعة واحدة وبها طلسم إذا طلع الإنسان عليها يقع نظره على المدينة بأسرها.

وسأذكر في كتاب العجائب صفة هذه المنائر وطولها ودائرتها وعدد درجها واعتقاد أهل البلاد بها وفي الصور التي عليها واختلافهم في الأصنام النحاس والرخام والطلسم الذي بقية الأهوية الأربعة وبلاط الملك (٥٥) ونذكر الصليب المجنون وحكايته وهو مستقبل قبلة الإسلام والبيمارستانات التي بها والأصنام التي بسوق الصرف والطلسمات التي ذكرناها في كتاب العجائب إذ لا يحتمل هذا الكتاب أكثر من هذا. (...)

(٦٥) مدينة القسطنطينية. في جانب سورها قبر أبي أيوب الأنصاري رضه صاحب رسول الله صلعم واسمه خالد بن زيد ولما قُتل دفنه المسلمون وقالوا للروم: هذا من كبار أصحاب نبينا والله إن نبش لا دق بناقوس في أرض العرب أبداً.

وبها الجامع الذي بناه مسلمة بن عبد الملك والتابعون رضهم، وبه قبر رجل من ولد الحسين رضه. وبها الأصنام النحاس والرخام والعمد والطلسمات العجيبة والمنائر التي تقدّم ذكرها والآثار التي ليس في رعب المسلمين مثلها. وبها أيا صوفيا وهي الكنيسة العظمى عندهم ويقولون بها ملك من الملائكة مقيم بها وقد عملوا دائر مكانه دار ابزين من الذهب وله حكاية عجيبة نذكرها في موضعها وسأذكر ترتيب هذه الكنيسة وهيكلها وارتفاعها وأبوابها وعلوها وطولها وعرضها والعمد التي بها وعجائب هذه المدينة وأوضاعها وصفة السمك الذي بها وباب الذهب والأبرجة الرخام والفيلة النحاس وجميع ما بها من العجائب والآثار والأصنام التي في البضرم وما فعل الملك مانويل معي من الخير (٧٥) والإحسان في كتاب العجائب إن شاء الله تع. وهذه المدينة هي أكبر من اسمها فانه تع يجعلها دار الإسلام بمته وكرمه إن شاء الله تع.

Translation

... But¹ marvelous columns are to be found in the city of Constantinople.² Among them is a column reinforced with lead and iron, placed in the Hippodrome, which is the arena. When the wind blows, it makes the column swing on the base of its pedestal, now to the east or the west, now to the south or the north, and people usually place pieces of pottery or nuts below it, so that it might grind them. In the same place, there is also a bronze column, which was cast in a single rounded piece,³ so that nothing may be introduced inside it.⁴

Another column, placed near the Hospital,⁵ is entirely covered with bronze, and on top of it is the tomb of Constantine. Above the tomb is the representation of a horse in bronze; and above the horse is a representation of Constantine, who is riding the horse. The animal's hooves are welded with lead to the stone, with the exception of its front hoof, which is raised in the air, as if the horse were trotting with Constantine on its back. Constantine's right hand is stretched in the air, open palm, pointing in the direction of the lands of Islam, while in his left hand is a globe.⁶ This column can be seen from the sea, from a distance of less than a day of sailing, and there are different folk stories about it. Some people say, "In his hand is a talisman that prevents the enemy from assailing the city." Others say instead that on the globe it is written: "I took possession of the world so that it rested in my hand like this globe, and I departed from it like this, holding nothing." But God knows best (as to what is true).

Another column is in the Istabrīn marketplace. It is made of white marble, and from its base to its top (is decorated with) images in high relief sprouting from the body of the column, marvelously fashioned; there are also banisters on this column, made out of a single piece of bronze. A talisman is there, and when people climb to the top of the column, their view extends over the entire city.⁷

In the *Kitāb al-ʿajāʾib* ("Book of Wonders")⁸ I will mention the shape of these columns, their height, their circumference, the number of their steps, as well as the beliefs of the inhabitants of those regions concerning the columns and concerning the figures that are represented upon them. (I will also mention) their disagreement concerning the copper and marble statues and the talismans that are found in the Dome of the Four Winds⁹ and in the Royal Palace. (50) We will mention the "mad cross" and the story attached to it, that it turns its face in the direction of prayer of Islam.¹⁰ Then the hospitals of the city, the statues that are found in the exchange market, and the talismans – things that we describe in the *Kitāb al-ʿajāʾib*, since the present book cannot be any more detailed than this ...

(56) The city of Constantinople: Next to its walls is the tomb of Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī (may God be pleased with him), a Companion of the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace), whose given name was Khālid ibn Zayd.¹¹ After he was killed, the Muslims buried him, and they said to the Romans: "This man was one of the greatest Companions of our Prophet. By God, if his remains are dug up, no church bell in the lands of the Arabs will ever ring again."

In this city, one finds the congregational mosque¹² that Maslama b. ʿAbd al-Malik and the Successors¹³ built (may God be pleased with them). Inside the mosque is the tomb

of a man from the progeny of Ḥusayn¹⁴ (may God be pleased with him). In Constantinople there are bronze and marble statues, pillars, and marvelous talismans, as well as the columns that we have already mentioned, and ancient monuments the like of which cannot be found in the lands of the Muslims. Ayā Sūfyā¹⁵ is there, which is the greatest church among them. They say that one of the angels dwells in the church, and they built an enclosure around his place, with golden parapets. A marvelous story is told about this angel, which we will mention in due course.¹⁶ (In the *Kitāb al-ʿajāʾib*) I will mention the layout of this church, its sanctuary, its elevation, and its gates; and its height, length, and width, and the pillars that are inside it. (Besides, I will describe) the wonders of this city and its customs, and the quality of the fishes that can be found there; and then the Golden Gate, the marble towers and the bronze elephants, and all the wonders and antiquities that are there, including the statues that are in the Hippodrome.¹⁷ In the *Kitāb al-ʿajāʾib*, God willing, may He be exalted (I will also mention) the favor and benevolence that the king Manuel¹⁸ has bestowed upon me. (57) The fame of this city does not do justice to its greatness. May God the Almighty, by His generosity and His grace, turn it into an abode of Islam, God willing, may He be exalted!

Commentary

1. The first detailed mention of Constantinople's monuments in the *Kitāb al-ziyārāt* comes abruptly after a description of the Alexandrian Pharos, in the section on Egypt (p. 48). Al-Harawī understood the Lighthouse, one of the ancient “wonders,” as a monumental column (*manāra*), which – according to someone – concealed the tombs of Alexander the Great and Aristotle. By comparing the Lighthouse to the Byzantine imperial columns, he reveals confusion over their different function.²⁵ More generally, he seems to attribute to *manā'ir* the shape and honorary purpose that Roman Coelid columns had.
2. The name of the city in the *Kitāb al-ziyārāt* appears mostly in the form *Qusṭantāniyya* – from *Qusṭantīn*, “Constantine” – or, more rarely, *Qusṭantīniyya*. On two occasions, however, the name is *Iṣṭānbūl* (p. 57, 92). Neither Sourdél-Thomine nor al-Jabḥa report textual variations on this point, confirming that this “informal” Arabicized name was already in use before the Ottoman conquest of the city.²⁶
3. The verb *qalaba*, “to turn,” seems to evoke here the image of a potter shaping a piece of clay.
4. This first *manāra* is probably to be identified with the obelisk erected in the Hippodrome by Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos which, according to medieval sources, until 1204 was covered with bronze plaques.²⁷ This may explain al-Harawī's reference to a reinforcement in “iron and lead.” Richter-Bernburg, however, prefers to identify it with the porphyry obelisk of Theodosius.²⁸ The image of the column swaying on its pedestal seems to be a *topos* derived from folk stories, recurring in other Arabic travel works.²⁹ It may also be compared with similar descriptions of columns shaken by earthquakes in the Greek *Parastaseis*.³⁰ According to both Schéfer and Sourdél-Thomine, the second *manāra* is to be identified with the Serpentine Column of the Hippodrome.³¹ Curiously, however, al-Harawī makes no mention of the peculiar shape of this column, which makes the identification uncertain. If so, al-Harawī's would be the only specific reference to the Serpentine Column that is extant for the period between the sixth and the fourteenth century.³²
5. The Persian-Arabic term *bīmāristān* describes in this period institutions that were at the same time hospitals and centers of scientific learning. Here it refers to a hospital (*xenon*) placed in the area of the Augusteion, probably the great *xenon* of Sampson, near St. Sophia.³³

25 Richter-Bernburg 2010: 139.

26 Cf. Miquel 1967: 2/412.

27 Schéfer 1881: 589 n. 4, Sourdél-Thomine 1957: 113–14 n. 3.

28 Richter-Bernburg: 2010: 124 n. 38.

29 Sourdél-Thomine 1957: 114, Richter-Bernburg 2010: 124 n. 38.

30 Dagron 1984: 136–37.

31 Schéfer 1881: 589; Sourdél-Thomine 1957: 114.

32 Cf. Madden 1992: 111–45 (esp. 113–15); on the columns of the Hippodrome see Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 64–71; Janin, *Constantinople*, 183–94; Grabar 1962: 25–33; Guberti Bassett 1991: 87–96.

33 Miller 1990: 101–35.

6. This is Justinian's column, surmounted by the emperor's equestrian statue.³⁴ The confusion between the two emperors is easily understandable on the part of a foreign traveler; it is even possible that al-Harawī used "Constantine" as a metonymy for Byzantine emperors. A brief but somewhat precise description of this monument had already been given by Ibn Rusta, or his source, Ibn Yaḥyā; in comparison to this earlier account, however, al-Harawī's text stands out for the vivid and detailed depiction of the statue, which he represents as almost on the point of marching away.³⁵ The word used to indicate the statue is *ṣūra*, literally "shape," "figure," a term often associated with pictorial representations.
7. Sourdel-Thomine explained *Istabrīn* as a loose transcription of the Greek *eis ton phoron*;³⁶ while Richter-Bernburg has suggested reading it as a phonetic rendition of *Staurion*, an open square situated near the Forum of Theodosius, or Forum Tauri.³⁷ A further possibility is that this is a direct reference to the Forum Tauri: in fact, while *sūq* translates perfectly the concept of *phoros*, *Istabrīn* may derive from *eis ton Tauron*; cf. occurrences of this name in the *Patria of Constantinople*.³⁸ Accordingly, the last *manāra* should be identified with the marble column of Theodosius, which is in fact white and carved with high reliefs.³⁹
8. Al-Harawī often referred to this "Book of Wonders," a work devoted to *mirabilia* and the description of notable monuments. As mentioned, this book is not extant, and it is possible that it remained only a project in the author's mind.
9. The "Dome of the Four Winds" (*qubbat al-ahwiya al-arba'a*) has generally been identified with the Anemodoulion, a building in the proximity of the Tauros that probably functioned as a device to indicate the direction of the wind.⁴⁰ The Anemodoulion is usually described as a pyramid, or a column topped by a pyramidal element; it was decorated with bronze plaques and figures of animals, plants, fruits, and other symbols – some of which were possibly spolia from a pagan shrine in Dyrrachion – and surmounted by a weather vane in the shape of a woman.⁴¹ It therefore seems not surprising that attached to it would be "talismanic" powers.⁴² If this identification is correct, it is noteworthy that al-Harawī, who saw the monument not long before its demolition in 1204, qualified it as a *qubba*, a domed structure.
10. No monument could be identified for this "mad cross" (*al-ṣalīb al-majnūn*). Interestingly, however, stories of miraculous crosses pointing in the direction of holy places

34 Schéfer 1881: 589 n. 6; Sourdel-Thomine 1957: 114 n. 1; see Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 248–53; Janin, *Constantinople*, 74–76.

35 Cf. El-Cheikh 2004: 208–09.

36 Sourdel-Thomine 1957: 114 n. 3.

37 Richter-Bernburg 2010: 124; cf. Janin, *Constantinople*, 17–18; Magdalino 2001: 65.

38 Berger 2013: 3/117, 3/149, etc.

39 Schéfer 1881: 589 n. 7; on the Forum Tauri see Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 258–66; Janin, *Constantinople*, 64–68, 81–82.

40 Schéfer 1881: 589 n. 8; Sourdel-Thomine 1957: 115 n. 2.

41 A. Kazhdan, *ODB*, s.v. "Anemodoulion."

42 Cf. Dagron 1984: 215.

occur in other medieval texts, both Christian and Islamic.⁴³ The fact that al-Harawī heard of a “mad cross” in Constantinople indicates that similar legends had a wide oral circulation.

11. Khālīd ibn Zayd Abū Ayyūb was a close Companion of the Prophet Muḥammad and one of the *ansār*, literally “helpers,” a title traditionally designating members of the Arab tribes of Yathrib/Medina who supported and aided Muḥammad after his emigration from Mecca (*hijra*). According to medieval Islamic sources, Abū Ayyūb died during the first siege of Constantinople, c.52 AH/672 CE. His shrine, mentioned by al-Harawī, is located today in the Eyüp Sultan mosque of Istanbul.⁴⁴ The generation of the Companions has been always revered in Islam for their proximity to the Prophet Muḥammad, their piety, and their direct involvement in the conquests. While the permissibility of building and performing pilgrimage to tombs and mausoleums in Islam has been the object of centuries-old controversy, holy shrines to commemorate Companions and other venerable figures are widely attested in literary and architectural records.⁴⁵
12. *Jāmi'*, “congregational,” the most important mosque of a city, where it is permitted to pronounce the Friday sermon (vs. *masjid*, local mosque). Both Islamic and Byzantine sources report that a mosque was built in Constantinople already in the eighth century, during the second Muslim siege; some of them locate it next to the city’s walls, while others refer to a building near the Hippodrome, in the so-called *Dār al-balāṭ* (“palace”).⁴⁶
13. Maslama ibn ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān (d.121 AH/738 CE), son of the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān (r. 685–705), a famous general and governor of the Umayyad period. According to Islamic and non-Islamic sources alike, he led the siege of Constantinople in 717. With the term “Successors” (*al-tābi‘ūn*), al-Harawī refers here to the Muslims who took part in that siege; more generally, in the Islamic tradition the “Successors” represent the second generation of righteous ancestors, those who came after the Companions of Muḥammad. As mentioned, Maslama is usually associated with the establishment of the first mosque in Constantinople.⁴⁷
14. Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, son of the caliph and Shi‘i *imām* ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and grandson of the Prophet Muḥammad; he is a central figure in Shi‘i history and religious piety. Performing pilgrimages to their tombs was, and still is, an important component of commemorating ‘Alī, his two sons Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, and their progeny. Interestingly, by mentioning the shrine of a descendant of Ḥusayn (though unnamed), the *Kitāb al-ziyārāt* bears witness to the existence of this cult even inside Byzantium. For this reason, al-Harawī has on occasion been considered a “cryp-

43 See Anthony 2014: 59.

44 El-Cheikh 2001: 67

45 Meri 2002: 161–63, 251–80; Leisten 1990: 12–22.

46 For a discussion of the rise and institutionalization of Islamic religious spaces in Constantinople see Anderson 2009.

47 Miquel 1967: 2/426; Anderson 2009: 88–94; El-Cheikh 2004: 63–65, 210; El-Cheikh 2001: 66.

- to-Shi'i" author.⁴⁸ His works, however, do not provide any concrete evidence in support of this hypothesis.⁴⁹
15. A direct transliteration from the Greek name of the church, as the author must have heard it, with no attempt to translate it into Arabic.
 16. The image of angels and archangels as protectors of sanctuaries is very common in the Christian tradition, both in patristic literature and as the subject of folk stories. Interestingly, this particular story finds a parallel in the Greek text called *Account of the building of Saint Sophia*, one recension of which was integrated into the *Patria*.⁵⁰ In this story, an angel presides over the construction site of the church, urging Justinian to complete it quickly, but he is "tricked" by the emperor into guarding the site for eternity.⁵¹
 17. Some of these monuments are mentioned as "wonders" also in other Arabic descriptions of Constantinople, such as Ibn Rusta's. "Marble towers" may refer generically to obelisks and pillars, but they may also be tentatively identified, more precisely, with the marble blocks that adorned the old Golden Gate, or alternatively with the towers of the Eastern Gate.⁵² Statues of elephants stood in the Hippodrome, in the Forum of Constantine, and, notoriously, at the Golden Gate; as shown by the *Patria* and the *Parastaseis*, they were the object of popular traditions and legends, thus playing an important role in the collective construction of an "imaginary Constantinople."⁵³
 18. This allusion to the emperor Manuel I Komnenos dates al-Harawi's journey to Constantinople to 1180 or slightly earlier.⁵⁴

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48 Sourdel-Thomine 1957: xx–xxii.

49 Meri 2002: 140–41, 157–61; Meri 2004: xxiii–xxvi.

50 Richter-Bernburg 2010: 123 n. 34.

51 Dagron 1984: 200–01, 231–33; Berger 2013: 246–47.

52 Mango 2000: 173–88, esp. 175, 179 n. 43, 181.

53 Quoting the title of Dagron 1984.

54 Sourdel-Thomine 1957: xv–xvii. On Manuel's relations with Muslims in Constantinople see Magdalino 1978: 101–14; Magdalino, *Manuel*, 107–08.

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I.5.6 Benjamin of Tudela (fl. second half of the twelfth century)

Constantinople in Benjamin of Tudela's *Travels*

LEE MORDECHAI

Ed.: There is no critical edition; scholars use Marcus Nathan Adler, *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela* (London, 1907) which contains an apparatus of several manuscripts but does not take into account all manuscripts; Adler's edition was employed for this contribution. The translation and introduction of Adler's *Itinerary* are reprinted in Michael Singer's edition, *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela: Travels in the Middle Ages* (Malibu, 1983). The older Adolf (Abraham) Asher edition, *The itinerary of Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela* (London and Berlin, 1840), is based on printed editions and is far less reliable. For nine earlier Hebrew editions see Singer 1983, 155–59

MSS.:¹

Used in Adler's edition:

BM: London, British Library, Additional 27089/19 (s. XIV)

R: Biblioteca Casanatense, Hebr. 3097/1, ff. 1–27 (#216 in Catalogue Sacerdote) (s. XV)

E: A manuscript which belonged to a private collection (Herr Epstein in Vienna) but was destroyed in the Second World War (s. XV/XVI)

O: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Opp. add. 8^o 36; ff. 58–63; Neubauer 2425 (s. XV/XVI), fragments

B: Oxford, Bodleian Library ms Opp. add. 8^o 58; fol. 57; Neubauer 2580 (s. XVIII), fragments

Printed editions:

C: the Editio Princeps, printed by Eliezer ben Gershon in Constantinople (a.1543)

F: the Ferrara edition, printed by Abraham Usque in 1556

(6. and 7. are used as the basis of Asher's edition and are checked for a few variant readings)

Nine additional manuscripts are listed in Busi, *Itinerario*.²

Other Translations: There are about thirty full or partial translations in modern languages of Benjamin's text. For fourteen translations in Latin, English, French, Dutch, and Yiddish prior to 1840 see *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela: Travels in the Middle Ages* (Malibu, 1983, 160–69). The list is expanded with another dozen or so translations in the languages above and German, Russian, Spanish, and Arabic in Busi, *Itinerario* (Rimini, 1988, 87). To these lists should be added the Turkish edition

¹ Not consulted.

² Rimini 1988: 85–86.

by Nuh Arslantaş, *Ortaçağda İki Yahudi Seyyahın İslam Dünyası Gözlemleri: Tudelalı Benjamin ve Ratisbonlu Petachia* (Istanbul, 2009). There is also a German partial translation and commentary by Hans Peter Rüger, *Syrien und Palästina nach dem Reisebericht des Benjamin von Tudela: übersetzt und erklärt* (Wiesbaden, 1990)

Significance

Benjamin provides us with an outsider's view of the Byzantine Empire's splendor, discussing Constantinople in relative length and probably combining his own impressions with stories and rumors he heard from the local Jews he met throughout his travels. He seems to be most excited about the wealth concentrated in Constantinople, which he repeats several times in his account. The Hebrew terms for "gold" (זהב) and "large" (גדול) appear ten and six times, respectively in the following 504-word long excerpt. Together with a few other such examples, there are more than two dozen words that refer directly to the Empire's grandeur – about 5 percent of the entire excerpt.³

The Author

The little we know about Benjamin of Tudela derives from his *Travels* (מסעות, literally *journeys*), the only remaining work authored by him. Throughout his work, Benjamin is a relatively distant author and provides little personal information. The only concrete details we have are his father's name (Yonah), the connection to the city of Tudela in Navarre⁴ and the dates of his return to Tudela (1172/3).⁵ Other details, including the reason for his travels, are unknown.⁶ Benjamin's formal medieval Hebrew has numerous Arabic forms, suggesting that Arabic might have been his mother tongue. Benjamin also uses some Castilian forms (for example, Grizianos or Grigos for Greeks at 19, 26, 106).⁷ This allowed him – and other contemporary Arabic-speaking explorers – to travel around Asia and Africa. In this, Benjamin was very much part of the high medieval Iberian Jewish tradition, strongly connected to Arabic science and culture. Yet Benjamin was also part of the Jewish culture focused around the Bible, Talmud, and Midrash. Based on

3 The terms for "silver" (כסף), "silk" (משי), and "tax" (מס) all appear three times; the term for "wealth" (עושר) appears twice.

4 In northern Spain; the region passed from Muslim to Christian control in 1115.

5 Much has been written about the dates of Benjamin's travels. Adler 1907: 1–2 discusses this issue and does not provide a clear answer but hints to c.1165–c.1171; Signer 1983: 20, who dates Benjamin's travels in 1169–71, and Weber 2000: 2, who places them around 1168–71, have misunderstood Adler's argument and do not explain their choice of dating. Jacoby reviews the evidence in a detailed manner and argues that Benjamin left Tudela in 1159 or 1160 at the latest and returned in 1172/73 see Jacoby 2008: 144–50. This corresponds with Asher's dating: Asher 1840: 2, XI, 1159/60–1173.

6 Weber 2000: 3 has suggested that he was a jewel merchant, based on his origin in Tudela, but this is only a conjecture. Shatzmiller 1998: 337–47 believes that Benjamin intended to survey the Jewish communities in the area to facilitate future pilgrimage. Jacoby 2008: 161–63 suggests that he was probably motivated by a conjunction of factors – including his piety, trade business, or simple curiosity.

7 For more examples see Jacoby 2008: 143.

his interests which frame his report, scholars have suggested that he was at least familiar with the main philosophical questions of his period if not a philosopher himself. He knew the Bible, which he cites throughout his work, and was interested in the Talmud, as apparent from his comments about the forms of schooling of Talmud in the Jewish communities he visited. Altogether, it is quite clear that Benjamin belonged to the elite group of Iberian Jews who synthesized Islamic and Jewish culture, mixing Arabic poetry and philosophy with erudition in rabbinic literature. The former helped them gain influence in the Andalusian kingdoms and caliphates in the Iberian Peninsula, where they served in various high-ranking positions under both Christian and Muslim rulers, while using their influence to support the Jewish community, gaining personal prestige.

Despite its relative brevity, Benjamin's *Travels* is an important text that sheds much light on medieval trade and Jewish communities and individuals, local traditions, and custom and travel routes. Moreover, for many of these, Benjamin's text is the only evidence we have. The discovery of the Cairo Geniza in the early twentieth century corroborated many of Benjamin's claims and anecdotes, although the amount of publications dealing with it has somewhat diminished in recent decades.⁸

Text and Context

Benjamin's *Travels*' narrative begins in Spain, and moves east, through southern France, Italy, and the southern Balkans (roughly modern Greece) before reaching Constantinople, the first city on which Benjamin expands significantly.⁹ From there the account continues east to Antioch through Asia Minor, south to Palestine and Jerusalem and back north to Syria, turning east to Mosul and eventually reaching Baghdad. Benjamin's itinerary continues towards the east, going through Persia and discussing even Samarkand, India, and China. From there Benjamin returns to discuss Egypt and then moves to Europe again, this time through Sicily, Italy, Germany and Bohemia, while mentioning Russia and France. Since Benjamin does not provide much details about most of these places – he describes most of the destinations in a few lines and with very few adjectives or personal impressions – it is practically impossible to determine how many of these destinations he actually visited and how much information he acquired through informants.¹⁰ For the last few centuries scholars have argued that the edition we have has been heavily abbreviated by a later editor – evident in the fact that the text has some inconsistencies and gaps in its itinerary, while also preserving very little information about trade, contemporary political and military events, and even the means of transportation Benjamin used.¹¹ David Jacoby has argued that the text's final section is a later addition, probably by a thirteenth-century French editor.¹²

8 For a bibliography see Lacerenza 1996: 463 n. 8.

9 Benjamin wrote about the same amount of text about Constantinople and Jerusalem, the lengthiest descriptions after Baghdad and Cairo.

10 See, for example, Hess 1965: 15; Jacoby 2008: 139, 148, 158.

11 See Asher 1840: 2, XVI–XVII; Jacoby 2008: 137–40; Asher pointed out that ten cities and two episodes take more than half of the work, while another two hundred cities are discussed very briefly.

12 Jacoby 2008: 139–40.

Text

והיא עיר הומי באים אליה בסחורה מכל הארצות בין בים ובין ביבשה אין כמותה בכל הארצות חוץ מבגדאד העיר הגדולה אשר לישמעאל. ושם במה של מתה סופה ושם האפיפיור של יוונים מפני שאינם עונים לדת האפיפיור של רומה. ושם במות כמו מניין ימות השנה ויש שם ממון גדול לאין מספר שמביאין אליה בכל שנה ושנה מס משני איים ומגדלים וכרכים שיש שם. וכעושר הזה לא נמצא בכל הבמות שבעולם. ובתוך הבמה עמודים של זהב וכסף ועששיות של כסף וזהב יותר ממה שיוכל אדם לספר. ושם יש מקום אחד מקום שחוק המלך סמוך לכותל הארמון הנקרא איפרדומי ובכל שנה ושנה עושה המלך שם ביום תולדות ישו שחוק גדול. ובאותו המקום מצויירים כל בני אדם שבעולם לפני המלך והמלכה בכל מיני כשוף ובלא כשוף ומביאים אריות ונמרים ודובים וחמורי הבר ומשלחים אותם להתקוטט זה בזה והעופות כמו כן ולא נראה כשחוק ההוא בכל הארצות: והוא המלך אמנואל בנה ארמון גדול לכסא מלכותו על שפת הים חוץ מן הארמונים שבנו אבותיו וקרא שמו בלכירוש וצפה העמודים והכותלות זהב וכסף צרוף וצייר בהם מלחמות הקדמונים אשר היו לפניו וגם המלחמות שעשה הוא בעצמו ועשה שם כסא של זהב ואבן יקרה ועטרת זהב עשה תלויה בשלשלת של זהב על הכסא כמדת ישיבתו תחתיה. ובה מרגליות שאין אדם יכול לשער דמיהן כי בלילה אין צריכין שם נרות כי הכל רואין מאור המרגליות אשר יתנו אורם. ושם בניינים שאין אדם יכול לספור אותם. ומביאין מכל ארץ יוון כל המס בכל שנה ושנה וממלא ממנו מגדלים מבגדי משי וארגמן וזהב ולא נראה כבניין ההוא וכעושר ההוא בכל הארץ. ואומרים כי המס של מדינה עולה בכל יום עשרים אלף זהובים בין שכירות החנויות והשוקים ומס הסוחרים בים וביבשה: והיוונים אנשי הארץ עשירים גדולים בזהב ובמרגליות והם הולכים מלובשים בבגדי משי ומשבצות זהב באריגה וברקמה על לבושיהם ורוכבים סוסיהם ודומים לבני מלכים. והארץ הנה רחבת ידיים מאוד בכל מיני בגדים וגם לחם ובשר ויין הרבה לא נראה כעשרה בכל הארץ. ושם בעלי חכמה בכל ספרי היוונים ואוכלים ושותים איש תחת גפנו ותחת תאנתו ושוכרים מכל הלשונות הגוים הנראים לעזים ללחום עם השולטון מסעוד מלך תוגרמים. והם הנקראים תורכוש מפני שאין להם לב מלחמה. והם נחשבים כנשים שאין בהן כוח לעצור:

ואין היהודים בתוך המדינה ביניהם כי העבירו אותם אחר זרוע הים. וזרוע יד רומי המקיף עליהם מצד אחד ואינם יכולים לצאת אלא דרך ים לסחור עם בעלי הדימה. ושם כמו אלפים יהודים רבנים. ומהם כמו ת"ק קראים בצד אחד וביניהם מחיצה ובין הרבנים תלמידי חכמים. ובראשם ר' אבטליון הרב ור' עובדיה ור' אהרן בכור שורו ור' יוסף שיר גירו. ור' אליקים הפרנס. וביניהם אומנים של משי וסוחרים הרבה ועשירים הרבה. ואין מניחין שם ליהודי לרכוב על סוס חוץ מר' שלמה המצרי שהוא רופא למלך ועל ידי מוצאין היהודים ריוח גדול בגלותם. כי בגלות כבוד הם יושבים. ורוב שנאה שביניהם על ידי הבורסקין עובדי העורות שמשליכין המים המטונפין שלהם בחוצות לפני פתח ביתם ומלכלכין מגרש היהודים ועל כן שונאים היוונים את היהודים בין טוב ובין רע ומכבידין עולם עליהם. ומכין אותם בחוצות ומעבידים אותם בפרך. אבל הם היהודים עשירים ואנשים טובים בעלי חסד ומצות וסובלים עול גלות בעין יפה. ושם המקום שדרים בו היהודים פיירה.

Translation

And it [Constantinople] is a busy city, with merchants coming to it from all countries whether by sea or by land – there is no other city like it in the entire world other than Baghdad, the great Islamic city. And the church¹ of Saint Sophia is there, as is the Greek pope since the Greeks do not follow Rome's pope.² And the city has as many churches as the days of the year, and countless wealth beyond description is brought there annually in the form of taxes from two islands³ and castles and villages in them. And nothing like this wealth is to be found in all the churches in the world. And in the church⁴ there are pillars of gold and silver and lamps of silver and gold, more than what a man could count. And there is a place there for the king's amusement near the palace's walls called Hippodrome, and every year the king provides there great entertainment on the anniversary of the birth of Jesus. And in the same place men of all nations of the world come in front of the king and queen in various chicaneries and without chicanery, and they bring lions and tigers and bears and wild asses, and send them to fight each other, and the same happens with birds. No such entertainment is seen in the whole world.⁵

And he, king Manuel,⁶ built a large palace for his seat of government on the seacoast, separate from the palaces built by his ancestors, and called it Blachernai.⁷ And he coated its columns and walls with gold and pure silver and painted upon them the battles of his predecessors and also those battles he waged himself, and placed there a throne, golden and bejeweled, and suspended a golden crown by a golden chain above the chair for him to sit underneath. It is inlaid with jewels of priceless value, and at night candles are not required there since everyone can see by the light the jewels emit. And countless other buildings are there. And every year the tribute brought from all the land of Greece is used to fill towers with garments of silk and purple and gold,⁸ and those buildings and wealth are unsurpassed throughout the land. And they say that the city's tax on shop and market rents and merchant taxes by land and sea amounts to 20,000 golden pieces a day:⁹ and the Greeks, people of this land, are exceedingly rich in gold and jewels and walk dressed in garments of silk and woven and embroidered gold, and ride their horses and look like princes. And the land is very rich in all kinds of cloth stuffs and also bread and meat and much wine, and such wealth is not found in the whole world.¹⁰ And there are also men, learned in all the books of the Greeks, and they eat and drink, every man [sits] under his vine and under his fig tree,¹¹ and they recruit from all foreign nations those called loazim [barbarians] to fight with the sultan Mas'ud,¹² king of the Tugramim [Seljuks], who are called Turks. For they [the Greeks] are not disposed to war, and they are considered as women who have no strength to fight.¹³

And the Jews do not live among them [Greeks] because they moved them behind the sea inlet. And the arm of the sea of Marmara surrounds them on one side, and they cannot leave except by sea to trade with the locals. And there are about two thousand Rabbinic Jews, and about five hundred Karaite¹⁴ Jews in one area, and they are separated [from the Rabbinic Jews] by a barrier. And among the Rabbis are wise scholars – at their head being the [chief] rabbi R. Avtalion, and R. Ovadiah, R. Aaron Bechor Shoro, R. Joseph Shir Giro, and R. Eliakim the *parnas*. And among them [Jews] are silk master-

workers and many merchants and many rich men.¹⁵ And no Jew is allowed to ride a horse other than R. Solomon the Egyptian who is the king's physician,¹⁶ and through him the Jews' exile is greatly eased. For their condition is very poor and there is much hatred against them, fostered by the tanners who work with leather and who throw their filthy water outside in front of the Jewish houses and defile the Jewish area. And therefore the Greeks hate the Jews, both good and bad, and oppress them, and beat them in the streets and overwork them.¹⁷ But those Jews are rich and good people, kind and pious, and suffer their suffer their exile graciously. And the name of the place where the Jews live is Pera.

Commentary

1. Benjamin uses the Hebrew term בַּמָּה *bamah* (pl. *bamot*) here, meaning raised place or altar (from the Greek βῆμα). Asher chose to translate it as an altar following biblical use, although more recent translations prefer churches, following the medieval Hebrew use.¹³
2. Benjamin knew about the schism between Catholic and Orthodox Christianity, but refers to the Patriarch of Constantinople with the Hebrew term for pope (אפיפיור) rather than patriarch.
3. Almost certainly a reference to Cyprus and Crete, the main two islands under Byzantine control at the time.
4. This refers to Hagia Sophia, but David Jacoby claims that Benjamin did not enter the church, but rather transmitted an exaggerated description he heard.¹⁴ José A. Ochoa connects Benjamin's descriptions to other contemporary accounts of the church.¹⁵
5. Ochoa discusses the Hippodrome and the event Benjamin saw, arguing that these were more standard games than the celebrations of Manuel's marriage to Maria of Antioch, as suggested by Asher.¹⁶
6. This is Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–81). Benjamin mentions him by name three times in his account.
7. Manuel did not build Blachernai from the foundations, but made major additions to it.¹⁷
8. It is unclear whether the gold is part of the description of the garments or a different form of tribute. David Jacoby believes this sentence refers to taxation in kind of silk textiles from private workshops which were then moved to imperial storerooms.¹⁸
9. Adler, following the main manuscript has וְשָׁנָה שָׁנָה here (mean. "every year"). This however seems a rather low income so the current יוֹם ("daily") is the preferred reading following Asher's text, the Casanatense manuscript (no. 2) and Epstein's manuscript (no. 3). Both readings would be estimates and either too low or too high, respectively, for Constantinople. The daily figure might be plausible for the whole empire.¹⁹
10. The immense wealth of Constantinople kept impressing Westerners and became a *topos* many of them referred to when discussing Byzantium and its emperor. Some of Benjamin's descriptions of these riches above seem to be stories he heard rather than things he actually saw.

¹³ Asher 1840: 2, 47

¹⁴ Jacoby 2008: 154.

¹⁵ Ochoa 1992: 92–93.

¹⁶ Ochoa 1992: 93–95; Asher 1840: 2, 48; Ochoa is wrong to correct Asher's dating of the marriage, however, as it indeed took place in 1161 (and not 1169): see Angold 1997: 254.

¹⁷ See Magdalino, *Manuel*, 115–17; Ochoa 1992: 95–97.

¹⁸ Jacoby 2000: 184.

¹⁹ See Jacoby 2008: 157 following Hendy 1985: 173–74; Jacoby 2000: 184. Oikonomides: 2002: 1054, seems to accept the sum as daily income; Dagron 2002: 422 appears to believe only that "the state derived a significant portion of its revenues from [renting] practices."

11. Mich. 4:4. Benjamin includes several such biblical references in his account.
12. This is the Seljuk Sultan Ghiyath ad-Din Mas'ud (r.1134–52).
13. This is a recurrent *topos* in twelfth-century Western European texts and its origin is traceable to Antiquity.²⁰
14. The Karaites are a Jewish sect that believes that the Jewish Bible is the supreme authority in Jewish law. It is distinct from Rabbinic Judaism, which recognizes later interpretation of scripture, such as the Talmud, as authoritative. In medieval times most Karaites lived under Muslim rule.
15. Dagron has researched the textile industry in Constantinople. Note that the tenth-century Book of the Eparch forbade selling raw silk to Jews or other merchants since they would be able to export it.²¹
16. This is despite canon 11 of the Quinisext Council, which forbids such relationships between Christians and Jews.²² Riding a horse in the city was a privilege kept for important locals and visitors. A parallel for this honor appears in a Melkite Egyptian text referring to a certain Sabas – possibly a bishop or Melkite patriarch of Alexandria – who was also a doctor and healed Alexios I Komnenos.²³
17. This might be a reference to the Jewish textile workers mentioned above.²⁴

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20 For a detailed discussion of the phenomenon see Carrier 2002.

21 Dagron 2002: 438–44; see also F. Spingou, I.4.4 in this volume.

22 Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, 2, 328–30.

23 See Ciggaar 2005: 289–90, 300; Ciggaar prefers to see the horse riding as resulting from Sabas' religious rank rather than his medical services.

24 For a short discussion of these workers see Jacoby 2000: 184; for a discussion of anti-semitism in Byzantium see Jacoby 2008: 159.

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I.5.7

Seeing the Spaces of Byzantium in Icelandic Saga: *Heimskringla* and *Morkinskinna*

SCOTT ASHLEY

Significance

These texts are examples of how Constantinople and its imperial monuments were perceived by Norwegian visitors in the early twelfth century and in turn remembered by Icelanders in the early thirteenth century. Both are concerned with the visit of King Sigurðr Magnússon of Norway, also known as *jórsalafari* or “Jerusalem-farer,” to Constantinople in 1110. They show that some details of the real city and its inhabitants may have reached Iceland via its connections with Norway. But perhaps more importantly, they demonstrate how Scandinavians imagined through their historical writings what they called *Miklagarðr*, the “Great City” of Constantine, and how they responded to it.

Introduction

The encounter between Scandinavia and Byzantium dates back to at least the fifth century CE when a scattering of late-Roman *solidi* and other objects appeared through the Baltic, especially on the island of Gotland and in modern-day eastern Sweden, probably as a result of complex systems of tribute and exchange that are still only poorly understood. Although these initial relations faded away at the end of the sixth century, during the Viking age (eighth to eleventh centuries) connectivity was renewed on a larger and more intensive scale. Through a mixture of trading, raiding, and travel the Scandinavian-descended peoples known as the Rus’ had entangled themselves in the world of Byzantium by the early tenth century, when the Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (r.913–959) described their annual journeys to the Black Sea and the Byzantine frontier in his *De administrando imperio*.¹ From the last years of the tenth and through the eleventh century, men from Rus’, mainland Scandinavia, and Iceland were drawn by the promise of treasure, glory, and adventure along the *austrveg* (Old Norse for “east way” or more generally “eastern lands”) to take service in the elite imperial Varangian Guard.²

The two Icelandic texts presented here, however, represent a different and later type of contact between Scandinavia and Byzantium. By the early twelfth century, times were changing fast in the north. All parts of Scandinavia had been officially Christian for a

1 Shepard 2008: 496–516. For full discussion of the relationships between Scandinavia and Byzantium see Androschuk *et al.* eds. 2016.

2 Blöndal 1978.

century or more. New and more powerful types of kingship had appeared and mainland Scandinavia at least was becoming more integrated into the social, economic, and cultural norms of Western Europe. These two extracts tell of the visit to Constantinople in 1110 of King Sigurðr Magnússon of Norway (r.1103–30), on the final leg of his crusade to Palestine and Jerusalem, by way of Iberia, the Balearics, and Sicily. Although his crusade (perhaps more accurately described as an “armed pilgrimage”) proved little more than a footnote in the history of Christian military expeditions to the Holy Land, it earned him the nickname *jórsalafari* (“Jerusalem-farer”) in Norway and Iceland, where his feat was long remembered. Direct connections between mainland Scandinavia, Iceland, and Byzantium faltered in the later twelfth century and all but came to an end by the first decades of the thirteenth, the result of changing networks of trade, travel, and communication in the north, the sack of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade in 1204, and the decline of the Varangian Guard. But as real contacts died out, so they were replaced by imagined ones in stories and memory.³

The golden age of history writing in Iceland was undoubtedly the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when almost all of the most famous Icelandic sagas were composed. Both *Heimskringla* and *Morkinskinna* date from this time, with the anonymous *Morkinskinna* the earlier, dated to c.1220. *Heimskringla* followed soon after, usually placed somewhere after 1220 and before c.1235, and has traditionally been attributed to the most famous of all medieval Icelandic writers, Snorri Sturluson. Regardless of whether Snorri really was the author in whole or in part, *Heimskringla* relied heavily on *Morkinskinna* as a source text in its latter sections, including the extract presented here, while also re-working and re-shaping it. Both works are dedicated to chronicling the lives and deeds of the kings of Norway, *Morkinskinna* confining itself to the solidly historical world of the early eleventh to the mid twelfth century, while *Heimskringla* works on a grander scale, taking the point of origin back to the proto-historic, semi-mythical Ynglings. Both also reflect the anxieties and debates over kingship experienced by Icelanders – who had lived without kings since the settlement of the island 350 years earlier – in the decades leading up to Iceland’s acceptance of Norwegian rule in 1262. As part of those projects, Sigurðr *jórsalafari* and his visit to Constantinople found their place in history.

3 Ashley 2011: 213–32.

Text A | Attributed to Snorri Sturluson (1178/9–1241)***Heimskringla***

Ed.: B. Aðalbjarnarson, *Heimskringla*, Íslenzk fornrit 26–28, vol. 3 (Reykjavík, 1951), 252–53

MS.: Copenhagen, *Kringla* (K), destroyed by fire in the University Library, Copenhagen, 1728; surviving in seventeenth-century paper copies AM 35, 36 and 63 fol., Arnamagnæan Institute, University of Copenhagen⁴

Other Translations: W. Morris and E. Magnusson, *The Stories of the Kings of Norway Called the Round World (Heimskringla)*, vol. 3 (London, 1895), 259–60; transl. E. Monsen and A. H. Smith, *Heimskringla or the Lives of the Norse Kings by Snorre Sturluson* (Cambridge, 1932), 613–14; transl. S. Laing, *Heimskringla*, Part Two, *Sagas of the Norse Kings*, rev. with intro. and notes by P. Foote (London, 1961), 284–85; transl. L. Hollander, *Heimskringla, History of the Kings of Norway* (Austin, Tex., 1964), 697–98; transl. A. Finlay and A. Faulkes, *Heimskringla*, vol. 3, *Magnús Ólafsson to Magnús Erlingsson* (London, 2015), 153–54

Significance

This extract concerns the arrival by sea of King Sigurðr at Constantinople and his ceremonial entry into the city. It shows that very specific names and details of the imperial spaces of Constantinople were still known in Iceland a century later, including the Golden Gate, the Blachernai Palace and the Hippodrome. It also gives insights into the ideals of behavior Icelanders believed Scandinavians would and should exhibit in their encounter with Byzantium and the wider world, demonstrating their pride and sense of status when dealing with the emperor and his court.

The Author

Since the sixteenth century the Icelander Snorri Sturluson has been attributed as the author of the collection of kings' sagas known as *Heimskringla*, a title derived from the opening words of the text, *kringla heimsins*, “the circle of the world.” While no surviving medieval manuscript makes the connection, scholars today still tend to accept Snorri's authorship, although it has been seriously questioned.⁵ The positive arguments supporting Snorri's connection to *Heimskringla* and the other major work strongly associated with his name, the mythological–poetic collection *Edda*, largely rest on the fact that he was known by his contemporaries to be an historian and in particular as an authority on the

4 Not consulted. While the transcripts of *Kringla* provide the basis for modern printed editions, there are a number of other incomplete manuscripts see Whaley 1991: 41–47. One leaf of the vellum *Kringla* survives, currently in Reykjavík, National and University Library of Iceland, Lbs. Framg. 82; *Kringla* was itself at some remove from the original, dating to c.1260–70 see Jørgensen 2007.

5 For the debates surrounding Snorri's authorship see Whaley 1991: 13–19.

kings of Norway.⁶ In 1230 his nephew Sturla Sighvatsson apparently copied “saga books” that Snorri had compiled.⁷ From a more subjective angle, both *Heimskringla* and *Edda* certainly seem to chime with what we know of Snorri and his interests.

Snorri Sturluson was born in 1178 or 1179 into one of the most powerful families in Iceland, the Sturlungs. Thanks to an advantageous marriage alliance, property dealings and a growing involvement in politics, by the early years of the thirteenth century Snorri was one of the leading chieftains of Iceland. In 1215–18 and again in 1222–31 he held the post of law-speaker, the principal legal position at the Althing, or annual assembly. *Íslendinga saga*, written by another of Snorri’s nephews, Sturla Þórðarson, and from which most of our biographical knowledge comes, portrays him as an accomplished but ruthless, manipulative and high-handed personality.

Snorri visited mainland Scandinavia from 1218–20 and it was on his return to Iceland that he most likely began work on *Heimskringla*. He was killed in his cellar on 22 September 1241 by his son-in-law, the result of feuding within the Sturlung family and Snorri’s alienation of the Norwegian king, Hákon Hákonarson.⁸

Text and Context

The following text comes from the section of *Heimskringla* known as “Magnússona saga” (“The Saga of the Sons of Magnús”), referring to the joint heirs of King Magnús *berfættr* (Barelegs) of Norway, Sigurðr *jórsalafari* and his two brothers, Eysteinn and Ólafr. Both the place-names and the circumstantial details make it possible that oral tales were still circulating a century later of Sigurðr’s arrival in Constantinople that found their way into the written accounts. Having said that, the text as we have it is a fictionalized version of events, taking a thoroughly Scandinavian perspective on the Byzantines and their city.⁹

As we read, we must always remember to keep the real king of Norway separate from the Sigurðr of the sagas. But there was certainly an attempt to achieve an air of historical truth in the extract. Snorri, or the author of *Heimskringla*, had followed *Morkinskinna* almost word for word up to the moment of Sigurðr’s *adventus* through the Golden Gate. *Morkinskinna* had here a story about Sigurðr arranging for a golden horseshoe to come loose as he rode into the city, commanding his men to pay it no attention, to impress the Byzantines. The story was a motif attached to medieval Western visitors to Constantinople, being first applied to Duke Robert of Normandy’s journey of 1035.¹⁰ Things are complicated somewhat by the fact that there is a major lacuna in the *Morkinskinna* manuscript

6 Snorri has also been claimed as the author of *Egils saga Skalla-Grimssonar* but there has been less consensus in that regard.

7 Whaley 1991: 13.

8 For a short account of Snorri’s life see Whaley 1991: 29–37.

9 Kalinke 1984: 152–67; the use of oral sources in the underlying *Morkinskinna* is discussed by ed. Andersson and Gade 2000: 57–65.

10 Ed. Van Houts 1995: 82–83.

at this point, but the text can be reconstructed with reasonable confidence from related sources. There then follows an account of competitive gift-giving between the emperor Kirjalax and Sigurðr that has more to do with a Scandinavian mead-hall than a Byzantine palace.¹¹ Both these scenes were completely cut from *Heimskringla*, probably as a result of their folkloric air. The close dependence on *Morkinskinna* returns at the point the emperor offers Sigurðr the choice between gold or games. This editing of the more fantastical elements is typical of Snorri's response to *Morkinskinna*.

¹¹ Ed. Jakobsson 2014: 96–97; ed. Andersson and Gade 2000: 323–24.

Text

Þá er Sigurður konungr sigldi inn til Miklagarðs, sigldi hann nær landi. Þar eru allt á land upp borgir ok kastalar ok þorp, svá at hvergi slítr. Þá sá af landi í bug allra seglanna, ok bar hvergi í milli, svá sem einn garðr væri. Allt fólk stóð úti, þat er sjá mátti sigling Sigurðar konungs. Spurt hafði ok Kirjalax keisari til ferðar Sigurðar konungs, ok lét hann upp lúka borgklið þat á Miklagarði, er heitir Gullvarta. Þat hlið skal inn ríða keisari, þá er hann hefir lengi áðr í brot verit af Miklagarði ok hafi vel sigrazk. Þá lét keisari breiða pell um ǫll stræti borgarinnar frá Gullvortu ok til Laktjarna. Þar eru keisarahallir inar ágæztu. Sigurðr konungr mælti við sína menn, at þeir skyldu ríða drambsamliga í borgina ok láta sér lítit um finnask alla nýbreytni, er þeir sá, ok svá gerðu þeir. Reið Sigurðr konungr ok allir hans menn með þvilíkan prís til Miklagarðs ok svá til innar ágæztu konungshallar, ok var þar fyrir þeim allt búit. Sigurðr konungr dvalðisk þar nokkura hrið. Þá sendi Kirjalax konungr menn til hans, hvárt hann vildi þiggja af keisara sex skippund af gulli eða vildi hann, at konungr léti efna til leiks þess, er keisari var vanr at láta leika á Paðreimi. Sigurðr konungr kaus leikinn, ok sendimenn sögðu, at keisarann kostaði eigi minna leikinn en þetta gull. Þá lét konungr efna til leiksins, ok var þá leikit at vanða, ok veittu allir leikar betr konungi þat sinn. Dróttning á hálfan leikinn, ok keppask í ǫllum leikum menn þeira. Ok segja Grikir, at þá er konungr vinnr fleiri leika á Paðreimi en dróttning, þá mun konungr vinna sigr, ef hann ferr herferð.

Translation

When King Sigurðr sailed to *Miklagarðr*,¹ he sailed near the shore. There were along the shore towns, castles and villages, without a break. Those on the shore could see all the blowing sails, and there was no opening between them, so it seemed a single wall. All the people stood outside, so they could witness the sailing of King Sigurðr.² Kirjalax Caesar³ had heard of the journey of King Sigurðr, and he had opened the city gate of *Miklagarðr*, that is called *Gullvarta*.⁴ That is the gate Caesar rides through when he has been a long time away from *Miklagarðr* and has won a victory. Then Caesar had spread out precious fabrics on all the streets of the city from *Gullvarta* to *Laktjarnir*. There is the renowned imperial hall.⁵ King Sigurðr spoke with his men, that they should ride proudly into the city and pay little attention to all the new things they saw, and so they did.⁶ King Sigurðr and all his men rode with such a show into *Miklagarðr* and so into the renowned royal hall, and all was ready for them. King Sigurðr stayed there for some time. Then King Kirjalax sent men to him, to ask whether he would accept from Caesar six *skippundr* of gold or would he have the king prepare the games, which Caesar was used to holding at the *Paðreimr*.⁸ King Sigurðr chose the games, and the messengers said that the games would cost Caesar no less than the gold. Then the king prepared the games, and they were played in the usual way, and all the games went better for the king that time.⁹ The queen had half the players, and their men fought in all the games.¹⁰ And the Greeks say that if the king wins more games in the *Paðreimr* than the queen, then the king would win a victory in his campaigns.

Commentary

1. This means “Great City” in Old Norse; literally the “great walled space,” hence Constantinople. While usually rendered simply as “Constantinople” in modern translations, it is important to note that Scandinavians experienced the *polis* not as the city of Constantine but as a *garðr*, a “yard” or farmstead familiar to them from their homelands, albeit on a vast scale.
2. Sailing to Byzantium was a theme for Scandinavian skaldic poets long before it became one for W. B. Yeats. The poet Þolverkr Arnórsson represented King Haraldr *harðráði* Sigurðarson (king of Norway, 1042–66) as approaching Constantinople with similar pomp to Sigurðr.¹²
3. The Old Norse name for the Emperor Alexios I Komnenos. “Kirjalax” became effectively a generic name for Byzantine emperors in Icelandic romance literature.¹³ The Icelandic term for emperor varied, even within the same text. Here it is *keisari* or Caesar, but only a few lines later Alexios is referred to as *konungr* or king. Other titles included *garðskonungr* (yard- or city-king), *Grikkjakonungr* (king of the Greeks) or *stólkonungr* (throne-king).
4. The Old Norse translation of “Golden Gate,” the major ceremonial and triumphal entrance into the city, as noted by Snorri. Although it seems unlikely that a minor northern ruler would have been granted the honor of an *adventus* through the Golden Gate, what was really at issue here was evidence for the equal status of “saga Sigurðr” and the emperor in the Icelandic imagination.¹⁴
5. *Laktjarnir* was the Old Norse attempt to render Blachernai, the imperial palace here imagined as a Scandinavian hall. Alexios Komnenos did indeed use Blachernai as his major residence, having fortified it and engaged in new building work.¹⁵
6. *Heimskringla* appears to have followed its source text, *Morkinskinna*, closely up to this point, but here they diverge (see Text and Context). Cf. the entrance of Sigurðr into Jerusalem from the original *Morkinskinna*, where the king also ignores the identical preparations made by King Baldwin.¹⁶
7. This is a Scandinavian weight of measure, of approximately 275 lb or 125 kg.¹⁷ The offer of gold became a standard trope in Icelandic saga of a Scandinavian king’s time in Byzantium. *Knýtlinga saga* (c.1250–60) describes Alexios/Kirjalax making the same choice of gold or games to King Eiríkr *inn góði* (the Good) of Denmark (r.1095–1103). Eiríkr takes the gold.¹⁸

12 Þolverkr’s poem is dated 1048–66; ed. Aðalbjarnarson, vol. 3, 1951: 71; ed. Gade 2009: 288–89. For an analysis of Sigurðr’s journey in terms of performance and drama see Jakobsson 2013: 121–40.

13 There is even a *Kirjalax saga*, an antiquarian romp through an imaginary “Byzantium”: ed. Pulsiano 1993: 355; Barnes 2009: 92, 96–97; see also Divjak 2009.

14 For the realities see C. Mango, “Golden Gate” *ODB* 2: 858–59; Mango 2000: 173–88.

15 C. Mango, “Blachernai, Church and Palace of” *ODB* 1: 293.

16 Ed. Jakobsson 2014: 88–89; ed. Andersson and Gade 2000: 321.

17 Ed. Andersson and Gade 2000: 436.

18 Ed. Guðnason 1982: 236–37; there is an English transl., ed. Pálsson and Edwards 1986: 121–22.

8. The Old Norse rendering of Hippodrome. See the description of the arena taken from *Morkinskinna* below.
 9. Here the king is Alexios rather than Sigurðr (see n. 3 above).
 10. The *dróttning* or queen refers to the empress, Eirene Doukaina. The sense appears to be that the emperor and empress have equally matched teams who compete against each other in the Hippodrome.
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Text B | Unknown (c.1220)

Morkinskinna

Ed.: Ár. Jakobsson and Þ.I. Guðjónsson, *Morkinskinna*, Íslenzk fornrit 23–24, vol. 2 (Reykjavík, 2011), 97–98

MS.: Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, GKS 1009 fol (c. a. 1275)¹⁹

Other Translations: W. Morris and E. Magnusson, *The Stories of the Kings of Norway Called the Round World (Heimskringla)*, vol. 3 (London, 1895), 260; transl. E. Monsen and A. H. Smith, *Heimskringla or the Lives of the Norse Kings by Snorre Sturluson* (Cambridge, 1932), 614; transl. S. Laing, *Heimskringla, Part Two, Sagas of the Norse Kings*, rev. with intro. and notes by P. Foote (London, 1961), 285–86; ed. T. M. Andersson and K. E. Gade, *Morkinskinna: The Earliest Icelandic Chronicle of the Norwegian Kings (1030–1157)*, *Islandica* 51 (Ithaca, N.Y., 2000), 324

Significance

This extract gives an insight into ways the Hippodrome of Constantinople was understood by Icelanders in the thirteenth century. It demonstrates how the author thought about the Hippodrome in terms derived from his own knowledge, as a place where the gods and heroes of Norse legend were displayed, interpreting it as a gigantic Icelandic homefield. The text shows that the characteristic responses of Scandinavians to Byzantium were not only defined by wonder and the recognition of difference, but also included a confidence in the centrality and value of their homeland and its culture.²⁰

The Author

Almost nothing is known for certain about the author of the collection of Norwegian kings' sagas called since the late seventeenth century *Morkinskinna*, a title meaning “rotten manuscript,” perhaps in reference to a now lost binding.²¹ There is a general consensus that the original text of *Morkinskinna* was completed in some form by c.1220.

¹⁹ Not consulted. For the history of the manuscript see ed. Andersson and Gade 2000: 5–8; Jakobsson 2014: 23–33.

²⁰ For a discussion around these themes more generally see Norako 2014: 423–34.

²¹ Jakobsson 2014: 23–25. GKS 1009 fol. itself is in generally quite good condition, relative to other Icelandic manuscripts, although there are patches of decay, holes, and missing leaves, creating several textual lacunae.

The manuscript itself dates from c.1275, however, and this has led to much speculation over many decades as to the exact relationship between the “original” text and that in GKS 1009 fol. Scholarship of the nineteenth and for much of the twentieth centuries tended to see *Morkinskinna* as a compilation based on earlier, now lost, texts which had in turn been heavily interpolated between the date of the completion of the original text and the creation of GKS 1009 fol. This made the concept of an “author” for *Morkinskinna* largely irrelevant. More recent studies have largely reversed both trends, preferring to understand the text as representing a significant and coherent effort of original authorial composition, despite its use of both oral and some written sources. At the same time, the distance between the “original” *Morkinskinna* and the extant text has been reduced.²² As a result, there has been revived interest in the identity and agenda of the individual responsible.

What little can be said comes from the text itself. The author was almost certainly an Icelander, given the foregrounding of Icelandic viewpoints in several of the individual sagas and þættir (“tales”) that make up *Morkinskinna*. The early history of the manuscript, as far as it can be reconstructed, is entirely Icelandic until it was taken to Denmark in 1662. He – and the male perspectives of the collection makes this likely – may have come from the north or northwest of the island, as the local knowledge on show clusters around those areas. Theodore Andersson has argued for the monastery of Munkaþverá in northern Iceland as a possible candidate for the location of the author, although the author was most likely a layman, of the local chieftain’s family.²³ While his arguments are worth close attention, there is so little evidence to go on that discussion of authorship and provenance is unlikely to be ever resolved.

Text and Context

King Sigurðr *jórsalafari* was believed to have attended games at the Hippodrome of Constantinople during his stay there. Although written down over a century later, this account does seem to contain some precise details that may indicate oral traditions behind it, derived from Norwegians or Icelanders who had themselves been in Constantinople, although not necessarily with Sigurðr. While the Hippodrome is understood within a Scandinavian cosmology, specific references to its architecture, statuary, and shows of riding, Greek Fire, and musical instruments do hint at some eyewitness testimony behind the written text. *Morkinskinna* makes regular reference within itself to oral informants

²² For an introduction to the complex history of the scholarship generated by *Morkinskinna* see ed. Pulsiano, 419–20; Jakobsson 2014: 35–69.

²³ Ed. Andersson and Gade 2000: 67–83.

and the uses of oral traditions, particularly among Icelanders, and the account begins with an explicit appeal to authenticity based upon direct witness.²⁴

Heimskringla followed *Morkinskinna* closely again up to this point, with only a few relatively minor differences, and the description of the Hippodrome followed on directly from the extract given above. But it did not make it into *Heimskringla*, once again we must assume because Snorri found it too fantastic for his vision of recent history.

²⁴ Ed. Andersson and Gade 2000: 57–65; one of the informants referred to by name, the Icelandic Halldórr Snorrason, had been in the Varangian Guard in the 1030s and may have been one of the conduits of information about Byzantium to the north Atlantic.

Text

Þat segja þeir menn er verit hafa í Miklagarði at þaðreimr sé á þá leið gorr at veggur hár er settr um einn vøll, at jafna til víðs túns kringlótts, ok gráður umhverfsis með steinveggnum, ok sitja menn þar á, en leikr er á vellinum. Eru þar skrifuð margs konar forn tíðendi, Æsir ok Vølsungar ok Gjúkungar, gort af kopar ok málmi með svá miklum hagleik at þat þykkir kvikt vera. Ok með þessi umbúð þykkir mønnum sem þeir sé í leiknum, ok er leikrinn settr með miklum brøgðum ok vélum; sýnisk sem menn ríði í lopti, ok við er ok skoteldr hafðr, ok sumt af forneskju. Þar við eru hqfð alls konar sngfæri, psalterium ok organ, hqrpur, gígjur ok fiðlur ok alls konar strengleikr.

Translation

The people who have been in *Miklagarðr* say that the *paðreimr* is built in such a way that there is a high wall surrounding a field, that is like a wide round homefield, and there are steps around the stone wall, and people sit there, while the games are played on the field.¹ On there are shown many kinds of old tales, the Æsir and the Vølsungs and the Gjókungs, made from copper and iron with such great skill that they seem alive.² And with this arrangement people feel they are part of the games, and the games are set up with great craft and trickery; it seems that people are riding in air, and there is also shooting fire, sometimes through witchcraft.³ There are displayed all kinds of musical instruments, psalteries, organs, harps, violins and fiddles and all kinds of stringed instruments.

Commentary

1. This sentence shows how Byzantium had been domesticated into the Icelandic mentality. As well as the place-names, *Miklagarðr* (the “Great City”) and *paðreimr* (Hippodrome), discussed in the notes to the extract from *Heimskringla* above, the great arena of Constantinople is described as *víðs túns kringlótts*, a wide round homefield. Old Norse *tún* had a range of potential meanings, but in an Icelandic context it specifically came to refer to the in-field or homefield, the turf-walled and manured ground surrounding the farmstead.²⁵ The ancient stone arena of the Roman Empire had been reimagined in a way that any Icelander listening to or reading the saga could understand, as a farmer’s most prized field.
2. This theme of imaginative translation was continued as the author interpreted the statuary surrounding the Hippodrome as part of Scandinavian myth and legend.²⁶ The Æsir were the major family of Norse gods, including Óðinn, Þórr, Baldr, and Frigg. The main sources of information about the Æsir came from Iceland, the *Elder* or *Poetic Edda* and the *Prose Edda*, the latter attributed to Snorri Sturluson. The Vølsungs and the Gjókungs were two interconnected families from northern European heroic legend. Their stories are primarily known from the Icelandic *Elder Edda* and *Vølsunga saga*, and from the Middle High German *Nibelungenlied*.

²⁵ Ashley 2011: 228–29.

²⁶ For the decorative scheme of the real Hippodrome see Bassett 1991: 87–96.

3. The reference to *skoteldr* (“shooting-fire”) was almost certainly to Greek Fire. The term *forneskja*, here translated as “witchcraft,” means something more akin to “old ways” or “old lore.” Given the word’s connotations of a pre-Christian past and of forbidden or dangerous knowledge, “witchcraft” seems appropriate.

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I.5.8 “Daniel the Exile” (late twelfth century)

Ekphrasis of Hippodrome Scenes: Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kyiv

ROBERT ROMANCHUK, BRAD HOSTETLER, MATTHEW W. HERRINGTON, CHRISTOPHER TIMM, AND SARAH SIMMONS

Ed.: Robert Romanchuk. For a discussion of the principles of the present edition and translation see Romanchuk 2021. Previous editions: *Daniil Zatočnik: Slovo e Molenie*, eds. M. Colucci and A. Danti (Florence, 1977), 190–91 [critical edition, follows the Undol'skii MS at this place]; *Das Gesuch Daniils: Nachdruck von Zarubins Ausgabe Leningrad 1932, ergänzt um weitere Proben der Überlieferung. Mit einer Einleitung von Barbara Conrad und bibliographischen Hinweisen von Dmitrij Tschizewskij*, eds. N. N. Zarubin *et al.* (Munich, 1972), 70–71 [publication of both MS copies in normalized orthography]; *Molenie Daniila Zatochnika i sviazannye s nim pamiatniki: Opyt istoriko-literaturnogo issledovaniia*, ed. P. Mindalev (Kazan, 1914), 115–17; *Slovo Daniila Zatochnika po vsem izvestnym spiskam*, ed. I. A. Shliapkin (St. Petersburg, 1889), 52–53, 80 [offers conjectural Greek readings of *hapax legomena*].

MSS.: Moscow, Russian State Library (RGB), Undol'skii 195, ff. 159v–60 [the base text] Moscow, State Historical Museum (GIM), Chudov Monastery 53/355, ff. 137v–38v

Other Translations: V. Zhivov, “The ‘Igor’ Tale’ from the Perspective of Cultural History,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 28 (2006), 353–62, at 357; D. J. Birnbaum *et al.*, “Daniel the Prisoner: A Virtual Florilegium” (2012), <http://zatochnik.obdurodon.org/> [interactive English translation of Colucci and Danti 1977]

Significance

The *ekphrasis* compiled into the *Supplication of Daniel the Exile* may present a rare opportunity to listen in on a contemporary speech about a work of Byzantine art, the Hippodrome frescoes of St. Sophia in Kyiv, that we can still (mostly) see. Even if this cannot be proven, the frescoes and the *ekphrasis* attest to the interest of Kyivan Rus' elites in Constantinopolitan entertainments and the “performance of power.”² And both the *ekphrasis* and its inclusion in a florilegium that was reimagined in Rus' as a Ptochoprodromically-styled “begging poem” show the potential of elite Byzantine forms in *Slavia Orthodoxa*, mostly unrealized but illuminating when encountered.³

We would like to acknowledge the assistance of Simon Franklin, Adam Gaiser, Paula Gerson, Lynn Jones, Plamena Kourtova, Reinier Leushuis, Cynthia Vakareliyska, and Eric Walker. All errors are our own.

1 For a high-resolution photograph of the base text MS see <https://lib-fond.ru/lib-rgb/310/f-310-195/> (image 164).

2 See Boeck 2009; Boeck 2017.

3 That is, our interpretation is somewhat more optimistic than that of Ivanov 2011, and closer to that of Lunde 2001; we recommend that the interested reader further explore the *Supplication of Daniel the Exile* in the

The Author

The present *ekphrasis* of Hippodrome scenes has come down to us as c. 22 (or §75)⁴ of the *Supplication of Daniel the Exile*, addressed to a prince of Pereiaslavl' in northeastern Rus', Iaroslav Vsevolodovich (r.1213–36); a shorter redaction without the *ekphrasis*, the *Discourse of Daniel the Exile*, is apparently addressed to Iaroslav Vladimirovich, prince of Novgorod (r.1180s–90s). Believing the *Supplication* and *Discourse* to be variants of an actual epistle, earlier scholars attempted to identify Daniel as a disgraced princely retainer or witty court jester.⁵ Others remarked the texts' similarity to the Byzantine begging poems of "Ptochoprodromos" and Michael Glykas, and to translated gnomic literature.⁶ In 1997, Henrik Birnbaum and one of the present contributors argued that these writings' variegated contents, "kaleidoscopic" structure, and unstable manuscript tradition show them to be *florilegia*, collections of deliberative and epideictic excerpts, around which a fictional epistolary frame was constructed over time.⁷ The manuscripts are East Slavic, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

We may attempt to localize this particular *ekphrasis*, submerged as it is in a later, pseudonymous context. Hippodrome entertainments and the Byzantine dignitaries *magistroi* and *doukes*, on the one hand, and their presence in a native Rus' *florilegium*, on the other, link the world of Constantinopolitan elites who could "catch a show" to that of their Kyivan counterparts, who viewed its representation in a tower of their cathedral church. Was the "Daniel" *ekphrasis* translated from Greek or composed in Slavic? If translated, its subject is wholly unknowable (in all likelihood a lost Byzantine work of art), and we cannot guess at how it reached Rus'.⁸ If Slavic, we likewise cannot be certain of any of this; yet it is economical to suppose a bilingual, Constantinople-educated South Slavic "author" (henceforth, *ekphrast*) who arrived in Rus' in the suite of some Greek metropolitan of Kyiv, probably as an interpreter, and who described the Hippodrome frescoes of the Kyivan Cathedral of St. Sophia.⁹ Whatever the case, the *ekphrast* was evidently familiar with Hippodrome entertainments of his day; and either way, we can make use of Il'ia Shliapkin's ingenious 1889 decipherment of Greek terms beneath the *hapaxes* of

teaching- and research-oriented online translation prepared by Birnbaum 2012 and two of the present contributors.

4 The former in Colucci and Danti 1977, the latter in Zarubin 1972.

5 E.g. Gudziĭ 1949: 188–99; Likhachev 1989: 189–92.

6 E.g. Franklin 1987: 177–87; Čiževskij 1962: 131–35.

7 Birnbaum and Romanchuk 1997: 576–602. Zhivov 2006: 360–61 n. 10 challenges our identification of "Daniel's" writings as *florilegia*, but does not propose an alternative hypothesis for their structure; in any case, the *ekphrasis* is found in a miscellaneous context (following an inserted misogynistic *florilegium*) at the end of the *Supplication*.

8 One obscure place probably representing an untranslated Greek exhortation notwithstanding, its syntax and grammar are quite clear, indeed "native," suggesting a text composed in Slavic; on the incomprehensibility of *ekphrasis* translated into Slavic from Greek cf. Ivanov 2011: 208 (who, it must be noted, does not propose the presence or absence of inscrutable "abracadabra" as a diagnostic test for the original language of an *ekphrasis*).

9 Cf. Mindalev 1914: 241 ("a monument that has not come down to us [in its entirety], apparently of Serbian origin"); and Franklin 1992: 69–81, esp. 70 (on interpreters).

the *ekphrasis*, progressively (and amusingly) changed to outlandish ethnonyms by later, monolingual scribes.¹⁰

We date the “Daniel” *ekphrasis* to about the last decade of the reign of Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80). The ekphrast is (quite possibly) viewing eleventh-century images with late twelfth-century eyes. Little moved by the opening of the chariot race – foregrounded in the Kyiv frescoes – he begins with the musicians, dancers, and acrobats of the show’s conclusion and ends with the beast-fighters on its periphery, conjuring visions of diving horses and aerial ropeladders in between. Much of his description accords with what we know about Manuel’s downplaying of chariot racing at the Hippodrome and his love of jousting, his re-purposing of the racetrack for public feasting alongside entertainments like animal combat and juggling, and his playing host to some of the most outlandish spectacles of his age.¹¹ In the words of Benjamin of Tudela, a visitor of the time: “No such entertainment [was] seen in the whole world.”¹²

Text and Context

According to Aphthonius the Sophist, second-century CE author of the standard textbook of preliminary exercises (*progymnasmata*) for students of grammar and rhetoric, an *ekphrasis* is “descriptive language, bringing what is shown clearly before the eyes.”¹³ The subject of an *ekphrasis* may be an event or a work of art, and descriptions of sporting scenes fall into both categories.¹⁴

The association of the “Daniel” *ekphrasis* with the monumental eleventh-century frescoes of St. Sophia in Kyiv seems to have first been made in 1883 by Aleksandr Veselovskii in a note to Part 7 of his *Investigations into Russian Religious Folksong*.¹⁵ Here the philologist noted the general likeness of the activities of entertainers in our text to those painted at the top of the southwest stairwell wall. Dmitrii Ainalov and Egor Redin followed suit in their 1889 study of the cathedral, recalling the text’s last line in their discussion of a northwest stairwell painting.¹⁶ In 1924, Arkadii Liashchenko claimed that the “Daniel” *ekphrasis* “has been taken more than once to be a commentary on the frescoes of St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv (for example, by A. N. Veselovskii and N. P. Kondakov).”¹⁷

10 Earlier in the MS tradition, tongue-twisting Greek-named entertainers were substituted by, e.g., *koroliazii* “Carolingians”; later, by *friazi* “Franks,” *liuteri* “Luther(an)s,” and *bashgordi* “Bashkirs” – not to mention the nakedly provocative *nagistovi*. Twentieth-century philology from Liashchenko 1924 to Isserlin 1981, more or less inclined to nationalism, preferred such “ethnic” readings, which set part or all of the action in a fantasy Rus’; for a pertinent art-historical analogy see Ševčenko 1991: 107–49, esp. 138–39 on Soviet scholars who discerned “games at the court of a Kyivan prince” in the Hippodrome frescoes of St. Sophia in Kyiv. For a more detailed discussion of these problems see Romanchuk 2021.

11 See Eastmond 2012a: 56; for the chronology of the Hippodrome in Constantinople and its state at this time see Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 64–71.

12 Translation by Lee Mordechai, I.5.6 in this volume, at p. 547.

13 Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata*, 36.22–23, transl. Kennedy 117.

14 Webb 2009: 61ff.

15 Veselovskii 1883: 188 n. 2.

16 Ainalov and Redin 1889: 120.

17 Liashchenko 1924: 413.

In an 1888 article in the *Notes of the Imperial Russian Archeological Society*, Nikolai Kondakov demonstrated that the stairwell frescoes of Kyivan Sophia, today badly damaged by time and restoration, represent various aspects of a spectacle staged at the Hippodrome of Constantinople, in a Byzantine style or styles roughly contemporary with the eleventh-century edifice itself.¹⁸ Since Kondakov's groundbreaking study, scholars who eschew nationalism (including the Soviet Russian variety) have broadly agreed with his conclusions.

The frescoes of Kyivan Sophia and the "Daniel" *ekphrasis* have various points of contact. Each presents an array of entertainments generally associated with court life: musicians, contests, hunters, and attendants.¹⁹ Both sources arrange these figures in a symmetrical and hierarchical composition focused on the emperor. In the frescoes of the southwest stairwell, the emperor is represented in his *kathisma* or box, placed at the center (fig. I.5.8a); entertainers and musicians, still visible today, are found to the right and up the stairs from his person (fig. I.5.8b); while charioteers at the starting gates or *carceres*, framed by hunting scenes, are placed to the left and down the stairs from him (fig. I.5.8c). Much the same holds when one looks across the steps to the stairwell column. Two groups of dignitaries (figs. I.5.8d and I.5.8e), now mostly lost, were positioned at the center and offset to the left (toward the entertainers), while more hunting scenes are found to the right and down the stairs (across from the charioteers and hunters). As we shall see, the "Daniel" *ekphrasis* has an analogous hierarchical arrangement, proceeding from scenes of entertainers to a circus hunter, all of whom direct their actions to the emperor.

Much of the *ekphrasis* as we have it does not correspond to the extant Kyivan frescoes. Scenes described in our text are not in the paintings, and key parts of the paintings (in particular, the chariot race) are not described. Yet the frescoes are lacunose and the *ekphrasis* may well be so. Significant parts of the stairwell program had already vanished by the nineteenth century, leaving empty spaces both large-scale (e.g. the wall between

18 Kondakov 1888. The tower frescoes were restored with oil overpainting in the nineteenth century. In 1843, a Russian imperial decree by Nicholas I (1796–1855) ordered the first restoration of all medieval Kyivan monuments: see Pevny 2010: 89. Fedor Solntsev led the cleaning and restoration of St. Sophia in 1845–53. His team produced the most comprehensive survey to date of the cathedral, including measurements, plans, diagrams, and elevations of the architecture and decorative program: cf. Solntsev 1871. In the church interior Solntsev removed the layers of overpaint on the medieval frescoes and produced watercolor copies of the original program. The cleaning, which took place in 1844–45, involved the mechanical scraping of overpaint using metal instruments. During the process, which involved the restoration of losses, attempts were made to maintain the contours of medieval compositions. In the end, fresh oil painting was applied over all the exposed medieval imagery, and only the frescoes in the south aisle dedicated to the Archangel Michael remained un-retouched: see Pevny 2010: 92. In 1920, F. Ernst and I. Morhylevs'kyi led a restoration team of Soviet scholars with renewed interest in preserving St. Sophia. They removed portions of Solntsev's oil overpainting where the medieval frescoes could be uncovered without damage: see Powstenko 1954: 56. While the worst damage of this restoration was removed in the early twentieth century and the medieval frescoes uncovered, portions of the southwest tower program are not original, including the left charioteer and the vegetal motifs and roundels in the barrel vault. Deciphering the full program thus remains problematic, but the Hippodrome scenes in the stairwell towers remain largely in their original form. Vysotskii 1989 is the most comprehensive guide to the secular frescoes of Kyivan Sophia.

19 For the tradition of depicting courtly entertainments see Jones 2007: 53–54.

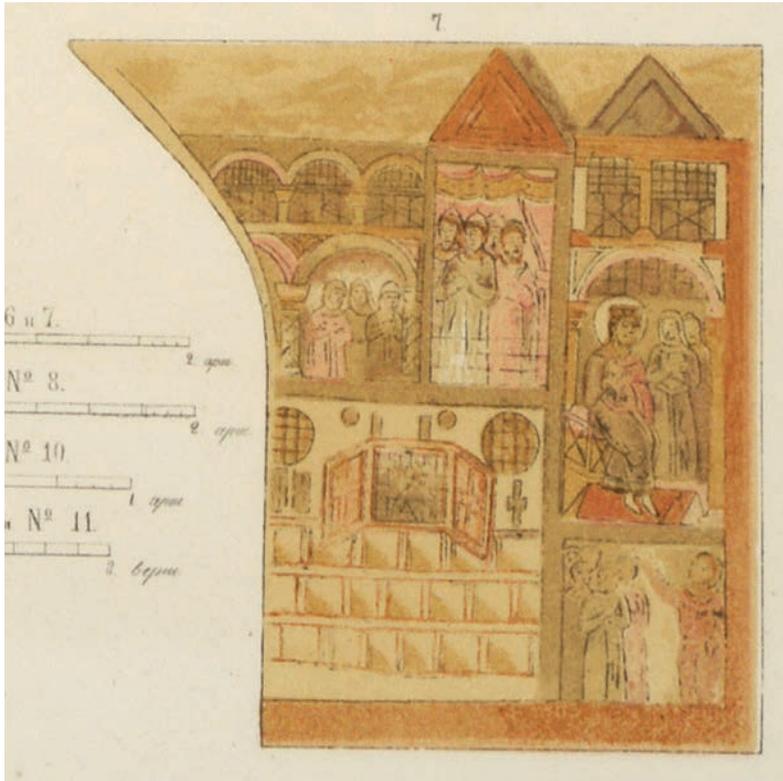


Fig. I.5.8a Cathedral of St. Sophia, Kyiv, southwest tower, reconstruction drawing of the *kathisma*. Drawing by Solntsev, F., 1871, *Drevnosti rossiiskogo gosudarstva: Kievskii Sofiiskii sobor* (St. Petersburg), pl. 53
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Fig. I.5.8b Cathedral of St. Sophia, Kyiv, southwest tower, reconstruction drawing of entertainers. Drawing by Solntsev 1871, pl. 53
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Fig. I.5.8c Cathedral of St. Sophia, Kyiv, southwest tower, reconstruction drawing of the *carceres*. Drawing by Solntsev 1871, pl. 52

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Fig. I.5.8d Cathedral of St. Sophia, Kyiv, southwest tower, reconstruction drawing of dignitaries. Drawing by Solntsev 1871, pl. 54

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Fig. I.5.8e Cathedral of St. Sophia, Kyiv, southwest tower, reconstruction drawing of dignitaries. Drawing by Solntsev 1871, pl. 54
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Fig. I.5.8f Cathedral of St. Sophia, Kyiv, southwest tower, view of the “Entertainers” fresco. Photograph by George Majeska
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Fig. I.5.8g Cathedral of St. Sophia, Kyiv, southwest tower, reconstruction drawing of horsemen. Drawing by Solntsev 1871, pl. 53
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the orchestra and the *kathisma*; much of the column) and small (cf. the profile chariots that once raced up the steps and the paired boxers who formerly sparred below the *carceres*).²⁰ Kondakov considered that the frescoes may well have depicted more examples of “martial games and varied mummery” than are extant today.²¹ And if the “Daniel” *ekphrasis* appears to neglect the emperor in his *kathisma*, at the dead center of the wall frescoes, such a description may once have followed our text, which breaks off at a point analogous to a section break in the prose *ekphrasis* of a painting of the jousts of Manuel I Komnenos,²² before the introduction of the emperor. Both *ekphraseis* feature a short *prooimion*, rapidly summarizing the scene (like an *accumulatio*, but adding elements not treated in the main speech) and avoiding conjunctions (*asyndeton*), which gives a sense of simultaneity; then a division of peripheral figures by duties (*distributio*) with repetition at the start of sentences (*anaphora*): “One... Another... Another...” A description of the central figure logically follows: such an *ekphrasis* “circumambulates” its main subject before treating him in detail. With the exception of the *prooimion*, these features are characteristic of the *ekphraseis* of paintings of groups composed by the second-century CE Philostratos the Elder – in particular his “Hunters,” a textual source of the *ekphrasis* of Manuel’s jousts.²³

²⁰ Vysotskii 1989: 149 and 146, fig. 88; *ibid.*, 141, fig. 83 (cf. Ainalov and Redin 1889: 109, fig. 7).

²¹ Kondakov 1888: 293.

²² Ed. Lambros, 15–18, transl. and analyzed Jones and Maguire 2002; see also Schreiner 1996: 227–42.

²³ Cf. Philostratos the Elder, *Pictures* 1.28 (“Hunters”), ed. Fairbanks, 106–15; Jones and Maguire 2002: 110; Philostratos’ *Pictures* appear to have been a classroom text in twelfth-century Byzantium.

Recent scholarship proposes that the *ekphrasis* of a painting, mosaic, or sculpture was intended to complement the work of art, rather than substitute for it.²⁴ *Enargeia*, “the quality of language that appeals to the audience’s imagination,” allowed an *ekphrasis* to deviate from its subject, enlivening the static image through metaphor and discursive dramatization and offering an aural experience to complement the visual.²⁵ The use of *enargeia* may well account for several discrepancies between the “Daniel” *ekphrasis* and the Kyivan paintings.

As Elena Boeck remarks, the Hippodrome paintings of St. Sophia in Kyiv are a “unique, monumental, medieval depiction of the Byzantine capital’s living links to the world of late antiquity.”²⁶ Large-scale *comparanda* for the Kyivan frescoes are extant or attested, but are all themselves “Late Antique,” of the fourth to eighth centuries: the carved bases of the Obelisk of Theodosius and of statues to the charioteer Porphyrios; the floor mosaics in Piazza Armerina and near Nicosia; the lost ceiling paintings of the Paraklyptikon and the Milion, described in writings.²⁷ The only contemporary (i.e. Middle Byzantine) analogs are ivory *oliphants* of a more intimate scale, to which we will return later.²⁸ None of these is a better match for our text than the Kyiv frescoes, which moreover – like the “Daniel” *ekphrasis* – forge yet another link, from the Byzantine capital to the elite culture of Kyivan Rus’. Of course some other Hippodrome scenes, similar to those in the southwest stairwell of Kyivan Sophia but no longer extant,²⁹ could be the subject of the “Daniel” *ekphrasis*. We thus invite the reader to consider that our text describes the Kyivan frescoes; or to consider the St. Sophia frescoes as *comparanda* for its lost subject.

At this point, the reader should visit the Cathedral’s virtual tour website, scroll down to the 3D viewer, and on the preview bar select the top of the south(west) tower – in Ukrainian, “Південна башта (Скоморохи).”³⁰ On the outer stairwell wall can be seen a superb representation of a Hippodrome orchestra (cf. figs. I.5.8b and I.5.8f). It consists of several larger, foregrounded figures: a pneumatic organist on the left with two assistants

24 James and Webb, “To Understand Ultimate Things,” 1–17. For a reassessment of James and Webb and a nuanced reading of the ways in which *ekphrasis* relates to art see Maguire, *Image and Imagination*; see also I. Nilsson, Introduction, II.2 in this volume.

25 Webb 2009: 87ff.; see also Papaioannou, *Enargeia*.

26 Boeck 2009: 283.

27 For the lost paintings in the Paraklyptikon and the Milion see Cameron 1973: 200–06; for the recently uncovered fourth-century floor mosaic in the village of Akaki in the Nicosia District of Cyprus, see www.mcw.gov.cy/mcw/da/da.nsf/All/0301DD3B26AA989AC2257EBB00447C40 (accessed December 2020); for other Late Antique examples see Dunabin 1982: 65–89.

28 Grabar 1935: 104 n. 3 insists that “Les petites scènes de genre, d’un style qui est d’ailleurs arabe, peintes sur le plafond en stalactites de la Chapelle Palatine à Palerme, ont un caractère purement ornemental. Elles ne traitent pas les thèmes du cycle impérial byzantin.” A partial Late Byzantine *comparandum* (for the entertainers only) is a *pyxis* at Dumbarton Oaks: Grabar 1960.

29 As Grabar 1960: 134–46 argued, these were genre scenes, reproduced with few changes over a millennium.

30 The RoundMe tour <https://roundme.com/tour/20740/> (produced by Ukraine360, <https://roundme.com/@ukraine360>) offers high-resolution images of all wall frescoes and mosaics; a direct link to the top of the southwest tower is <https://roundme.com/tour/20740/view/50960/>. A second tour, with low-resolution images and currently without southwest tower access, is available at <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=XxDnKGZFXJG/>; for future versions, the reader may wish to consult <https://st-sophia.org.ua/en/home/> (all URLs accessed December 2020).

pumping away, two dancers in the center, and a seated harpist on the right with a lute player above; and four smaller, backgrounded figures: from left to right, a dancing flutist and cymbalist, and a standing pair of horn players. The musicians surround the dancers. Assuming Shliapkin's readings to be correct, the "Daniel" *ekphrasis* arranges the orchestra into *choraulai*, *kobaloi*, and *orchestai*. If the ekphrast is using *alleotheta* (*enallage*) to denote individuals by means of the plural, then by *choraulai* he could mean the leading (foregrounded) organist – which accords with Ainalov and Redin's view; by *kobaloi*, any of the "players" (Ainalov and Redin plump for the left-hand dancer as *gelotopios*, for his tunic formerly hung to the ground between his legs, while André Grabar remarks that the right-hand organist's assistant wears a buffoon's pointed cap); and by *orchestai*, either of the two dancers without instruments.³¹ With *alleotheta* and following Ainalov and Redin, the ekphrast scans the foregrounded figures from left to right. But if the plurals are taken literally, then Shliapkin's readings could denote both of the "pipers" (on organ and flute), all the "players" (the whole company), and the four dancing figures (the flutist, cymbalist, and two dancers), respectively – leaving little correspondence between visual and rhetorical hierarchies.

A few steps down the stairwell on its inner column (in the tour, to the right of the orchestra scene) one could have formerly viewed a painted procession of four dignitaries, two civil (an *ostiaros* and a *praipositos*, in Kondakov's interpretation) and two perhaps military (judging by their shorter tunics) – the last of whom, a spear-bearer, wore a mantle and was of high rank (fig. I.5.8d); then another pair, one of whom was a civil servant in long robes and a *maniakes* (fig. I.5.8e: according to Kondakov, he was a *praipositos* or *magistros*).³² The frescoes were still visible in the nineteenth century and copied by Fedor Solntsev,³³ but are now mostly lost. The ekphrast places civil *magistroi* before military *doukes*, perhaps following the first painted procession or acknowledging the leading role played by the *magistroi* in Hippodrome festivals.³⁴

Turning back to the outer wall, to the left of the organist's assistants and a window one may see (with some difficulty, due to its poor state of preservation) a fresco of three horsemen lassoing a wild horse (fig. I.5.8g).³⁵ Grabar calls this scene "unique": he notes the absence of anything like it in other secular artistic cycles from Byzantium, and wonders whether it might be a genre scene of steppe peoples or a sporting competition.³⁶ It is the only surviving painting on the large wall between the orchestra above and the *kathisma*

31 Cf. Ainalov and Redin 1889: 118; Grabar 1962: 245. Totskaia and Zaiaruznyi 1988: 143–55, argue that the two dancers are in fact a bell-ringer and a drummer; Vysotskii 1989: 155 does not accept this interpretation.

32 Kondakov 1888: 295; in this period, a *magistros* could wear an ankle-length, long-sleeved tunic covered by an elaborately decorated mantle, as seen in the early twelfth-century donor portrait of Nikephoros the *magistros* in the Church of Panagia Phorbiotissa of Asinou (1105/6); or he could wear the tunic on its own, without the mantle, as seen in the donor portrait of the *magistros* Nikephoros Kasnitzes at the Church of St. Nicholas (1160–80) in Kastoria: Parani, *Reconstructing*, 54, fig. 62.

33 In Solntsev 1871.

34 Cf. *The Book of Ceremonies*, 1.68, 1.70, transl. Moffatt and Tall, 303–10, 340–49.

35 Vysotskii 1989: 153–54 and 149, fig. 91.

36 Grabar 1962: 245.

below, which (in Ainalov and Redin's reasonable assumption) "was once taken up with a whole range of images."³⁷ Might not some have been of other horsemen and trick riders?

Just after the opening list of performers in the "Daniel" *ekphrasis*, a rider is described as "falling upon his warhorse" and "rac[ing] across the Hippodrome, risking his life." We propose that this rider, perhaps a jousting, be taken together with the man who "shows [his injured legs] to his emperor, revealing to him his bravery." A *comparandum* for such a pair of figures together is found on the Clephane horn, an *oliphant* or carved ivory horn, probably of the eleventh or twelfth century, that portrays Hippodrome entertainments. In one scene, a mounted hunter gallops toward another who falls headlong from his horse, his legs in the air and bared from the knees down.³⁸ The latter figure could have been perceived as proudly showing the emperor his injuries precisely in twelfth-century Byzantium. If "soldiers, showing off the wounds which they [had] received in battle, boldly converse[d] with the emperor" as early as John Chrysostom's day, John Birkenmeier argues that injury on the battlefield and off "became a Komnenian topos, part of a rhetorical canon" of distinction and heroism, as well as "a method of advancement and recognition among the practical folk who fought for the emperor."³⁹

The last horseman in the *ekphrasis* is a trick rider whose deed is of another order entirely than the lassoing of a wild horse: "covering the eyes of his warhorse [and] striking its flanks," "with a leap from a high slope, [he] casts himself into the sea upon his horse." This describes with considerable precision the spectacle of horse diving, often assumed to have been invented in Texas in the late nineteenth century and a popular Wild West show feature for several decades in the U.S. In the show's final version, a stunt rider "climbed a wooden tower at the end of the [Atlantic City] pier, jumped on a horse – which itself had sprinted up a ramp – and plunged 40 feet into a tank of 12-foot-deep water."⁴⁰ We may assume that the *ekphrasis* had seen or at least heard of this spectacle – which could have arisen independently in any horse-riding culture – and associated it with a painting of a horse and rider leaping.⁴¹

There are verbal analogies of different degrees of precision to the "varied buffoonery" described in the *ekphrasis*, but no sure visual *comparanda*. The first such entertainer "flies from a church or high palace on silken wings." We have secure textual evidence, not for this kind of performance, but for the very event described: the ill-fated wingsuit flight of

37 Ainalov and Redin 1889: 129.

38 Eastmond 2012b: 99, fig. 5. It is also possible that the former figure is a charioteer, as found in most Hippodrome scenes; and the latter, a circus hunter or beast-fighter who has been bitten in the leg, as seen on the lower right corner of the right panel of the Anastasios diptych of 517: see Boeck 2009, fig. 12. For a discussion of such beast-fighters in the Hippodrome see Schrodtt 1981: 51. These possibilities are unlikely, though, as both MSS give the singular of "warhorse" and the plurals of "shanks" and "shin bones."

39 John Chrysostom, *On Saints Juveninus and Maximinus*, PG 50: 576.57–62, transl. Mayer p. 99; Birkenmeier 2002: 214–15. Indeed, Birkenmeier's examples are of wounded jousting (albeit of the imperial family).

40 Horse diving at the Atlantic City pier ended in 1978, although Donald Trump attempted to revive the show (using mules instead of horses) in 1994. B. Kent, "The Horse was in Charge," *New York Times*, May 4, 1997, www.nytimes.com/1997/05/04/nyregion/the-horse-was-in-charge.html (accessed December 2020).

41 Horse diving would have been dangerous for rider and animal alike. For horse safety and injury at the Hippodrome see McCabe 2010: 74–77.

a “descendant of Agar who posed as a conjurer” but was “no more than a suicide,” in the retinue of Sultan Kilij Arslan II of Rum. Following games held at the Hippodrome in the latter’s honor during his 1161/2 visit to Constantinople, this magician announced that he would fly across the whole stadium from a tower above the *carceres*. He wore “an extremely long, wide white robe, on which twisted withes, gathering the garment all around, made ample folds.” When a wind arose, and after many hesitations, he leapt; but “instead of taking wing, he plummeted groundward like a solid mass pulled down by gravity.”⁴² This event could not of course have been painted in St. Sophia: the ekphrast is likely recalling the affair, which must have been remembered in the City for a long time, in connection with some image – perhaps a painted column with a capital in the form of a robed entertainer.⁴³

The figure who “casts himself, bare, into a fire” is almost certainly another magician or mime. In the early twelfth century King Sigurðr of Norway, returning from crusade, stopped in Constantinople and described the performances that he saw: “the games are played on the field. On there are shown many kinds of old tales, the Æsir and the Volsungs and the Gjúkungs, made from copper and iron with such great skill that they seem alive. And with this arrangement people feel they are part of the games, and the games are set up with great craft and trickery; it seems that people are riding in air, and there is also shooting fire, sometimes through witchcraft. There are displayed all kinds of musical instruments, psalteries, organs, harps, violins and fiddles and all kinds of stringed instruments.”⁴⁴ Sigurðr’s account sets acrobatic feats, fire shows of some magical sort, and musical entertainment side by side. We might, therefore, imagine a lost depiction of a firewalking magician in the vicinity of the orchestra;⁴⁵ or that our ekphrast, elaborating on the painted entertainments, describes a fire show such as those performed in twelfth-century Constantinople.⁴⁶

The third buffoon ropeslides from a tall building down to the ground at a faraway point, holding to a strap and “grasping a bared sword in the other hand.” Ropewalking, of which ropesliding is frequently held to be a kind, is well attested at the Hippodrome.⁴⁷ The climax of this act differs from the headlong descent (on a grooved wooden breastplate) of later ropesliders such as Robert Cadman, “Icarus of the Rope,” but the performances must have been similar: a protracted climb up an obliquely stretched rope, with “acrobatic stunts and mimetic antics,” and a precipitous return to earth, brandishing weapons and

42 Choniates, *History*, 119–20, transl. Magoulias, 67–68.

43 Cf. Grabar 1960: 142–43 and figs. 33, 36.

44 Translation by Scott Ashley in I.5.7B in this volume at p. 562. See also Ashley 2013: 228–29.

45 Cf. the images of jugglers with knives (and balls) and tumblers with swords, accompanying an orchestra, in an illustration to the eleventh-century Rhoda Bible and a fragmentary twelfth-century fresco of the Church of St. John of Bohí, reproduced in Grabar 1960: 145, figs. 37, 38.

46 The origins of Bulgarian *nestinarstvo* and Greek *anastenaria*, a modern firewalking tradition devoted to the cult of Constantine and Helena, are obscure. It is certainly not a survival of pagan antiquity, as nationalist ethnographers would have it: its practitioners emphasize its tradition and links to Christian antiquity. Cf. Kourtova 2007; Xygalatas 2011: 57–74.

47 Choniates, *History*, 290, transl. Magoulias, 160; Guiland 1966: 301. Danet 1700 discusses various kinds of ropewalking (with varied degrees of accuracy), s.v. “Funambuli”; note that Beckmann 1880, vol. 2: 126–27 maintains that the different kinds do not bear special names.

“stream[ing] a jet of smoke from friction.”⁴⁸ Cadman perished in 1740 sliding from the tower of St. Mary’s Church in Shrewsbury across the River Severn, some 200 feet down and 800 feet away; by comparison, the tower over the *carceres* from which wingsuited or ropesliding entertainers might have commenced their “flights” stood some 75 feet above the Hippodrome arena, around 1,400 feet long.⁴⁹ As Byzantine analogies of Hogarth’s “Southwark Fair” are quite unattested, visual inspiration for this passage could have been a second painted column, with a capital in the form of an acrobat holding a sword.

We finally ask the reader to navigate to the bottom of the south(west) tower – in Ukrainian, “Південна башта (Іподром)” – and “step back” to gain a fuller view of the scenes of animal combat.⁵⁰ The last figure described in the *ekphrasis* is a beast-fighter (*theriomachon*) or circus hunter (a participant in the *theatrokynegesia*), “fight[ing] close at hand with a ferocious beast.”⁵¹ He is “wound in damp linen,” which probably refers to the characteristic uniform of these entertainers: a tunic tucked up under a belt or gathered around the waist.⁵² The scene could represent one of those framing the *carceres* on the outer wall (cf. fig. I.5.8c) or painted on the stairwell column across the way. On the wall’s upper register, a hunter on foot urges a trained leopard to attack a wild horse as two lions devour their prey; another hunter spears a boar below. Further genre scenes of a horseman spearing a lion and archers shooting at a small animal in a decorative tree fill the upper register of the column.⁵³ The figures on foot wear tucked-up tunics.

48 P. Life, “Cadman, Robert (1711/12–1740),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2005; online ed., May 2007), www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/64323 (accessed December 2020). For partial pre-modern analogies, cf. Manilius, *Star Lore*, 5.650–55, ed. Goold: 352; Prudentius, *The Origin of Sin*, 367–68; ed. H. Thomson: 228–30.

49 For the estimated distance of Cadman’s flight, see “Robert Cadman,” <http://christleton.org.uk/village/music/> (accessed December 2020); for the height of the *carceres* in the Hippodrome and the length of the arena, see Bardill 2010: 110–14.

50 At present, this navigation button is mistakenly located at the top of the stairs. A direct link to the bottom of the southwest tower is <https://roundme.com/tour/20740/view/50961/> (accessed December 2020).

51 Guiland 1966: 290 distinguishes between “les combats d’animaux et les representations de chasse.”

52 *Euzónos*, girt up, or *succincta*, held up by means of a cincture: cf. Philostratus the Elder, *Pictures* I.28 (“Hunters”), ed. Fairbanks, 110; *Aeneid* 6.555; Kondakov 1888: 289–90 and Ainalov and Redin 1889: 106–07 identify this dress as eastern, the latter proposing that it was known as *ab utroque latere divisis* or *dischista*.

53 For *comparanda* from Troyes see Vysotskii 1989: 133, fig. 75, and 140, fig. 82. Kondakov 1889: 289 and Ainalov and Redin 1889: 106 placed all these scenes in Constantinople; various other scholars have seen them as local princely hunts, but Théodoridès 1958: 73–84, esp. 79–80, locates them securely in the Hippodrome.

Text⁵⁴

Хоравлѣ¹ бо и ковали,² охорисѣ,³ ритори,⁴ магистрове,⁵ дуксове,⁶ башкарадѣ⁷ и Ѡфорози⁸ — тѣм имѣют честь и милость у поганных салтанов и у королев.⁹ Ин, впад на фарь,¹⁰ бѣгает чрез подрумие, отчаявся живота; а инии летает с церкви, ли с высоки полаты паволочиты крилы; а ин наг мечется во огонь, показующе крѣпость сердце своих царем своим; а ин, прорѣзав лыста, обнажив кости голенеи своих, кажет цареву своему, являет ему храборство свое; а инии, скочив, метается в море с брѣга¹¹ высока конем своим, очи накрыв фареву, ударяя по бедрам, глаголет: Ѡсѣни туѠ форадин!¹² За честь и милость царя нашего отчаяхомся живота!¹³ А ин, привязав вервь к уху церковному,¹⁴ а другии конец к земли, отнес далече церкви и по тому бѣгает долов, емся одною рукою за конец¹⁵ на верви той, а в другои рущѣ держа мечь наг; а ин, обвився мокрым полотном, борется рукопашь¹⁶ с лютым звѣрем.

Translation

Pipers (χοραῦλοι)¹⁷ and rogues (κόβαλοι),¹⁸ dancers (ὄρχησται), orators (ρήτορες), ministers (μάγιστροι), generals (δοῦκες),¹⁹ buffoons (μασκαράδες),²⁰ and [horsemen]²¹ – in this way they earn honor and favor from pagan sultans and from kings.²² One, falling upon his warhorse (φάριον), races across the Hippodrome, risking his life;²³ and another flies from a church or high palace on silken wings;²⁴ and another casts himself, bare, into a fire²⁵ – [thus] showing the strength of their hearts to their emperors. And another, having cut through his shanks and bared his shin bones [performing his deed], shows them to his emperor, revealing to him his bravery; and another, with a leap from a high slope, casts himself into the sea upon his horse:²⁶ covering the eyes of his warhorse, striking its flanks, he says, “[May we be carried] with all speed (φοράδην)!²⁷ For the honor and favor of our emperor we have risked our lives!”²⁸ And another ties a rope to the eyelet of a church and the other end to the earth, bearing it far away from the church; down along it he races, holding on to a thread²⁹ on that rope with one hand and grasping a bared sword in the other hand; and another, wound in damp linen, fights close at hand³⁰ with a ferocious beast.³¹

⁵⁴ The Undol'skii copy in a normalized orthography, emended with Shliapkin's and the present editor's conjectures. No attempt has been made to introduce South Slavic forms not already present in Undol'skii. For further discussion see Romanchuk 2021.

Commentary

1. Reading *χοραυλῆ* for the *κορολιάζι/κοβολιάζι ... κοβρῆλι* of the MSS, after Shliapkin (proposed by him for the second *hapaξ*).⁵⁵ The *χοραύλης* accompanied a chorus,⁵⁶ and according to the editors of Du Cange's *Glossarium ... Latinitatis*, he was also its *princeps*.⁵⁷ The *αὐλ[ός]* in this compound might refer to either flute or organ.⁵⁸ This antique term and the two following were not borrowed into Slavic: they are the usage of a well-educated Greek speaker.
2. Reading *κωβαλι* (proposed for the first *hapaξ*) for the *κωβαρι* of the MSS, after Shliapkin, who glosses *κόβαλος* as *μῖμος* “mime” (apparently following John Tzetzes' scholion on Aristophanes' *Frogs* 1015)⁵⁹ and *γελοιαστής* “jester, buffoon.”⁶⁰ Theodore Balsamon described mimes as “those who put on masks of slaves or women,” and commentators on Ḥasan ‘Ali ibn Abī Tālib glossed *mīmas* as “a person who is ridiculed.”⁶¹ Isserlin proposes that *κωβαρι* instead conceals *καβαλλάρ(ι)οι* “cavaliers, horsemen.”⁶² The unique *κοβρῆλι* of the Chudov MS appears to conflate the first two Greek terms, *χοραυλῆ* and *κωβαλι*.
3. Reading *οχορυῆ* for the *οφοροςῆ/-ε* of the MSS, after Shliapkin, who supposes a metathesis and a vocalic reduplication in the Cyrillic transcription.⁶³ An *ὄρχηστής* in later Greek was especially a pantomimic dancer.⁶⁴ Mindalev proposes to read here *οχολι* “the proud, the wealthy” (*superbi*), which denotes “retainers” or “knights” in the South Slavic novels about Troy,⁶⁵ but these novels are late (of the fourteenth century) and translated from Italian.
4. Shliapkin identifies the *рыторы/ратору* of the MSS as German *Ritter* “knights.”⁶⁶ The word *рыторῆ* is found once with this meaning in a thirteenth-century Novgorodian chronicle entry.⁶⁷ By a slightly different correction we arrive at *румору*, the plural of *румор*, a well-attested Slavic loan of Greek *ρήτωρ* “orator, rhetor.”
5. The *μάγιστρος* was a high-ranking dignitary in ninth- to twelfth-century Byzantium. In the tenth century, he helped open Hippodrome festivities.⁶⁸ By a strange coincidence, one of the last *μάγιστροι* bore the ethnically identifying name Rousopoulos.⁶⁹

55 Shliapkin 1889: 80.

56 See LSJ and Sophocles, s.v. “χοραύλης.”

57 Du Cange, *Glossarium ... Latinitatis*, s.v. “choraules.”

58 On the latter see Gertsman 2004.

59 *Scholia in Aristophanes*, ed. Koster, IV.3, 997.

60 Shliapkin 1889: 80.

61 See Perisanidi 2014: 194; Moreh 1992: 11.

62 Isserlin 1981: 90; see also p. 539 in this volume.

63 Shliapkin 1889: 80.

64 See LSJ, s.v. “ὄρχηστής”; this figure could also simply be a dancer: see *LBG*, s.v. “ὄρχηστᾶδες” (pl.). Cf. also Miklosich 1862–65, s.v. “плясць” (the Slavic translation, as distinct from Cyrillic transcription of Greek as here).

65 Mindalev 1914: 241–42.

66 Shliapkin 1889: 80.

67 See Sreznevskii 1893–1912, s.v. “рыторъ.”

68 See *The Book of Ceremonies*, 1.68, 1.70, transl. Moffatt and Tall: 303–10, 340–49.

69 See *ODB*, s.v. “Magistros” (A. Kazhdan).

Магистр, a Slavic loanword denoting this title and found in both MSS, is well attested from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries.⁷⁰

6. From the tenth to twelfth centuries *δούξ* was the title of a district military commander in Byzantium, and later, of a lesser governor.⁷¹ The Slavic loan *дукс*, denoting this title, is present in both MSS and attested in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.⁷²
7. Reading *βαυκαραδῆ* for the *βοκωροδῆ/βορκοιουδι* of the MSS, after Shliapkin.⁷³ The singular *μασκαράς* (which Shliapkin glosses as *βωμολόχος* “ribald, coarse”)⁷⁴ represents a medieval Greek loan of Arabic *maskhara*, a person who invites ridicule (*sakhra*), “who makes himself a laughing stock by his speech or clothing” (Ibn al-Ukhuwwa).⁷⁵ The word was not assimilated into Slavic.
8. Liashchenko interprets the *φοροзу/-е* of the MSS (which must, by its distinct morphology, be considered separately from the third *hapaх*) to mean “[Arab] horsemen,” reconstructing a Slavic plural *фapycy* deriving ultimately from Arabic *fāris* “horseman” (pl. *fursān*):⁷⁶ however, the expected Greek intermediary **φάρις* “horseman” is apparently not attested.⁷⁷ The form *фapyc* is found in later Slavic, but it means “steed.”⁷⁸ It is the Cyrillic transcription of *φάρης*, a variant of medieval Greek *φάρας* “Arab horse, steed, warhorse.”⁷⁹ A reader willing to assume the ekphrast’s familiarity with Arabic might instead perceive *furūs* “horses,” by metonymy “horsemen,”⁸⁰ with a superfluous Slavic plural ending, behind the *φοροзу/-е* of the MSS.
9. *Κορoли*, “[Latin] kings,” could be a substitution for *цapи*, “[Orthodox] emperors,” made by a scribe in an antigraph: such a substitution occurs in the (generally inferior) Chudov MS in another place, the Slavic speech of the last horseman.
10. The well-attested Slavic *фapь*, translated as “warhorse,” is a loan from medieval Greek *φapί(ov)* “Arab horse, steed, warhorse,” like *φάρας* a loan from Arabic *fars* “horse.”⁸¹
11. We take *бpѣз* in its South Slavic meaning, “slope” or “hill” (cf. Serbian *brěg*).⁸²
12. Shliapkin detects,⁸³ behind the garbled Cyrillic *сѣни ту фенардус/фенадрус* of the MSS, the Greek exhortation of a driver (or, as here, a trick rider), using *φοράδην* in the

70 Pace Isserlin 1981: 103, магистр does not seem to have been used for Latin *magister* before the fifteenth century.

71 See ODB, s.vv. “Doux” and “Katepano” (A. Kazhdan).

72 Pace Isserlin 1981: 62, дукс does not seem to have been used for Latin *dux*.

73 Shliapkin 1889: 80.

74 See also LBG, s.v. “μασκαράς”; Kriaras, s.v. “μασκαράς.”

75 See Moreh 1992: 73.

76 Liashchenko 1924: 418–19.

77 Pace Isserlin 1981: 215.

78 Фapиc is attested in the East Slavic text of Nestor-Iskander’s fifteenth-century *Tale of the Capture of Constantinople*, and is altered to конь “horse” by the text’s Serbian redactor Grigorije-Vasilije.

79 See Du Cange, *Glossarium . . . Graecitatis*, s.v. “φάρας” and n. 10.

80 For the latter meaning see Richardson 1829, s.v. “Furūs,” p. 1086.

81 See Odintsov 1980: 17–25.

82 See Daničić 1863–64, s.v. “бpѣгъ”; cf. also Vlasto 1988: 32 n. 41, 255.

83 Shliapkin 1889: 80.

- sense “impetuously borne along” (*ὄρμητικῶς φερόμενος*),⁸⁴ “with rushing motion, violently.”⁸⁵ The adverb is often used with *ἄγω*, *κομίζω*, and *φέρω* and their compounds.
13. If *милость царя* “the favor of the emperor” can only be a subjective genitive (i.e. the emperor favors us, hence “for favor from the emperor we have risked our lives”), *честь царя* “the honor of the emperor” could be taken to be either subjective (the emperor honors us, “for honor from the emperor . . .”) or objective (we honor the emperor, “for the honor of the emperor . . .”) – or perhaps both at once. (This ambiguity does not arise in the earlier statement “they earn honor and favor from pagan sultans and kings,” with its verb of having *имѣют* and prepositions *у* “chez.”)
 14. This *ухо церковное* “church ear” might be taken to mean a loop or opening in a wall, by analogy to the “ears of a needle” of the Gospel parable in Slavic.⁸⁶ The corresponding Greek architectural term is likely to be *ἄνοιγμα [τοίχου]*. Shliapkin, apparently relying on the Chudov MS reading *κρест* “cross,” translates as “cupola.”⁸⁷
 15. We take *конец* here in its specific South Slavic meaning, “thread” (cf. Serbian *kònac*).⁸⁸
 16. *Рукопашь* “hand to hand, in a close fight” (*manu*) may indicate a struggle with blades or staves (i.e. with an armed hand) or with fists.⁸⁹ This word, not present in the Chudov MS (which elsewhere follows the Undol’skii MS form for form), could be an amplification in Undol’skii.
 17. This figure could have played either flute or organ, and may have headed the chorus: see n. 1.
 18. This term refers to players in general or mimes in particular. Arab writers recorded that mimes entertained with buffoonery, weapons, and magic, while John Zonaras distinguished between those who performed for the emperor and those who performed at public festivals.⁹⁰
 19. We take these two titles to mean (respectively) civil and military dignitaries in general.
 20. It has been proposed that Arabic *masākhīr*, buffoons, were mummers as well.⁹¹ In thirteenth-century Damascus, *masākhīr* performed at public festivals.⁹²
 21. For a discussion of the *hapax legomenon* rendered provisionally as “horsemen,” see n. 8. It would be surprising were trick riders not represented in this list.
 22. The word translated here as “kings” may have been “emperors” in the archetype: see n. 9.
 23. Nikephoros Gregoras describes a fourteenth-century trick rider who would perform acrobatic stunts on a running horse.⁹³ Manuel Komnenos’ enthusiasm for jousting

84 Photios, *Lexicon*, ed. R. Porson (Cambridge, 1823), s.v. “φοράδην,” p. 565.

85 LSJ, s.v. “φοράδην.”

86 Mt. 19:24; Mk. 10:25; Lk. 18:25.

87 Shliapkin 1889: 80.

88 See Daničić 1863–64, s.v. “коньць.”

89 For these meanings in Russian, see Dal’ 1907, s.v. “Рукопашь,” vol. 3, p. 1740.

90 See Moreh 1992: 11–14; Perisanidi 2014: 194–95; cf. also *ODB*, s.v. “mime” (A. Kazhdan).

91 Moreh 1992: 54–59, 72–76.

92 See Talmon-Heller 2007: 129.

93 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantine History*, 8.10; cf. Kaldellis 2017: 181–82.

- is well attested.⁹⁴ Might this figure be a jouster? Above we propose that he be taken together with the injured man, described a few lines on.
24. This is a likely reference to the ignominious 1161/2 “flight” of a magician in the entourage of the Sultan of Rum, recorded by Niketas Choniates.⁹⁵
 25. Aside from the testimony of Sigurðr of Norway (see p. 575), the Karaite lexicographer David ben Abraham al-Fāsī (tenth century) writes that the mime “entertains by throwing sparks of fire, spears, and other instruments of death,” while al-Fāsī’s contemporary al-Mas’ūdī recalls a Jewish magician “who performed various kinds of magic, illusion tricks and acts of buffoonery.”⁹⁶
 26. Could diving horses have performed at the Hippodrome? The basins in the *euripos*, which cartographer Cristoforo Buondelmonti called a “bath,” would likely have been too shallow for them.⁹⁷ In any case, we need not take the “sea” literally, as it could refer to a deep pool or tank.
 27. For a discussion of this obscure passage, see n. 12.
 28. The last part of this formula bears some resemblance to the acclamation “Lord, we guard their (i.e. the emperors’) life with our life!” shouted by the *kraktai* (*claquers*), “cheerleaders” of the Hippodrome.⁹⁸
 29. The ropeslider “hangs by a thread” for dramatic effect: the “thread” must refer to a strap.
 30. The word translated here as “close at hand” may not have been in the archetype: see n. 16.
 31. We might suppose that the *ekphrasis* continued at this point with a description of the emperor in his *kathisma*, to whom (or to whose proxy) much of the action has already been directed. No trace of any such description is found in the *Supplication of Daniel the Exile*.

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94 Cf. Eastmond 2012a: 56; Jones and Maguire 2002.

95 Choniates, *History*, 119–20, transl. Magoulias, 67–68.

96 See Moreh 1992: 11–15.

97 Cf. Bardill 2010: 135–39.

98 See *The Book of Ceremonies*, 1.5, 1.39, 1.43, 1.63, 1.65, 1.69, 1.80, 1.82, transl. Moffatt and Tall, 47–52, 196–202, 217–25, 280–84, 293–96, 310–40, 377–80.

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I.5.9 Odo of Deuil (c.1110–April 18, 1162)

Description of the Philopation

GRETI DINKOVA-BRUUN

Ed.: *Odo of Deuil, De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem: The Journey of Louis VII to the East*, ed. and transl. V. G. Berry (New York, 1948), 48–49;¹ other editions: *Études de Deuil, La croisade de Louis VII roi de France*, ed. H. Waquet (Paris, 1949);² *Ex Odonis de Deogilo libro de via sancti Sepulchri a Ludovico VII Francorum rege suscepta*, in *MGH SS 26*, ed. G. Waitz (Hanover, 1882), 59–73;³ *Sancti Bernardi Clarevallensis abbatis genus illustre assertum: Accedunt Odonis de Diogilo, Johannis Eremitae, Herberti Turrium Sardiniae archiepiscopi, aliorumque aliquot scriptorum opuscula, duodecimi post Christum saeculi historiam spectantia*, ed. P.-Fr. Chiflet (Divione, 1660)⁴

MS.:⁵ Montpellier, Collège de Médecins 39 (s. XII ex.–XIII in.), ff. 15v–41r; passage on Philopation at f. 23v⁶

Other Translations: *Odo of Deuil. De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem: The Journey of Louis VII to the East*, ed. and transl. V. G. Berry (New York, 1948) (English); *Histoire de la croisade de Louis VII par Odon de Deuil*, transl. F. Guizot, in *Collection des mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France depuis la fondation de la monarchie française jusqu'au 13e siècle*, vol. 24, 278–384 (Paris, 1825; repr. Clermont-Ferrand, 2004) (French).⁷

Significance

Odo of Deuil's text on the Philopation is significant for our understanding of Byzantine aesthetic ideals as they were applied to imperial splendor in general and to the pleasure parks in particular.⁸ It is evident that the beauty of nature combined with hunting was

1 Selected passages from the *De profectione* (mostly Books IV and V) in Berry's translation are reprinted in Van der Vin 1980, vol. 2, 518–21.

2 This is the best edition and the one used here. Unlike Berry, Waquet preserves the medieval orthography of the manuscript; the passage on the Philopation is on p. 38–39.

3 This is a partial edition, containing only the sections of Odo's work that concern the Alemanni and the Count of Flanders Theobald (1127–68); for the Philopation passage, see p. 65, ll. 9–22.

4 The 1660 Dijon edition was reprinted in *PL* 185, 1205A–1246C; online version at www.binetti.ru/bernardus/205.shtml (accessed December 2020).

5 Consulted.

6 The manuscript was copied by one scribe at Clairvaux, presumably from a codex that belonged to the library of the Abbey of St. Denis see Berry 1948: xxxiv. For a list of the manuscript's contents and a brief description of its codicological aspects see Berry 1948: xxxv–xxxvii, with a pl., p. xxxvi, showing the beginning of Book I. From the critical notes in both Berry and Waquet (passim) it becomes evident that the text was used by a reader who made a number of corrections.

7 For other nineteenth-century paraphrases and partial translations see Berry 1948: xlii.

8 Even though it can be argued that Odo expresses Western perception of Byzantine aesthetics and Western

considered an integral component of high status and luxury. This passage should be read together with the passage from John Kinnamos' *Deeds* discussed by Michael Grünbart (I.5.10 in this volume). The correlation of the two texts allows us to compare the ways in which the attractiveness of the place was perceived by both the local population and Western visitors.

The Author

Born in the village of Deuil (now Deuil-la-Barre, a northern suburb of Paris), Odo was a monk at the monastery of Saint-Denis and a trusted confrère of the renowned Abbot Suger (c.1081–1151), who appointed him to different offices in Poitou, Berry, and Arras.⁹ He was a capable church administrator and a learned man who rose to prominence when, during the Second Crusade, he followed King Louis VII of France (r.1120/1137–1180) as his chaplain and secretary. Despite its biases and limitations, Odo's record of the French army's expedition to the Holy Land and its defeat at Antioch in 1148 is an important historical source for this ill-fated expedition. After his return in 1149, Odo spent some time at Saint-Denis working closely with his mentor Abbot Suger. In the summer of 1150, he was sent to the Abbey of Saint-Cornelius at Compiègne to oust a group of corrupt canons and replace them with monks from Saint-Denis, who elected him as their first abbot on September 16, 1150.¹⁰ Only a few months later, in January 1151, Odo was elected unanimously as the next abbot of Saint-Denis, even though at the time he was in Rome dealing with the issue of the Compiègne reform.¹¹ According to Bernard of Clairvaux, Odo faced a number of challenges during his abbacy. He was even accused of murder by his fellow-monks, but he persevered and with the unwavering support of the King remained in office until his death in 1162.¹² Noticeably, in the 1160s, during Odo's abbacy, a group of monks from Saint-Denis traveled to the East and to Constantinople to gather Greek manuscripts, some of which were then translated into Latin.¹³

Text and Context

Odo wrote the *De profectioe* in the summer of 1148 (or alternatively in 1150). The work is divided into seven books and is dedicated to Suger, the famous Abbot of Saint-Denis. In fact, Odo professes that the main purpose of his account was to provide Suger with material for his own planned history of the reign of Louis VII (r.1137–80),¹⁴ a project that was never completed. Both Odo's highly rhetorical style and his general attitude towards

admiration for the beauty of Byzantine parks and palaces, it is obvious that what he describes in his text is also what the Byzantines considered appealing and attractive.

9 Phillips 2003: 81; Waquet 1949: 8.

10 Waquet 1949: 8.

11 Waquet 1949: 9.

12 Berry 1948: xv; Phillips 2003: 82; Waquet 1949: 9.

13 Ciggaar 1996: 176.

14 Berry 1948: xxiii–xxiv; Waquet 1949: 10–11.

the new military expedition to the Holy Land were shaped by narratives about the First Crusade, which he perused at Saint-Denis before his departure.¹⁵ Thus, the final product of Odo's literary efforts is a text that offers a unique perspective on the described events and which has been repeatedly examined and mined for information by modern scholars.¹⁶ There are two criticisms most often leveled at Odo: first, his tendency to eulogize and exculpate the King of France; and second, his prejudice against the Greeks whose perfidy, according to him, was to blame for the ultimate disastrous failure of the expedition. While both these biases are indeed evident in the *De profectione*, a careful reading of the text shows further nuances. Odo acknowledges that the Western crusaders misbehaved on several occasions and demonstrates some understanding of the reasons for the Greeks' hostility.¹⁷ In regard to Louis VII, on a couple of occasions Odo refers to the shortcomings of his king by mentioning incidents that reveal his inexperience in leadership and lack of authority.¹⁸ All in all, Odo is an observant narrator, and the *De profectione* still remains the most important eyewitness account of the Second Crusade. The text has countless interesting details to offer to the historian, one of which is the description in Book III of the park called the Philopation.

Book III of the *De profectione* covers the crusaders' journey through Europe up to their arrival in Constantinople, from where they would cross into Anatolia and proceed to the Holy Land. It presents a highly negative account of the plundering and pillaging effected by the German army, after which the French contingent followed. The passage on the Philopation is included in this context. It describes the delights of the place and their utter devastation by Conrad III (r.1138–52) and his retinue after their sojourn there in September 1147. The Philopation was a park with waterways and ponds, various animals for hunting, and luxurious imperial residences;¹⁹ it was located outside the walls of Constantinople in the vicinity of the Golden Gate. A month later, Louis VII and Odo himself were also given accommodation there, which raises the question whether the damages wrecked by the Germans were as extensive as reported by the French chronicler, if they could be redressed in such a short period of time.²⁰

The description of the Philopation is not the only passage of this kind included in the *De profectione*. Especially important in this regard is Book IV of the work, which opens up with a section depicting the geographical location, appearance, and marvels of

15 Phillips 2003: 83; Spencer 2019: 657–60.

16 Phillips 2003: 81, with further bibliography. Most recently, see Spencer 2019.

17 Phillips 2003: 85–90. However, Spencer 2019: 659 argues that “Odo’s denigration of the Greeks was a literary goal of primary, rather than secondary, importance.”

18 Berry 1948: 74–75; Phillips 2003: 91–92.

19 For the different kinds of pleasure parks found in the Byzantine context see Ševčenko 2002: 69–86; the locations and distinct features of four parks, among them also the Philopation, are discussed in detail in Maguire 2000: 252–54.

20 Waquet 1949: 39 n. 1.

Constantinople.²¹ Among them Odo pays special attention to the Blachernai Palace and the Church of the Wisdom of God, Hagia Sophia. Although he calls Constantinople “the glory of the Greeks,” Odo adds that the city was filthy, stinky, dark, and lawless – in short, extremely dangerous for a foreign traveler.²²

21 For a useful summary account on Constantinople’s location, churches, and monasteries, the statue of Justinian and the Hippodrome, the city’s monumental columns, palaces, other notable buildings, and even its water supply see Van der Vin 1980: 1, 249–91; the Philopation is, however, not mentioned in this work.

22 Berry 1948: 63–67; for Odo’s dislike of the city see Ciggaar 1996: 172.

Text

Imperator autem et superstes multitudo, non sine dolore quidem, sed tamen velut sine dampno tantum malum perferentes, consurgunt et, quasi audaciores redditi pro eventu, Constantinopolim veniunt. Erat ante urbem murorum ambitus spaciosus et speciosus, multimodam venationem includens, conductus etiam aquarum et stanna continens. Inerant etiam quedam fossa et concava, que loco nemorum animalibus prebebant latibula. In amenitate illa quedam palatia nimia ambitione fulgebant, que imperatores ad iocunditatem vernorum temporum sibi fundaverant. In hunc, ut verum fatear, deliciarum locum Alemannus imperator irrupit, et undique pene omnia destruens, Grecorum delicias ipsis intuentibus suis usibus rapuit. Imperiale namque palatium, et singulare quod muris supereminet urbis, istum sub se habet locum et inhabitantium in eo fovet aspectum. Tamen, si tale spectaculum Greco imperatori stuporem attulit vel dolorem, repressit et per suos Alemanni colloquium postulavit. Sed alius eorum ingredi civitatem alius egredi timuit aut noluit, et neuter pro altero mores suos aut fastus consuetudinum temperavit.

Translation

The emperor and the crowd of survivors, enduring this great disaster, indeed not without distress, but still as if it did not cause them a great injury, rallied and, as though made more daring by this outcome, reached Constantinople.¹ There was outside the city a spacious and splendid walled terrain enclosing a variety of game animals² and containing also conduits of water and ponds.³ Inside, there were also some dugouts and hollows instead of woods that provided hiding places for the animals.⁴ In this lovely place some palaces, which the emperors had built for their enjoyment during springtime, glittered in extravagant splendor.⁵ The German emperor rushed into this place of delights, if I am to speak truthfully, and destroying almost everything everywhere, snatched for his own uses the pleasures of the Greeks before their own eyes. For, the imperial palace,⁶ the only building that is higher than the city walls, has this park right below itself and (thus) offers a view to those living in it. Still, if such a spectacle shocked and aggrieved the Greek emperor,⁷ he repressed his emotions and through envoys asked the German to a conference. However, one man was either afraid or unwilling to enter their city, while the other felt the same way about leaving it, and neither man tempered his habits or his customary pride on account of the other.

Commentary

1. The German Crusaders, led by Conrad III, arrived at Constantinople in early September 1147. Thousands of their soldiers had already died during a rainstorm that caused a major flood near their camp in the plain of Choerobacchi, located to the west of the city. The original size of the German army was perhaps around 35,000 men.²³

²³ Phillips 2009: 91.

2. The expression “*multimodam venationem*” can also be translated as “various kinds of hunting grounds” which would make sense in a sentence where also “conduits of water and ponds” are mentioned.
3. It was considered essential to supply the game parks with canals of running water as well as with ponds for the benefit of the enclosed animals.²⁴ However, it is difficult to say where the water that fed the Philopation’s canals was coming from.²⁵ In Book IV, Odo states that Constantinople was well supplied with sweet water (“*aquas dulces*”) through subterraneous conduits, but does not give more specific details about their course or origin.²⁶

The word “*stanna*” that is used in the Latin text represents an alternative medieval spelling for “*stagna*” (pools).

4. Odo’s description of the Philopation is the most detailed we have, even though the park is often referred to in historical accounts.²⁷ In the medieval West, we know of similar pleasure parks, the earliest of which seems to be the “*hortus*” built by Frederick I Barbarossa (r.1155–90) in 1158.²⁸
5. In addition to the splendor of the palaces located in the Philopation, Odo talks about the “almost incomparable beauty” of the exterior of the Blachernai Palace, which is surpassed only by its interior boasting multi-colored gold, marble floors, and exquisite artwork.²⁹ It is evident from this description that the Blachernai was even more sumptuous than the buildings in the Philopation. Odo also mentions the Palace of Constantine (the Great Palace) but he only refers to a chapel there which “is revered for its holy relics” and does not offer any description of the buildings.³⁰
6. The imperial palace referred to here is that of Blachernai.³¹
7. This is Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80).

²⁴ Ševčenko 2002: 71.

²⁵ The conduit closest to the Philopation and the Blachernai Palace seems to be a possible branch of the main Thracian supply line leading to the Mokios reservoir; see Crow *et al.* 2008: 111–12 (maps 12 and 13), 122–23. However, it seems that the Thracian line was in disrepair during the reign of Manuel I Komnenos (Crow *et al.* 2008: 21).

²⁶ Berry 1948: 64–65; Waquet 1949: 45. It is known that Constantinople had Late Antique aqueducts that brought water to the city and that this water was then stored in underground reservoirs and cisterns. Around 150 Byzantine cisterns and reservoirs have been mentioned by travelers (Crow *et al.* 2008: 125), even though it is impossible to establish how many of them were functioning at any given time, a fact that makes calculating the storage capacity of the city somewhat problematic: see Crow *et al.* 2008: 141.

²⁷ Other mentions of the Philopation are recorded in Maguire 1990: 212. For further bibliography see also Ševčenko 2002: 73 n. 16.

²⁸ Ševčenko 2002: 82.

²⁹ Berry 1948: 64–65; Waquet 1949: 45. On the fascination of the Western travelers with this pleasure palace see Kazhdan and Epstein, *Change*, 118 and 245, where the authors quote Odo’s text on the Blachernai Palace in Berry’s translation.

³⁰ Berry 1948: 62–63; Waquet 1949: 44.

³¹ See p. 587–88.

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I.5.10 John Kinnamos (c.1143–after 1185)

The Philopation: A Place of Relaxation and Imperial Performance

MICHAEL GRÜNBART

Ed.: A. Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum* (Bonn 1836), II 14 (74,19–75,3)

MS.:¹ Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 163 (s. XIII)

Other Translations: C. M. Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus* (New York, 1976), 63 (English); J. Rosenblum, *Jean Kinnamos, Chronique* (Paris, 1972), 59 (French); M. Grünbart, *Inszenierung und Repräsentation der byzantinischen Aristokratie vom 10. bis zum 13. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn, 2015), 201 (German)

Significance

Kinnamos describes the events of the Second Crusade (specifically in 1147) emphasizing the problems and misunderstandings between the troops from the West and the Byzantine population. After their march through Bulgarian lands the German troops led by their ruler, Conrad III, reached the suburban areas of Constantinople, where they found groomed parklands and hunting grounds, the so-called Philopation.

The Author

See A. Walker, I.5.12 and K. Warcaba, II.3.1 in this volume.

Text and Context

John Kinnamos wrote a historiography (*chronikai*) that covers the years from 1118 to 1176 (the reigns of the emperors John II Komnenos and Manuel I) and complements the work of Niketas Choniates. He provides information on the Second Crusade (1147–49).

The above passage refers to the so-called Philopation, a region on the outskirts of Constantinople, adjoined to the land walls of the Great City.² Henry Maguire located it close to the Blachernai palace not far from the Golden Horn port of Kosmidion, which seems to be the most probable solution.³ No traces of the pleasure grounds have been found.⁴

1 Not consulted.

2 Janin, *Constantinople*, 143–45, 452–53 (relevant sources compiled); Külzer 2008: 587; Grünbart 2015: 201.

3 Maguire 2000: 252–54; Maguire 2011: 72.

4 See Heher 2020, who summarizes all suggestions of localization.

The Philopation served multiple functions. According to the sources it was a kind of park including animal enclosures, ponds, and places for relaxation. Magnificent imperial tents were pitched there occasionally in order to create an appropriate atmosphere for ceremonies and for the representation of authority. It is most likely that Basil II (r.976–1025) met the usurper Bardas Skleros in a tent there (in 989), because he wanted to avoid his presence in the city.⁵ The Bulgarian khan Simeon approached Constantinople and was watched by the inhabitants from the Constantinopolitan land walls; then he spoke to Romanos I Lakapenos (r.920–944) on a platform in the Golden Horn (in 924).⁶ In June 1065 Constantine X Doukas (r.1059–67) and his court moved to the Philopation, where he granted audiences.⁷ A chapel or small church was presumably situated in that area, since several emperors celebrated mass there.⁸

The passage from Kinnamos refers to the crusaders of the Second Crusade. Specifically, when the crusaders approached Constantinople in 1147, the German king Conrad III (r.1138–52) was not allowed to enter the city. He and his men were subsequently transported to Asia Minor.

According to other texts, some usurpers encamped at the Philopation: Leon Torniki-os (in 1047) and Alexios Branas (in 1186/87) gathered their troops in front of the walls.⁹ Andronikos (I) Komnenos (r.1183–85) spent some time in the Philopation preparing his entrance to the city.¹⁰ Imperial brides were also received there after they had disembarked from their ships, which had come up the Golden Horn to Kosmidion. Pseudo-Kodinos provides a report on that regular practice.¹¹ In 1179, Agnes, daughter of the French king Louis VII, who was getting married to Alexios II, son of Manuel I Komnenos, arrived at the outskirts of Constantinople. In a Vatican manuscript (Vatican library, Graecus 1851) a poem dealing with the reception of a foreign bride (= Agnes) is preserved and her reception in the Philopation is depicted.¹² A well-designed tent houses the meeting of Agnes and Maria Porphyrogenita. About 100 years later Maria of Armenia, fiancée of Michael IX (co-emperor 1294/5–1320), came to the Kosmidion and was solemnly welcomed in the area of the Philopation.

5 Grünbart 2008.

6 Grünbart 2012.

7 *Life of George the Hagiorite*, 81, ed. Martin-Hisard, 2006–07: 99; the emperors Alexios I, Alexios II, Andronikos I, and Alexios III acted similarly.

8 *Life of George the Hagiorite*, 81, ed. Martin-Hisard, 2006–07: 99 (Constantine X, feast of Peter and Paul); Choniates, *History*, ed. van Dieten 1975: 293–94 (Andronikos I: Ascension of Christ).

9 Attaleiates, *History*, ed. Tsolakes 19; Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, Thurn 1973: 439–40; Zonaras, *Epitome*, XVII 23, ed. Büttner and Wobst, 627–28; Psellos, *Chronography* VI 107, ed. Reinsch 154; Choniates, *History*, ed. van Dieten: 378.

10 Choniates, *History*, ed. van Dieten 256, 45–51.

11 Pseudo-Kodinos XII, ed. Verpeaux 286.

12 Jeffreys 1981; Maguire 2011: 74; Hilsdale 2005: 458–83, 472 (color illustration of fol. 6 depicting tents with magnificent decoration); Hennessy 2006; http://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1851 (accessed December 2020).

The Philopation had also served as an imperial hunting ground as well, since it was the closest park to the palace.¹³ The prospective emperor Basil (I), who accompanied the emperor Michael III, brought down a huge wolf;¹⁴ some time later (in 867) Iakobitzes, one of the murderers of Michael III, was killed in a hunting accident.¹⁵ In the eleventh century Constantine IX Monomachos ordered a culling of the wild animals in the Philopation, since they depleted the herd of game.¹⁶

Odo de Deuil refers to animals in that park, that were hunted by the German Crusaders (see p. 589).

13 Patlagean 1992 (on imperial hunting); Ševčenko 2002: 73–74.

14 Skylitzes, *Synopsis*, ed. Thurn: 125–26.

15 Wahlgren 2006: 253 (*Chronicle of the Logothete*).

16 *Life of George the Hagiorite*, 33, ed. Martin-Hisard, 2006-07: 61–62.

Text

Κορράδος δὲ πανστρατὶ ὡς ἐπὶ Βυζάντιον ἐφέρετο· ἐν δὲ τῷ καταντικρῷ τειχέων βασιλικῷ γεγωνῶς ἐνδiciaτῆματι, ὃ Φιλοπάτιον ὀνομάζουσιν οὐκ οἶδα εἴτε τὴν φίλην αἰνιττόμενοι διατριβὴν (ἄνεσιν γὰρ τινα παρέχεται καὶ φροντίδων ἀπαλλαγὴν τοῖς ἐκ τῶν ἀστικῶν ταραχῶν ἐνθάδε ἀπαλασσομένοις) εἴτε καὶ τὴν φύλλοις κομῶσαν πόαν τε δασιλῆ ἀνιεῖσιν (ἀμφιλαφῆς γὰρ ὁ χῶρος καὶ ἐπίχλοον ἀπανταχῆ φέρεי τὸ πρόσωπον), ἐντεῦθεν τῷ περιβόλῳ προσεῖχε τοῦ ἄστεο.

Translation

So Conrad hastened to Byzantium with all his force; he reached the imperial dwelling which is opposite the walls and which people call Philopation – I do not know whether this [name] should hint at its pleasant (*philen*) habitation (for it offers relaxation and a release from cares to people who escape from urban noise to that place), or also at its grass (*phyllois*) overgrown with leaves and very rich (the place is extensive and bears everywhere a green appearance). And only then did he give his attention to the city's wall from there.

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I.5.11 Digenis Akritis (c. 1140)

Description of Digenis' Palace

ELIZABETH JEFFREYS

The translation printed here with some emendations was printed first in E. Jeffreys, *Digenis Akritis, The Grottaferrata and Escorial Versions* (Cambridge, 1998)

Ed.: E. Jeffreys, *Digenis Akritis, The Grottaferrata and Escorial Versions* (Cambridge, 1998); other editions: E. Legrand, *Les exploits de Digenis Akritis d'après le manuscrit de Grottaferrata* (Paris, 1892); J. Mavrogordato, *Digenes Akrites* (Oxford, 1956); E. Trapp, *Digenes Akrites, synoptische Ausgabe der ältesten Versionen* (Vienna, 1971)

MS.:¹ Grottaferrata, Z.a.XLIV (444) (s. XIII), ff. 1r–73r

Other Translations: For this passage, see Mango, *Art*, 215–16; J. Mavrogordato, *Digenes Akrites* (Oxford, 1956); D. B. Hull, *Digenis Akritis: The Two-Blooded Border Lord* (Athens, Ohio, 1971) (English); C. Jouanno, *Digénis Akritis, le héros des frontières: une épopée byzantine* (Paris, 1998) (French); P. Odorico, *Digenis Akritis, poema anonimo bizantino* (Florence, 1995) (Italian)

Significance

An example of the *locus amoenus* motif with historical overtones: the palace depicted in this passage can be located both in a literary tradition that stretches back to Antiquity and forward to the Palaiologan period and in a historical context in the circumstances of Byzantine occupation of the Euphrates frontier region in the ninth and tenth centuries.

The Author

Digenis Akritis is the title now given to an anonymous narrative of the life and deeds of a medieval Greek warrior hero. The text survives in six manuscripts ranging in date from the late thirteenth to the late seventeenth century; all but one (in prose) use fifteen-syllable verse. The tale that is told is recognizably the same in each version, but the wording differs extensively, making it impossible to pare the versions back to a single original text; intriguingly the two oldest versions (those now in the Grottaferrata and Escorial collections) were combined in the early sixteenth century to make an omnibus edition, which no longer survives independently but can be glimpsed in the four later texts.

The narrative falls into two unequal parts: the tale of the Arab emir who abducted and married the daughter of the Byzantine military governor on the borders with Syria, and,

¹ Consulted.

at greater length, the story of Digenis (“of Double Descent”), his Arab-Byzantine son – his precocious childhood, his hunting achievements, his clashes with brigands, his contented life with his abducted bride in their castle on the banks of the Euphrates, and finally their death on the same day. Several historical strands are apparent: names reminiscent of ninth-century Paulician heretics, episodes from the tenth-century Arab–Byzantine wars, and technical administrative terminology that was in use until the late eleventh century. The narrative’s episodic structure, and its degraded historical allusions, suggest that this material had circulated orally in “ballad” form for some time before being strung together to make up a sequential story of the life and loves of a warrior hero. The most likely time and place for consolidation to have taken place is in Constantinople in the years from the 1120s onwards when the composition of novels in the late antique manner was fashionable; passages in Theodore Prodromos’ *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* (written before 1138) parody *Digenis*.

Text and Context

This passage is taken from the Grottaferrata (G) version of *Digenis*. The G version, in the oldest surviving manuscript of *Digenis*, presents overall a more coherent narrative than that in the Escorial (E) manuscript, which dates from the late fifteenth century, though in many ways *Digenis* G is more prosaic than *Digenis* E. The equivalent scene in E is found at E 1629–59. In both versions, the palace is placed in a garden, a *locus amoenus* that looks back to idealized gardens found, for example, in Achilles Tatius’ *Leukippe and Kleitophon*; these enclosed a romance’s heroine and, in the later medieval tradition in both Latin and Greek, came to symbolize the heroine’s closely guarded virginity.

Text

Μέσον αὐτοῦ τοῦ θαυμαστοῦ καὶ τερπνοῦ παραδείσου
 οἶκον τερπνὸν ἀνήγειρεν ὁ γενναῖος Ἄκρίτης
 εὐμεγέθη, τετράγωνον ἐκ λίθων πεπρισμένων,
 45 ἄνωθεν δὲ μετὰ σεμνῶν κίωνων καὶ θυρίδων.
 τοὺς ὀρόφους ἐκόσμησε πάντας μετὰ μουσείου
 ἐκ μαρμάρων πολυτελῶν τῇ αἴγλῃ ἀστραπτόντων·
 τὸ ἔδαφος ἐφαίδρυνεν, ἐψήφωσεν ἐν λίθοις,
 ἔσωθεν δὲ τριώροφα ποιήσας ὑπερῶα,
 50 ἔχοντα ὕψος ἱκανόν, ὀρόφους παμποικίλους,
 ἀνδρῶνας τε σταυροειδεῖς, πεντακούβουκλα ξένα
 μετὰ μαρμάρων φαεινῶν λίαν ἀστραπηβόλων.
 τοσοῦτον δὲ ἐκάλλυνε τὸ ἔργον ὁ τεχνίτης,
 ὥστε νομίζειν ὑφαντὰ τὰ ὀρώμενα εἶναι
 55 ἔκ τε τῶν λίθων τῆς φαιδρᾶς καὶ πολυμόρφου θέας·
 τὸ ἔδαφος κατέστρωσεν ἐκ λίθων ὀνουχίτων
 ἠκονημένων ἰσχυρῶς, ὡς δοκεῖν τοὺς ὀρῶντας
 ὕδωρ ὑπάρχειν πεπηγὸς εἰς κρυστάλλινον φύσιν.
 ἀμφοτέρωθεν ἴδρυσεν τῶν μερῶν ἐκ πλαγίου
 60 χαμοτρικλίνους θαυμαστούς, εὐμήκεις, χρυσορόφους,
 ἐν οἷς πάντων τὰ τρόπαια τῶν πάλαι ἐν ἀνδρείᾳ
 λαμπάντων ἀνιστόρησε χρυσόμουσα, ὠραῖα,
 τὴν τοῦ Σαμψῶν ἀρχίσσας τε πρὸς ἀλλοφύλους μάχην,
 λέοντα ὅπως ἔσχισε τῇ χειρὶ παραδόξως,
 65 πύλας ὅπως μετὰ κλειθρῶν πόλεως ἀλλοφύλων
 ἐν τῷ λόφῳ ἠγάγετο, ὅποτε ἀπεκλείσθη,
 ἀλλοφύλων τοὺς ἐμπαιγμούς καὶ τὰς ἐξολοθρεύσεις,
 τελευταῖον τὴν τοῦ ναοῦ κατάλυσιν ἀθρόαν
 τὴν γεναμένην παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐν ταῖς πάλαι ἡμέραις
 70 καὶ αὐτὸν ἀπολλύμενον μετὰ τῶν ἀλλοφύλων.
 μέσον παράγει τὸν Δαβὶδ χωρὶς ὀπλων παντοίων,
 μόνην σφενδόνην τῇ χειρὶ κατέχων καὶ τὸν λίθον·
 ἐκεῖθεν δὲ τὸν Γολιάθ μέγαν τῇ ἡλικίᾳ
 καὶ τῇ ἰδέᾳ φοβερόν πολύν τε ἐν ἰσχύϊ,
 75 πεφραγμένον ἐκ κεφαλῆς μέχρι ποδῶν σιδήρῳ
 καὶ τῇ χειρὶ ἀκόντιον φέροντα ὡς ἄττιον,
 ὀλοσίδηρον τῇ χροᾷ τῇ τοῦ ζωγράφου τέχνῃ
 ἔγραψε τοῦτον καὶ αὐτοῦ κινήματα πολέμου—
 λίθῳ εὐστόχως τε βληθεὶς ὁ Γολιάθ εὐθέως
 80 ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν κατέπεσε τρωμένος παραυτίκα—
 καὶ τὸν Δαβὶδ δραμόντα τε καὶ ἄρανα τὸ ξίφος

Translation

In the middle of this marvellous and delightful pleasure garden
 the noble Frontiersman built a delightful house,¹
 of good size, four-square, of hewn stones,
 45 with imposing columns and windows in the upper part.
 He decorated all the ceilings with mosaics
 from costly marbles, gleaming in their brilliance.
 He made the floor bright and paved it with stone pieces.
 Inside he made upper rooms with three floors,
 50 fair in height, with ceilings of many shades
 and cross-shaped halls, extraordinary five-domed chambers²
 with glittering marble that sparkled most radiantly.
 The craftsman so beautified his work
 that you might think that what you saw was woven
 55 out of the precious stones' bright and multi-formed appearance.
 He paved the floor with onyx
 that had been so highly polished that onlookers thought
 it was water frozen into ice.
 At an angle on both sides he set up
 60 marvellous dining-chambers, of a good length, with golden ceilings,³
 on which he recorded the triumphs of all the illustrious men of valor
 from the past in beautiful mosaics of gold,⁴
 beginning with Samson's battle against the Philistines,⁵
 how – unbelievably – he tore the lion apart with his hands,
 65 how he carried off the aliens' gates, bolts and all,
 to the hill when he had been imprisoned,
 his mockery and overthrow of the aliens,
 and finally the complete destruction of the temple,
 that he achieved in days gone by,
 70 when he destroyed himself together with the aliens.
 In the middle he displayed David, without weapons of any kind,
 holding only a sling in his hand and a stone.
 And next Goliath, huge in stature,
 terrifying in appearance and great in strength,
 75 defended from head to foot with iron⁶
 and holding in his hand a javelin like a loom,
 entirely iron in color through the painter's art:
 he depicted him and his activities in war –
 Goliath, who had been swiftly struck by a well-aimed stone,
 80 at once fell wounded to the ground –
 and David, running up and raising his sword,

καὶ τεμόντα τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ λαβόντα τὸ νῆκος,
εἶτα τὸν φθόνον τοῦ Σαούλ, φυγὴν τοῦ πραοτάτου,
τὰς μυρίας ἐπιβουλὰς, Θεοῦ τὰς ἐκδικήσεις.

85 Ἄχιλλέως ἱστόρησε τοὺς μυθικοὺς πολέμους,
τὸ κάλλος Ἄγαμέμνονος, σφαγὴν τὴν ὀλεθρίαν,
Πηνελόπην τὴν σώφρονα, τοὺς κτανθέντας νυμφίους,
Ἵδυσσεύως τὴν θαυμαστὴν πρὸς τὸν Κύκλωπα τόλμην,
Βελλεροφόντην κτείναντα Χίμαιραν τὴν πυρφόρον,

90 Ἀλεξάνδρου τὰ τρόπαια, τὴν τοῦ Δαρείου ἦτταν,
Κανδάκης τὰ βασίλεια καὶ τὴν αὐτῆς σοφίαν,
τὴν πρὸς Βραχμαῖνας ἀφίξιν, αὐθις πρὸς Ἀμαζόνας,
λοιπά τε κατορθώματα τοῦ σοφοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου,
ἄλλα τε πλήθη θαυμαστά, πολυειδεῖς ἀνδρείας·

95 τὰ τοῦ Μωσέως θαύματα, πληγὰς τῶν Αἰγυπτίων
Ἰουδαίων τὴν ἔξοδον, γογγυσμοὺς ἀγνωμόνων,
Θεοῦ τὴν ἀγανάκτησιν, θεράποντος δεήσεις
καὶ Ἰησοῦ τὰς τοῦ Ναυῆ ἐνδόξους ἀριστείας.
ταῦτα καὶ ἄλλα πλείονα ἐν τοῖς δυσὶ τρικλίνοις

100 ὁ Διγενὴς ἱστόρησε χρυσόμουσα ποιήσας,
ἃ τοῖς ὀρώσιν ἄπειρον τὴν ἡδονὴν παρεῖχον.
ἐντὸς τοῦ οἴκου τῆς αὐλῆς ὑπῆρχε τὸ πεδίον
πολὺ ἔχον διάστημα εἰς τε μῆκος καὶ πλάτος·
τούτου ἐν μέσῳ ἵδρυσε ναόν, ἔνδοξον ἔργον,

105 ἀγίου ἐν ὀνόματι μάρτυρος Θεοδώρου
καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ τὸν ἴδιον πανέντιμον πατέρα
θάπτει κομίσας τὸν νεκρὸν ἀπὸ Καππαδοκίας
λίθοις τὸ μνημα φαεινοῖς, ὡς ἔπρεπε, κοσμήσας.

and cutting off Goliath's head and achieving victory;
 then Saul's envy, the flight of that most gentle man,
 the myriad plots and God's vengeance.
 85 He recorded Achilles' legendary wars,
 the beauty of Agamemnon, the deadly slaughter,
 wise Penelope, the suitors who were slain,
 Odysseus' marvellous daring against the Cyclops,
 Bellerophon killing the fire-bearing Chimaera,
 90 the triumphs of Alexander, the defeat of Dareios,
 Kandake's palace and her wisdom,
 the journey to the Brahmans and then to the Amazons,
 and the rest of the wise Alexander's achievements
 and a host of other marvellous feats, brave deeds of many kinds;
 95 Moses' miracles, the Egyptians' plagues,
 the Exodus of the Jews, the complaints of the ungrateful,
 God's wrath, the attendant's supplication,
 the glorious exploits of Joshua son of Nun.
 All these scenes and many more in the two dining-chambers
 100 Digenis recorded in gold mosaic,
 which provided boundless pleasure to those who saw them.
 Within the courtyard of the house was a flat area
 of great size in both length and breadth.
 In the middle of this Digenis set up a church, a glorious structure,
 105 in the name of the martyr Saint Theodore;⁷
 and in it he buried his revered father,
 bringing the body from Cappadocia
 and adorning the tomb, as was fitting, with brilliant stones.

Commentary

1. The physical structures implied by this description are those of an eleventh- or twelfth-century aristocratic house, whether in Constantinople or the countryside.²
2. Perhaps a tetraconch (four bays) built round a central space, reminiscent of the Pentakoubouklion built by Basil I in the Great Palace.³
3. vv. 59–60, 99. Perhaps the two dining-chambers were intended for separate use by the men and women of the household, as has been suggested in connection with the Pentakouboulion of the Great Palace.⁴
4. The fashion for decorating aristocratic houses in the twelfth century with scenes of past imperial triumphs is discussed in Magdalino and Nelson, “Emperor,” 128–83. Of the figures in these scenes Samson, David, Goliath, Joshua, Moses, and the Exodus of the Jews are drawn from the Old Testament, Achilles, Agamemnon, Odysseus, Penelope, and Bellerophon from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, while Alexander, Dareios, the Brahmans, and Kandake refer to the Alexander Romance.
5. Samson appears notably in the *opus sectile* pavement of the Pantokrator monastery, completed by 1138.⁵
6. Goliath is envisaged in the heavy *kataphrakt* armour that was revived in the tenth century in the campaigns of Nikephoros II Phokas (r.963–69), with tactics set out in his *Praecepta militaria*.⁶
7. The formation of the cult of the two Saints Theodore, with its significance for the Byzantine military élite, is discussed in Haldon 2016.⁷

Bibliography

Secondary Literature

The bibliography on the *Digenis* poems is vast, covering its textual formation, its historical contexts, and much else. For surveys of recent work, in addition to the references in the editions cited above, see:

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- Magdalino and Nelson, “Emperor.”

2 See Magdalino 1984: 95–98; Hunt 1984: 142–45; Ousterhout 2005: 145–51.

3 *Vita Basilii* (ed. Ševčenko) 90.5 = Theoph.Cont. V.90.

4 *The Book of Ceremonies* (comm. Moffatt and Tall) 2.15.

5 See Megaw 1963: 333–71, at 335–40; for the symbolism of Samson see esp. Ousterhout 2001: 146–48.

6 See McGeer 1995 for texts and discussion.

7 Useful information in Walter 2003, White 2013.

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I.5.12 John Kinnamos (c.1143–after 1185)

Paintings in the House of Alexios Axouch in Suburban Constantinople

ALICIA WALKER

Ed.: A. Meineke, *Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, CSHB 23.1 (Bonn, 1836), 266 (ll. 4–9) and 267 (ll. 13–16)

MS.:¹ Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 163 (s. XIII)

Other Translations: John Kinnamos, *The Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, transl. C. M. Brand (New York, 1976), 199–202; Mango, *Art*, 224–25 (partial) (English); Jean Kinnamos, *Chronique*, transl. J. Rosenblum (Paris, 1972), 170–72 (French)

Significance

This text offers a rare, if succinct, description of domestic decoration in the region of Constantinople. The fact that Kinnamos reads Alexios' choice of program in political terms evinces how works of art could be perceived as not only aesthetic objects but also social, communicative acts.² Furthermore, Kinnamos reveals that Byzantine viewers were sensitive to differences in artistic mode and able to recognize the styles of foreign traditions and ethnic groups. Still, Kinnamos' accusation of sedition may have distorted the facts. Instead of a political statement, the murals could represent a Byzantine aristocrat's participation in what had become – by the mid twelfth century – a cosmopolitan, pan-Mediterranean fashion for the iconographic themes and stylistic forms of contemporary Islamic courtly arts.

The Author³

John Kinnamos was a historian and a member of the imperial administration. He held the office of *grammatikos* (secretary) under Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80), a post that required him to accompany the emperor on military expeditions to Europe and Asia Minor. He seems to have enjoyed a privileged position at the court and close contact with the imperial circle. Following Manuel I's death, Kinnamos may have fallen out of political favor, but he re-established his standing under Andronikos I Komnenos (r.1183–85). He outlived the last of the Komnenian emperors, but his fate under the Angeloi is unknown.⁴

1 Not consulted.

2 On this point see also Magdalino, *Manuel*, 471–72.

3 On the author see K. Warcaba, II.3.1 in this volume.

4 Brand 1976: 2–5.

Text and Context

Kinnamos is best known for his history, conventionally titled the *Epitome*, which covers events of the twelfth century from 1118 to 1176, corresponding to the reigns of John II Komnenos (r.1118–43) and Manuel I. As an imperial secretary, Kinnamos likely experienced first-hand many of the events he describes in the later period of his account. It is probable that he learned of other events in his narrative from people who witnessed them personally.⁵ Charles Brand proposes that Kinnamos composed his history c.1180–82, during the reign of Manuel I's heir, Alexios II.⁶ Kinnamos' manuscript appears not to have been copied or widely disseminated in his own time.⁷

Kinnamos is often discussed in tandem with another prominent historian of the twelfth century, Niketas Choniates (1155/57–1217). The two chroniclers recounted many of the same events, and Choniates drew upon Kinnamos' manuscript as a source for his own history.⁸ Despite this overlap, their perspectives differed significantly. In particular, Kinnamos portrays Manuel I in unflatteringly laudatory terms, while Choniates was critical of the emperor.⁹

The excerpt from Kinnamos' chronicle translated here recounts the demise of Alexios Axouch (b.c. 1120), a high-ranking member of Manuel I's administration who had close personal ties to the Komnenian dynasty.¹⁰ The story of Alexios features prominently in both Kinnamos' and Choniates' histories and by all accounts was a major scandal of Manuel's reign. The Axouch family was of "Persian" (Seljuq) origin, but rose to power at the imperial court. Alexios' father, John Axouch (d.1150), had come to Constantinople during the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118) in 1097 as a young captive following the siege of Nicaea. John Axouch was made a companion for Alexios I's son and heir apparent, John II, and later became his most trusted minister.¹¹ Under John II, John Axouch was granted the title *sebastos* (literally "venerable," an esteemed rank held predominantly by members of the imperial family) and occupied the powerful office of *megas domestikos* (supreme military commander).¹² While Kinnamos is less than charitable in his characterization of John Axouch, Choniates reveres him for his equanimity, intelligence, military acumen, and loyalty.¹³ After John II's death, John Axouch played a critical role in securing the throne for Manuel I, however modern scholars note evidence of tension between the older adviser and younger emperor.¹⁴

John's son, Alexios Axouch was raised at court and, under Manuel I, held the position of *protostrator* ("chief of the imperial grooms," initially a post of relatively low standing,

5 Brand 1976: 2–6.

6 Brand 1976: 4–5.

7 Brand 1976: 10–11.

8 Brand 1976: 11; Simpson 2013: 215–24.

9 Magdalino 1983; Simpson 2013: 223–24.

10 Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, 2, 117–35.

11 Brand 1989: 15.

12 "Axouch," *ODB* 1:239; "Sebastos," *ODB* 3: 1862–63; "Megas domestikos," *ODB* 2: 1239–40.

13 Brand 1989: 4–6; Magdalino, *Manuel*, 218–19; Simpson 2013: 323–24.

14 Magdalino 1987; Magdalino, *Manuel*, 192, 218–19; Stancović 2007.

but by the twelfth century one of increasing significance that carried military and administrative responsibilities).¹⁵ He married into the imperial family, wedding Manuel I's niece, Maria (b. c.1125).¹⁶ In 1157 Manuel dispatched Alexios Axouch to Ancona to negotiate a peace treaty with Western powers, a task all sources agree Axouch accomplished with aplomb.¹⁷ Alexios Axouch also led successful military campaigns for the emperor in Europe and Asia Minor. Yet in 1167 he was accused of treason and banished to a monastery.¹⁸

In the passage discussed here, Kinnamos interprets paintings in Alexios Axouch's suburban home as celebrations of the deeds of the Seljuq Sultan of Ikonion (Konya), Kiliç Arslan II (r. 1156–92), the sometimes enemy, sometimes ally of Manuel I. Kinnamos reports that when Axouch was dispatched by the emperor to Cilicia, he sought out Kiliç Arslan in order to befriend him and forge an alliance against Manuel.¹⁹ Upon returning to Constantinople, Axouch imprudently commissioned paintings that purportedly celebrated Kiliç Arslan's military prowess. Kinnamos presents these works of art as part of the evidence of Alexios Axouch's sedition, together with other activities including recruiting mercenaries to revolt against Manuel, soliciting magical potions from a sorcerer to poison the emperor and render him impotent, and exchanging letters with Kiliç Arslan that documented these rebellious schemes.²⁰ Judging Alexios to have foolishly exposed his own treasonous intentions, Kinnamos presents him as flagrantly undermining the authority of the emperor.²¹

Byzantine historians who discuss these events differ in their interpretations of them. Niketas Choniates perceived the accusations against Alexios Axouch to be a calumny and believed that Manuel I persecuted him unjustly as a result of poor guidance, jealousy, and superstition.²² Indeed Choniates suggests that Manuel suspected Alexios' disloyalty because of a popular prophecy that claimed an emperor whose name started with an "M" would be unseated by a challenger whose name began with an "A."²³ Kinnamos, in contrast, presents Alexios as unquestionably guilty. Modern scholars debate whether Alexios Axouch was innocent, although Brand makes a strong case in favor of Choniates' position.²⁴

15 Magdalino, *Manuel*, 266; "Protostrator," *ODB* 3: 1748–49.

16 Maria, granddaughter of John II Komnenos, was the daughter of Manuel's older brother, Alexios Komnenos. The marriage took place c.1141; see Varzos, *Γενεαλόγισα*, 2, 117–35; Brand 1989: 8; Magdalino, *Manuel*, 208.

17 Magdalino, *Manuel*, 61–63.

18 Brand 1989: 8–10; "Axouch," *ODB* 1: 239; Simpson 2013: 223.

19 Cilicia is situated in south-central Anatolia along the Mediterranean coast and north of Cyprus; it is traversed by the Taurus Mountains. During the Komnenian period, Byzantine control of Cilicia was unstable; both John II (in 1137) and Manuel I (in 1159) were engaged in efforts to secure it. Kiliç Arslan's capital at Ikonion (modern-day Konya) was located on the path between Constantinople and Cilicia.

20 Brand 1989: 9–10; Simpson 2013: 222–23.

21 PG 133: 633–36; Kinnamos, *Deeds*, 199–200.

22 Choniates, *History*, I, 143 (l. 65)–146 (l. 29); transl. Magoulias, 81–83.

23 Choniates, *History*, I, 146 (l. 40) and 169 (ll. 89–95 and 1–4); transl. Magoulias, 83 and 96.

24 Brand 1989: 9–10; see also Magdalino, *Manuel*, 6–7, 200, 218–19; Beiheimmer 2011: 625–27; Simpson 2013: 222–23, 323–24.

For the present discussion, whether or not Alexios Axouch was in fact guilty of treason is of little significance. Of greater interest is that Kinnamos presents a work of art as an indication of its patron's political inclinations and, in this case, disloyalty. As such, Kinnamos' rhetorical deployment of the decorations at Alexios Axouch's house has something in common with the historian Nicholas Mesarites' (c.1163–after 1216) *ekphrasis* on the so-called Mouchroutas Hall, an architectural structure of “Persian” form in the Great Palace of Constantinople. Mesarites presents the Mouchroutas as a reflection of the ethical and spiritual failures of Alexios Axouch's son, John Komnenos Axouch (d.c.1200).²⁵ In both instances, works of art connected to the “Persian” or “Turkic” (Seljuq) tradition are deployed to expose shortcomings in the moral integrity and political loyalty of the people with whom they are associated.

The story of the Axouch family's rise and fall exemplifies the complex and wide-ranging attitudes toward foreign people and works of art at the Komnenian court, which in the cases of Kinnamos and Mesarites tended toward ethnic prejudice. Even after many decades of living as Christians in Byzantium, the Axouchs were still regarded by these historians as suspect and “other.”²⁶ Their distrust of Alexios Axouch and John Komnenos Axouch may have developed from the twelfth-century surge in Seljuq presence at the imperial court and in Byzantium more widely, a situation which may have enflamed anti-“Persian” sentiments among some courtiers.²⁷ In contrast, Choniates does not comment on Alexios Axouch's ethnic origin, focusing instead on his exemplary character and accomplishments and thereby indicating a competing attitude during the era.²⁸

No other contemporary source mentions the wall paintings of Alexios Axouch's house, and Kinnamos' description of them is brief and lacking in detail. It is impossible to know the precise appearance of these murals, but their martial theme is clear, and Kinnamos' association of them with a Seljuq artistic tradition implies that they were rendered in a medieval Islamic style. Lucy-Anne Hunt suggests that rather than depicting scenes of Kiliç Arslan's victories, Alexios Axouch may have instead decorated his walls with generic motifs from the so-called princely cycle of courtly iconography.²⁹ Found pervasively in medieval Islamic art and architecture, these programs feature scenes of hunting and combat that Kinnamos might have mistaken (or construed) to depict specific individuals and

25 Walker 2012: 144–64. On the text see J. Featherstone, I.6.6 in this volume. For discussion of a “Persian” architectural structure introduced to the episcopal palace in Nafpaktos, see Spingou and Walker 1.5.15 in this volume.

26 Brand 1989: 23–24; Magdalino, *Manuel*, 219.

27 On the dynamic interactions between Byzantine and Seljuq society at this time, especially across the upper social strata of each group see Brand 1989; Beiheimmer 2011; Shukurov 2012.

28 Brand 1989: 23; Simpson 2013: 323–24. Although, as Simpson observes, Choniates at times is highly critical of non-Christian foreigners, and expresses animosity and intolerance toward Byzantium's enemies, including the Seljuqs; Simpson 2013: 324–29.

29 Hunt 1984, esp. 139–40.

events.³⁰ Such iconography enjoyed immense popularity throughout the Mediterranean region in the twelfth century, appearing in monuments and objects of Latin, Byzantine, and Islamic production.³¹ By selecting this foreign style of decoration for his home, Alexios Axouch may have been innocently following cosmopolitan trends in courtly fashions of the era.³²

30 On this category of medieval Islamic courtly iconography see Shepherd 1974: 79–92; Shoshan 1991: 67–107, esp. 72–74; Hoffman 2008: 107–32; Pancaroğlu 2017: 504–18.

31 For examples and further discussion of this phenomenon see Hoffman 1999: 403–20; Hoffman 2001: 17–50.

32 For an overview of other examples of Islamicizing decoration in middle Byzantine aristocratic buildings see Hunt 1984; regarding the cosmopolitan character of the Byzantine court under Manuel I see Magdalino, *Manuel*, 106–08.

Text

... χρόνῳ δὲ ὕστερον ἐς Βυζάντιον ἐπανιών,¹ ἐπειδὴ ποτε γραφαῖς ἐπαγλαῖσαι τῶν προαστείων ἀντῶν δωματίων ἠβουλήθη τινά, οὔτε τινὰς Ἑλληνίους παλαιότερας ἐνέθετο πράξεις αὐτοῖς οὔτε μὴν τὰ βασιλέως, ὅποια καὶ μᾶλλον τοῖς ἐν ἀρχαῖς εἶθισται, διεξήλθεν ἔργα, ὅσα ἔν τε πολέμοις καὶ θηροκτονίαις αὐτὸς εἴργαστο.² τοσοῦτοις γὰρ αὐτὸν ξυμπλακῆναι συνέβη καὶ τοιοῖσδε φύσιν ἀντικαταστήναι θηρίοις, ὅσοις οὐδένα τῶν πώποτε γεγονότων ἠκούσαμεν.³ καὶ εἴ τι μὴ νόμων ἄπο φέρομαι ἱστορικῶν, ὅποιοι οὖν τι ἄρτι ἐκ τούτων ἐξέλθω.⁴ ἦν μὲν περὶ τροπᾶς ἤδη χειμερινάς, καὶ χιῶν κατὰ γῆς τοσαύτη ἐπεστοίβαστο, ὡς φάραγγας μὲν καὶ τὰς ἐν ὄρεσι σήραγγας πάσας ὑποκεκρῦφθαι μονονουχί, ὑπερβολῆ δὲ τῆ ἐκ τοῦ ψύχους μικροῦ καὶ πεπηχθαι τὰ σώματα. ἀμέλει καὶ θηρία μὲν πάντα οὐκ ἔχοντα ὅπη κρύπαιντο, τὰς λόχμας ἐξαναδύντα ἀθρόα ὑπὲρ τῆς χιόνος ἐφέροντο, πτηνῶν δὲ ἀγέλαι οὐκέτι τοῖς πτίλοις κεκρῆσθαι δεδυνημένοι (συνεῖχε γὰρ ταῦτα ὁ κρύσταλλος καὶ οἷόν τις δεσμός ἐπεκάθιζεν, ὡς ἐπὶ τῶν ἰξευτῶν ἔστιν ἰδεῖν)⁵ πεζαὶ λοιπὸν ἀντὶ πτηνῶν ἦσαν θηρσὶ καὶ ἀνθρώποις ἐτοιμότατον θήραμα κείμεναι. βασιλεὺς δὲ θηρευσόμενος ἐπὶ τι τῶν ἐξῆς χώρων, ᾧ Δαματρῦς ἢ κλησίς ἐστιν.⁶ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἔργου τοίνυν γεγονότι μέγα τι χρῆμα θηρὸς ὑπαντᾷ, οὐπω μὲν λέοντος, οὐ γὰρ ξυνεχώρει λέγειν ἢ παρδαλῆ, τοῦτο δὲ αὐτὸ ἀφηρεῖτο τὸ μέγεθος καὶ ἡ πρὸς λέοντα ὁμοιότης· ἦν οὖν διπλῆ τις καὶ ἐπαμφοτερίζουσα φύσις, πάρδαλις ἐν λέοντι καὶ λέων ἐν παρδαλεῖ, τεράστιόν τι μῖγμα ποιότητων, ἐν τῷ γενναίῳ τὸ γοργόν, τὸ θυμικὸν ἐν τῷ βλοσυρῷ, καὶ καθάπαξ πάντα δι' ἀλλήλων ἤκοντα τὰ ἀμφοῖν ἴδια. ὁ μὲν δὲ θῆρ τοιοῦτος ἦν, τῶν δὲ βασιλεῖ ἐπομένων, ἐπειδὴ τοῦτον εἶδον, ἀπερρύησαν οἱ πλείους. ἦν γὰρ οὐδὲ ἰδεῖν τοῖς πολλοῖς ἀνεκτός. ὡς δὲ καὶ ἀγχοῦ ἤδη ἐγένετο, οὐδεὶς ἦν τὸ λοιπὸν ὃς τούτῳ ξυνίστατο. ἀλλὰ βασιλεὺς φευγόντων ὁ παρήρητο ξίφος ἐλκύσας τὸν θῆρα πατάξων ἐφέρετο, πληγὴν τε αὐτῷ τοῦ μετώπου κατενεγκῶν ἄχρι καὶ ἐπὶ στέρνα διήλασεν. ὁ μὲν δὲ Βασιλεὺς τοιοῦσδε τις ἐπὶ θηροκτονίαις ἐγένετο. Ἀλέξιος δὲ (ἐπάνειμι γὰρ ὅθεν τὴν ἐκβολὴν τοῦ λόγου ἐποίησάμην) τούτων ἀφέμενος τὰς τοῦ σουλτάν ἀνεστήλου στρατηγίας, νήπιος ἄπερ ἐν σκότῳ φυλάσσειν ἐχρῆν ταῦτα ἐπὶ δωματίων αὐτὸς δημοσιεύων κατὰ τὴν γραφὴν.⁷

Translation

... Returning some time later to Byzantion [i.e. Constantinople],¹ when he [Alexios] wished to decorate one of his suburban houses with paintings, he included in them neither any ancient Hellenic deeds nor those of the emperor, which men in power are indeed accustomed to do, nor his [the emperor's] great feats, which he has achieved in war and hunting.² For he [Manuel] had combatted and battled so many beasts of such great nature, the likes of which we have not heard told about anyone else who was ever born.³ And lest I be led astray from the rules for historians, I shall set out an example of them [i.e. Manuel's deeds].⁴ It was already around the winter solstice, and so much snow had accumulated on the earth that all the clefts and ravines in the mountains were covered over in a single night, and living things were almost frozen by the excessive cold. Indeed, all the animals that lacked a place for hiding came forth from their lairs and swept over the snow en masse; flocks of birds no longer able to use their wings (for the ice bound these [i.e. their feathers] together and held them down like a shackle, as it is possible to see among bird hunters),⁵ thereafter flew on their feet instead of their wings, and so made easy prey for wild beasts and men. The emperor went hunting in one of his eastern estates called Damatrys.⁶ So, while he was engaged with this task, some great creature came upon him, by no means a lion, nor could it be said to be a leopard, again, its size and its resemblance to a lion excluded this [possibility]. Its nature was somehow double and ambiguous, drawing both together, a leopard in a lion and a lion in a leopard, some monstrous mixture of qualities, fierce by birth, spirited in its fearfulness, and entirely embodying all characteristics of both. Such was this beast that most of those accompanying the emperor fled when they saw this thing. For it was unbearable for many even to behold. When it came near, there was no one who confronted it. But while they fled, the emperor drew his sword, which was hanging at his side, and strode forth to strike the beast; he thus smote its brow and thrust through up to its chest. And so, such was the emperor in hunting. Alexios (for now I come back to where I made the digression from my narrative) by depicting the battles of the sultan, foolishly disclosed through the paintings in his home things he ought to have kept in the dark.⁷

Commentary

1. Kinnamos begins the paragraph from which this excerpt derives with a terse statement of Alexios Axouch's transgressions and the punishment he received. Kinnamos never questions Alexios' guilt. The author then steps back in time to explain the events that led to Alexios Axouch's fate. In the lines immediately preceding the description of the house, Kinnamos recounts how, just before commissioning the paintings, Alexios Axouch had undertaken a secret visit to the court of Kiliç Arslan.³³
2. Although there are no surviving examples of Byzantine wall painting that depict the imperial themes that Kinnamos specifies, references to such programs are found in middle Byzantine texts. They describe murals in the imperial palace commissioned by Manuel and portraying his military accomplishments as well as decorative programs in aristocratic residences that lauded the Komnenian emperors.³⁴
3. The royal hunt was understood as a metaphor for battle and carried significant weight in middle Byzantine imperial reality as well as in imperial visual and verbal rhetoric.³⁵
4. In his digression,³⁶ Kinnamos describes one of Manuel I's heroic hunts, thereby representing in words the kind of panegyric image that he states "men of power" should commission for their homes. In so doing, he makes a verbal statement of loyalty to the emperor in contrast to the visual statement of betrayal that he claims Alexios Axouch advertised through the decoration of his home.³⁷
5. Kinnamos may refer here to a technique in Byzantine bird hunting that involved tethering (or otherwise immobilizing) birds as bait to attract other birds.
6. Damatrys (modern Samatya in Sancaktepe, Samandıra/Istanbul) was the location of an imperial hunting lodge. Located in Bithynia, about a dozen miles inland from the eastern coast of the Bosphoros, the site was established by Emperor Tiberios II (r.574–82) and completed by Emperor Maurice (r.582–602). In the middle Byzantine era, Damatrys was a key gateway for military expeditions to the East.³⁸
7. In the section of the text that follows, Kinnamos details the case against Alexios, citing his specific transgressions as well as Manuel's initial clemency. He then documents the witnesses who attested to Alexios Axouch's guilt.³⁹

33 Kinnamos, *Deeds*, Bk. VI.6, ed. Meineke, 265–66, transl. Brand, 199.

34 Magdalino 1978; Magdalino and Nelson, "Emperor," 135–37; Magdalino, *Manuel*, 470–77, esp. 471–72.

35 See Maguire 1992; Patlagean 1992; Ševčenko 2002.

36 Kinnamos, *Deeds*, Bk. VI.6, ed. Meineke, 266–67, transl. Brand, 200.

37 For the parallels in content and purpose of artistic and literary panegyric during the Komnenian era, esp. in the reign of Manuel I, see Magdalino, *Manuel*, 470–71.

38 See Akyürek *et al.* 2007; Ricci 2008: 10–11.

39 Kinnamos, *Deeds*, Bk. VI.6, ed. Meineke, 267–68, transl. Brand, 200–02.

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I.5.13 Riccoldo di Pennino da Monte di Croce, OP (Riccoldo da Monte di Croce or Riccoldo da Firenze) (c.1242–1320)

*Liber peregrinationis/The Book of His Pilgrimage,
“On the Holy Sepulchre of the Lord”*

M. MICHÈLE MULCHAHEY

Ed.: The text employed here has been transcribed from Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, MS. lat. 4°.466 (s. XIV inc.), ff. 1r–24r, esp. ff. 5ra–6ra;¹ previous editions: *Fratris Ricoldi de Monte Crucis Liber peregrinacionis*, in *Peregrinatores medii aevi quattuor: Burchardus de Monte Sion, Ricoldus de Monte Crucis, Odoricus de Foro Julii, Wilbrandus de Oldeborg*, ed. J. C. M. Laurent (Leipzig, 1864; repr. 1873), 101–41, esp. 112–13; Riccoldo de Monte Croce, *Pérégrination en Terre Sainte et au Proche Orient: texte latin et traduction; Lettres sur la chute de Saint-Jean d’Acre*, ed. R. Kappler, *Textes et traductions des classiques français du Moyen Âge* (Paris, 1997), esp. 68–74

MSS.:² Berlin, Staatsbibliothek MS. lat. 4°.466 (s. XIV inc.), ff. 1r–24r

Paris, BnF, Latin 3343 (s. XV), ff. 80v–85v (fragment)

Paris, BnF, Latin 6225 (s. XV), ff. 154r–161v (fragment)

Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale, H.II.33 (s. XVI), ff. 235r–246v (abbreviation)

Vatican City, BAV, Barb. lat. 2687 (s. XV), ff. 1r–12v

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Other Translations: R. George-Tvrtković, *A Christian Pilgrim in Medieval Iraq:*

Riccoldo da Montecroce’s Encounter with Islam (Turnhout, 2012), Appendix B, 175–227.

Excerpts: D. Pringle, *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Land, 1187–1291*, *Crusade Texts in Translation* 23 (London and New York, 2012/2016) no. 15, 61–75 (English);

Kappler, as above (French); Riccoldo da Monte di Croce, *Libro della peregrinazione: Epistole alla Chiesa Trionfante*, intro., transl., and notes by D. Cappi (Genoa and

Milan, 2005) (Italian)

Significance

The whole of the *Liber peregrinationis* provides an illustration of one way that descriptions of eastern sites and artworks made their way west: through the tales and written descriptions of travelers, pilgrims, and missionaries. The passage translated here offers information about the disposition of the shrine of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem in

¹ The Berlin manuscript was produced by the scriptorium at Santa Maria Novella in Florence under the supervision of fra Riccoldo himself, who corrected and annotated his text; it is being used here because of this direct connection with the author, as well as the overall quality of the text it preserves.

² Only the Berlin manuscript has been consulted; see n. 1 above.

the late thirteenth century, including the rock-cut character of the lower church founded by St. Helena on the site of her discovery of the True Cross. The brief description of the mosaic depicting Christ indicates the presence of such Byzantinizing works in the Levant, and Riccoldo's own response to seeing such art as a Westerner is worth noting.

The Author

Riccoldo was born in Florence, after his family had moved into the city from Monte di Croce, located in the hills of the Florentine *contado*.³ He joined the Dominican order at Santa Maria Novella in Florence around 1267, and soon showed scholarly potential: he was assigned to teach logic at the Dominicans' convent in Pisa in 1272,⁴ where he produced a partial commentary on Aristotle's *Peri Hermenias*,⁵ and would also serve as lector in theology in Prato.⁶ But a career in the classroom was not to be: fra Riccoldo was destined for missionary work.

In 1287, the Dominican master-general Munio de Zamora proposed Riccoldo to Pope Nicholas IV for a preaching mission to the East, and by late the next year he had reached Acre.⁷ Before heading further east, however, Riccoldo first made a pilgrimage tour of the Holy Land. He mentions celebrating Epiphany in 1289 at the River Jordan.⁸ Four months later he was fully engaged in his mission, now in Sivas in central Cappadocia.⁹ From there Riccoldo headed into Persia, where he spent six months preaching in Tabriz.¹⁰ By 1291, he had reached Baghdad, reporting that it was there he heard that Acre had fallen.¹¹ Riccoldo was still preaching with the aid of an interpreter in Tabriz,¹² but once in Baghdad, he attended the city's public *madrasa* to study the Arabic language and Arabic literature.¹³

In addition to his on-going mission amongst the Muslim population, Riccoldo also engaged with Baghdad's Nestorian Christians. His travels had been punctuated by encounters with Eastern Christian sects,¹⁴ and Riccoldo apparently found it was the confrontation with Christian heresy that truly tested the limits of his theological abilities. He headed home around 1300, in order to clarify certain points of doctrine with the Holy See.¹⁵

3 Older theories that Riccoldo adopted the sobriquet "Monte Croce" as a reminder of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land have been discounted.

4 Orlandi 1955: I, 37; Kaeppli and Dondaine 1941: 39.

5 It survives in a single manuscript, Šibenik, Samostan Sv. Frane., Bibl. Min. Convent., MS. 14.B, ff. 1r–8r.

6 Kaeppli and Dondaine 1941: 77–78.

7 George-Tvrtković 2012: 12.

8 Kappler 1997: 52–54.

9 Modern-day Sebaste, in Turkey: see Pringle 2012: 55; also *Epistola II*, ed. Röhrich 1884: 273, transl. George-Tvrtković 2012: 148.

10 Kappler 1997: 118

11 See p. 626–27.

12 Kappler 1997: 118.

13 George-Tvrtković 2012: 9.

14 Kappler 1997: 16–17; 74; 124–36; 136–54.

15 Orlandi 1955: I, 37.

Fra Riccoldo intended to return to the East,¹⁶ but ill-health thwarted those plans, and he settled down to a quieter ministry at Santa Maria Novella. He penned a series of guides for missionaries, including a description of the lands he visited, the *Liber peregrinationis*, as well as more polemical works about the faiths he encountered there, his *Contra legem sarracenorum* and the *Libellus ad nationes orientales*.¹⁷ Fra Riccoldo da Monte di Croce died at Florence on October 31, 1320.¹⁸

Text and Context

Riccoldo da Monte di Croce probably began keeping a journal of his travels upon his arrival in the Levant in 1288, but the work of editing his recollections to produce the *Liber peregrinationis* (“The Book of his Pilgrimage”) is something he undertook only once he had settled in Baghdad in the early 1290s and completed in Florence many years later.¹⁹ His primary intention in describing the countries he visited – from Palestine through what is modern-day Turkey and down into Persia – was to provide a guide-book for missionaries, especially the friars of his own order.²⁰ Missionary work amongst non-Christians had become an increasingly important part of the Dominican ministry in the second half of the thirteenth century, and fra Riccoldo’s request to be sent east can be seen as a response to calls like the one famously sent out by the Dominican master-general Humbert of Romans for friars to volunteer for such work and to study the languages that would enable them to succeed in their missionary work.²¹ Riccoldo’s journey began with a more traditional pilgrimage to the Holy Land, however: he says he longed to see the places where Christ lived and died with his own eyes,²² and devotes nearly a third of the *Liber peregrinationis* to describing his experiences at the various sites mentioned in the Gospels. His account presents the sort of affective re-imagining of his own participation in the events of Christ’s life typical of mendicant piety: he preaches and baptizes converts at the River Jordan; he brings gifts to the manger in Bethlehem as the Magi did; he agonizes with the Virgin Mary and St. John at the foot of the Cross on Calvary, where he responds almost viscerally to the images discussed in the passage translated here.²³

The emphasis on mission becomes clearer in the text as Riccoldo departs from Acre to head north and then eastward. The *Liber peregrinationis* now focuses less on the sights and geography of the region and more on the cultures of the peoples fra Riccoldo

16 Symbolically, Riccoldo did not shave his missionary’s beard upon his return to Italy; see Orlandi 1955: I, 37.

17 Mérigoux 1986; Dondaine 1967.

18 Orlandi 1955: I, 38.

19 Panella 1986.

20 Kappler 1997: 36.

21 This was Humbert’s encyclical letter of 1255; see Humbert of Romans, *Epistolae III* (anno 1255) in *Opera II*, 490–94, esp. 492–93. The following year Humbert praised the friars who had answered his call; he refers, in fact, to recent missionary work that quite literally blazed the trail that Riccoldo da Monte di Croce would follow – missions amongst the Tatars and Cumans and ecumenical discussions with the Maronite Christians, amongst them (*ibid.*: 501–02).

22 Kappler 1997: 38.

23 Kappler 1997: 54, 60, 68.

encountered, and begins to provide the sort of record that those who would follow him as missionaries would find truly useful. He was a keen observer, and his descriptions of the Tatars and Kurds, Eastern Christian sects, and Islamic religious practices became an important source of information for Western readers.

The Tatars Riccoldo characterizes as a rapacious nomadic people with little respect for the settled culture of those who lived in towns and cities. He recounts at some length the rise of the Tatar nation, especially the campaigns of Genghis Khan that first spread their influence into India in the east (where Riccoldo believes he invaded the mythical kingdom of Prester John), through the Caucasus Mountains to the west, and south into Syria and Persia, where they laid siege to Baghdad. Riccoldo attributes much of their behavior to the fact that the Tatars had no divinely inspired lawcode to act as a rein on their baser desires. Their later conversion to Islam he characterizes as born of greed for the gifts the Saracens offered them, rather than from any true respect for the *Quʿran* or the law of Mohammed. They did not become Christians, Riccoldo asserts, because the Christians were unwilling to bribe them.²⁴

Fra Riccoldo is, in fact, most interested in the theologies and religious practices of the peoples he met. His primary concern is to inform the missionaries who came after him about what they would find themselves up against. This explains why he devotes lengthy sections of the *Liber peregrinationis* to the nature of the heterodoxy he found in the eastern Christian sects. Having visited the great monastery of St. Matthew near Nineveh,²⁵ for example, Riccoldo praises the monks for their abstinence and their devotion in prayer, but recognizes them as heretics whose theological deviations include a form of monophysitism, as well as the sacramental errors of using leavened bread for the Eucharist and eschewing both the proper formula for baptism and auricular confession to a priest. Riccoldo says he and his companions created great dissension within the community of monks when their teaching found some supporters there. To settle matters, the Jacobite Patriarch allowed a formal disputation²⁶ following which, according to Riccoldo, the Patriarch wrote out his personal profession of Christ's two natures and then allowed the friars to preach their doctrine to the clergy and people of Nineveh.²⁷

Of the Maronites fra Riccoldo has less to say, noting only that they persuaded the archbishop of one unidentified city on the Tigris to write to the pope offering obedience to the Roman Church.²⁸ But the Nestorians, amongst whom Riccoldo would spend the next several years in Baghdad, receive his full attention in the *Liber peregrinationis*. He enumerates the “many things” in which the Nestorians err theologically, most especially their

²⁴ Kappler 1997: 78–114.

²⁵ Founded in the fourth century, the monastery of St. Matthew (Mar Matti or Dayr Sheikh Matti) still exists today, near modern-day Mosul in Iraq; see George-Tvrtković 2012: 201 n. 42.

²⁶ Ever since Dominic himself had debated openly with the Cathars, public disputation had been a standard part of the Dominican approach to persuading heretics and their adherents, as well as in the encounter with other faiths. One of the more famous examples of the latter was the disputation that took place between the Dominican friar Pablo Christiani, a convert from Judaism, and Rabbi Nahmanides in the presence of King James I of Aragon in Barcelona in 1263; see Chazan 1977.

²⁷ Kappler 1997: 124–32.

²⁸ Kappler 1997: 132–34.

on-going refusal to acknowledge the Virgin as *Theotokos*, the very issue that divided the Latins and the Greeks from the Nestorians eight centuries earlier at the Council of Chalcedon. As with their Christology, Riccoldo also finds questionable Trinitarian doctrine in the language the Nestorians use to describe the Persons of the Trinity, in referring to them merely as three distinct “qualities” of the Godhead. There are numerous aspects of liturgical observance with which fra Riccoldo takes issue as well, ranging from the Nestorians de-consecrating rather than reserving any hosts that remain after communion, to the refusal to give last rites to the dying, to what Riccoldo recoils from as the “monstrous practice” of both male and female circumcision. Fra Riccoldo offers a lively narrative of the rocky reception he and his companions received from the Nestorians of Baghdad, who were so appalled at what the Westerners had to say that they felt it necessary to purify the church in which the friars had first preached, and then excommunicated them. But as with all of Riccoldo’s edifying stories of his encounters with the Eastern Christians, a public debate ultimately convinced high-ranking members of the local clergy of the truth of what the friars taught, and they were invited back into the Nestorians’ churches to preach.²⁹

What made the *Liber peregrinationis* famous and continues to attract most historians’ attention are the sections of the text in which Riccoldo discusses the Saracens and the law of Islam. These are arguably the most original parts of Riccoldo’s work as well: his presentation of Islam is both insightful and remarkably even-handed, clearly informed by the time he spent studying Islamic theology and the *Qu’ran* and living in close contact with Muslims while in Baghdad.³⁰ Riccoldo does not deny that his ultimate purpose in writing is to “eliminate the perfidy of Mahomet,”³¹ but he realized that he needed to educate himself thoroughly if he were to meet the Saracens on their own intellectual ground. He opens this part of the *Liber peregrinationis* with a summary of what he has learned about what he calls Islam’s seven “works of perfection,” finding it hard to keep the admiration from his voice – or not to see in it a rebuke to some Christians – as he describes the Saracens’ “studiousness, devotion in prayer, mercy towards the poor, reverence for the name of God and his prophets and holy places, dignified behavior, friendliness to foreigners, and concord and mutual love.”³² But when Riccoldo turns to examine the *Qu’ran* itself, he becomes an impassioned polemicist who finds the law of the Saracens deeply flawed. He identifies six major deficiencies of the *Qu’ran* that counterbalance the seven commendable works for which he has just praised his Muslim neighbours: their law is “lax, confused, obscure, exceedingly mendacious, irrational, and violent,” argues Riccoldo, through six sections devoted to exposing each of these shortcomings in turn.³³

29 Kappler 1997: 136–54.

30 George-Tvrtković 2012: 46–50, contrasts “typical medieval Christian accounts of Muslim praxis” with the original data Riccoldo provides about Islam.

31 Kappler 1997: 156.

32 Kappler 1997: 158–72.

33 Kappler 1997: 172–200.

Interfaith dialog did not always go smoothly. Riccoldo's personal feelings about the Saracens were put to the test when news of the fall of Acre in May of 1291 reached him in Baghdad. A stricken Riccoldo responded with the series of open letters known as his *Epistolae ad ecclesiam triumphantem*, in which he grieves for those who died and wrestles with his doubts about God's apparent willingness to allow the Saracens to triumph over the Christian faith. One letter is addressed to the slain Dominican Patriarch of Jerusalem, Nicolas d'Hannapes, whom fra Riccoldo had met when he first arrived in Acre and to whose death he now reacts with obvious emotion; he writes, too, of finding the bloody remnants of Dominican habits in the bazaar in Baghdad and buying them back as witnesses to his confrères' martyrdom.³⁴ Riccoldo records being forcibly stripped of his own habit at one point and surviving by working as a camel driver, which seems to imply that he was in Baghdad during the persecution of the Christians started by the Mongol ruler Mahmūd Ghazan in 1295.³⁵ Such experiences lend a piquancy to Riccoldo's struggle to remain objective about Muslim culture.

Once he was back home in Florence, sometime after 1300, fra Riccoldo would refine the arguments against the *Qu'ran* that are present in embryo in the *Liber peregrinationis* and make them the focal point of a more overtly polemical text, his *Contra legem Sarracenorum*. Replete with references to works such as Thomas Aquinas' *Summa contra gentiles*, the text shows Riccoldo making full use now of the scholarly resources available to him at Santa Maria Novella to produce a manual in the same didactic mode as Aquinas' text, one which first refutes the claims of Islam in detail and then demonstrates the truth of Christian doctrine.³⁶ The *Contra legem Sarracenorum* became Riccoldo da Monte di Croce's most influential work, as witnessed by the nearly thirty manuscript copies of it that survive.³⁷ He soon followed it up with a similar treatment of both the Eastern Christian sects and Judaism, his *Libellus ad nationes orientales*.³⁸ Riccoldo da Monte di Croce remains an enduring witness to interfaith encounter in the Middle Ages.

34 *Epistola IV*, ed. Röhrich, 1884, and see www.e-theca.net/emiliopanella/riccoldo/epi.htm (accessed February 3, 2016) for Panella's more recent transcription; for the English see George-Tvrtković 2012: 165–70.

35 Pringle 2012: 55; *Epistola I*, ed. Röhrich, 1884: 268, transl. George-Tvrtković 2012: 142.

36 Mérigoux 1986: 27–33.

37 Mérigoux 1986: 35–36 lists the 28 extant Latin manuscripts; see also George-Tvrtković, 2012: 25 n. 30.

38 There is currently no critical edition of the *Libellus ad nationes orientales*, but see Emilio Panella's transcription from the Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS. *Conv. soppr.* C.8.1173, ff. 219r–244r at www.e-theca.net/emiliopanella/riccoldo2/adno.htm (accessed February 3, 2016).

Text

De sancto sepulcro Domini

Inde procedentes intrauimus in ecclesiam sepulcri. Est autem ecclesia maxima, que continet montem Caluarie et locum sepulcri. Adscendentes autem ad mon[f. 5rb] tem Caluarie, in loco ubi crucifixus est Dominus, inuenimus locum ubi in saxo fixum est lignum crucis; et, ibi iuxta, ymaginem crucifixi opere mosayco, tenens faciem ad occidentem sicut fuit crucifixus Dominus. Et ad pedes saxi ubi erat infixata crux, stactio beate Virginis et beati Iohannis, qui stabant iuxta crucem respicientes ad orientem et ad faciem Christi. Ibi est locus tante deuotionis quod si quis non fleret compassione Filii clamantis et morientis in cruce, flere cogitur compassione Matris flentis ad pedes crucis Christi morientis pro nobis. O anima, o anima peccatoris hominis, quomodo potuisti postea uiuificare et gubernare corpus tante corruptionis et tante contradictionis? Quare non factus est michi dolor mortis, dolor compassionis? Si uere fuissem deuotus ut credebam, dolore vel gaudio mori potui de completionem tanti desiderii. Circumspiciens autem sollicite si uere uiderem Dominum meum oculis corporeis pendentem in cruce, non vidi nisi oculis fidei. Oculis autem corporis uidi locum crucifixionis et saxum conscissum a summo usque deorsum; et partem columpne sustentans, ad quam flagellatus est Dominus, que sustentabat lapidem altaris deorsum prope stationem ubi Mater et Virgo plorabat. Ibi retro et iuxta eam erat locus, et ostendebant lapidem ubi deposuerunt [f. 5va] corpus et ligauerunt linteo et condiderunt aromatibus ut sepelirent.

Inde uolentes accedere ad sepulcrum et querere Dominum quem non inuenieramus in monte Caluarie – iam enim deposuerant eum, cum ego miser tarde perueni! – dixi “Eamus et queramus ad monumentum ubi posuerunt eum.” Et congregans christianos, qui tunc erant ibi ultra centum, ordinaui processionem, quam incepimus ad columpnam quam dicunt esse in medio mundi, et descendimus per uiam per quam uenerunt Marie cum aromatibus, et nos plane procedentes per uiam et conferentes ad inuicem “Quis reuoluet nobis lapidem?” etc. Et postea cum adpropinquauimus alta uoce cantantes et repetentes *Victime pascale laudes*, ad omnem passum unum uersum unus precinebat et omnes respondebant. Et circumdantes et circumeuntes sepulcrum, cum querentes sollicite non inueniremus Dominum, clamauit quispiam tam alta uoce “Surrexit Christus spes mea, precedet suos in Galilea” quod extra totum templum rumor et tumultus insonuit inter saracenos.

Intrantes autem in sepulcro inuenimus magnum illum lapidem ad hostium monumenti sed reuolutum iuxta hostium. Et exeuntes, cum non inueniremus Dominum, ostenderunt nobis ortum et locum ubi primo apparuit Marie Magdalene; et inde uiam, [f. 5vb] non in orto, ubi apparuit aliis Mariis et ubi tenuerunt pedes eius.

In eadem autem ecclesia est alia ecclesia subtus, quam fodit Elena ubi inuenit cruces, ad quam descendimus plus quam uiginti passus, et est tota fossio in lapide. In ipsa autem ecclesia sepulcri, celebrantes et predicantes pluribus vicibus et populum comunicantes, quieuimus die et nocte.

Translation

On the Holy Sepulcher of the Lord

Heading on from there, we went into the Church of the Sepulcher. It is a very large church indeed, which encompasses Mount Calvary and the site of the Sepulcher. Going up Mount Calvary to the place where the Lord was crucified, we came upon the spot where the wood of the Cross was fixed into the rock; and next to it is an image of the Crucified in mosaic work, turning His face to the west, as the Lord was, in fact, crucified. And at the foot of the rock where the Cross was affixed is a station of the Blessed Virgin and Blessed John, who stood next to the Cross looking eastward into Christ's face. It is a place of such devotion that if one did not weep with compassion for the Son crying out and dying on the Cross, he would be compelled to weep with compassion for the Mother weeping at the foot of the cross of Christ dying for us. O my soul, o soul of a sinful man! How could you continue to give life to and guide a body of such corruption and such contradiction? Why did the sorrow of compassion not become for me the pain of death? If I were truly as devout as I believed myself to be, I should have been able to die from sorrow – or joy – upon the fulfillment of so great a desire. But gazing intently to see if I might truly see my Lord hanging on the Cross with my corporeal eyes, I saw Him only with the eyes of faith. I did, however, see with the eyes of my body the place of the crucifixion; and the rock split from top to bottom; and, underneath, part of the column at which the Lord was scourged, which supported the altar stone down below near the station where the Mother and Virgin lamented. There, behind and adjacent to it, was the place where they displayed the stone upon which they laid the body and wrapped it in linen cloth and embalmed it with sweet-smelling spices so that they might bury Him.²

Wishing to go from there to the Sepulcher to seek the Lord whom we had not found on Mount Calvary – for they had already taken Him down, since my miserable self had come too late! – I said, “Let us go and seek Him at the tomb where they have laid Him.”³ And gathering together the Christians, who at that point numbered more than a hundred, I organized a procession, which we began at the column that they say marks the very center of the world, and we went down by the route along which the Marys came with the spices, walking at a steady pace along the road and saying to one another, “Who will roll back away the stone for us?” etc.⁴ And after that, as we neared the Sepulcher, singing in *alta voce* and repeating the “*Victimae paschali laudes*” (the *Praises to the Paschal Victim*),⁵ at every step one of us would intone one verse of the sequence and then all would respond. Surrounding the Sepulcher and then circling round and round it, when we had not found the Lord after searching for him so anxiously, someone cried out “Christ, my hope, has risen // He will go before His own into Galilee”⁶ in such a loud a voice that it caused a great stir and the Saracens who were outside the shrine were in an uproar.

Going right into the Sepulcher we found that great stone at the mouth of the tomb, but rolled back next to the entrance. And exiting again, since we had not found the Lord, they showed us the garden and the place where He first appeared to Mary Magdalene;

Inde exeuntes et redeuntes de Iherusalem uenimus (viii miliaria) recto cursu in Emaus. Et conferentes de Christo ut ipse apropinquans iret nobiscum, per prata et loca pulcerima apropinquantes castello uenimus ad uiam in qua se finxit longius ire, et postea in Emaus ad locum ubi parauerant cenam et congnouerunt eum,⁹ ubi est ecclesia pulcra.

Inde redeuntes (x miliaria) uenimus iuxta Ramam, ciuitatem Iosep qui sepelliuit Christum, et inde iuxta Cesaream Filippi, que est super mare. Inde (xxv miliaria) ad Caco castellum. Et inde apropinquantes Castro Peregrini uenimus ad caueam Virginis. Est autem cauea Virginis fouea iuxta mare, in uia que uenit de Egipto in Iudea<m> uel in Galileam. Voluit enim Ioseph declinare Iudeam et ire in Galileam, et cum esset iuxta mare in uia que uenit de Cesarea Filippi et quiesceret super lapidem, lapis quasi liquatus et per semet [f. 6ra] ipsum se lectum et concauum faciens, ocultauit puerum et Mariam et Iosep, ut non uiderent eos quidam insequentes et uolentes ledere, ut dicunt. Inde (iiii miliaria) uenimus in Castrum Peregrini et inde in Accon.

and then the road, not in the garden, where He appeared to the other Marys and where they clasped His feet.

In the same church, however, there is another church underneath, which Helena carved out where she found the crosses, to reach which we descended more than twenty steps, and the whole thing is cut from the living rock. We remained a day and a night in that same Church of the Sepulcher, celebrating and preaching many times and giving communion to the people.

Leaving there and returning from Jerusalem, after eight miles⁷ along a straight road we came to Emmaus. And, talking about Christ so that He might be near us and go with us as we approached the town through fields and very beautiful scenery, we came to the road on which He had acted as if He would go farther;⁸ and, after that, in Emmaus itself, we arrived at the place where they had prepared dinner and recognized Him,⁹ and where there is now a beautiful church.

Backtracking from there, after ten miles, we came to Rama,¹⁰ the city of Joseph, who buried Christ, and then to Caesarea Philippi,¹¹ which is on the sea. From there we went twenty-five miles to the town of Caco.¹² And thence nearing Pilgrim's Castle,¹³ we came to the Grotto of the Virgin. The Grotto of the Virgin is, in fact, a cave next to the sea, on the road that goes from Egypt into Judaea or into Galilee. For Joseph wished to bypass Judaea and go to Galilee, and when he was by the sea on the road that comes from Caesarea Philippi and rested upon a rock, the rock seemed almost to melt, and, fashioning itself into a bed and a hollow space, it hid the Child and Mary and Joseph, so that those who were following them and wishing to do them harm would not see them. Or so they say. Then four miles farther on we came to Pilgrim's Castle, and on into Acre.

Commentary

1. Cf. Mt. 27:51.
2. Cf. Jn. 19:40.
3. Cf. Jn. 20:2ff.
4. Mk. 16:3.
5. *Victimae paschali laudes* is the sequence for Easter Sunday, attributed in an eleventh-century manuscript from the abbey of Einsiedeln to Wipo of Burgundy (d.c.1048), chaplain to the German Emperor Conrad II. William Durandus credited it to Robert II “the Pious” of France (r.996–1031) and some similarities with the sequences of the monk of St. Gall, Notker “the Stammerer” (c.840–912), were noted in the seventeenth century; but Wipo remains the most likely author. For the text see *Missale Romanum*, p. 330.
6. *Victimae paschali laudes*, penultimate verse (ibid.); cf. Mt. 28:7; Mk. 16:7.
7. The indications of distance throughout the text were inserted by Riccoldo after the manuscript had been copied by the scribe; the vagaries of memory may thus explain some of the inaccuracies in his estimates, since he was making these additions to his text many years after his pilgrimage had taken place.
8. Lk. 24:28.
9. Cf. Mt. 27:51.
10. Also known to Christians as Arimathea, identified by many scholars as modern-day Ramla.
11. Riccoldo means Caesarea Maritima (or Palaestina), which is on the coast; Caesarea Philippi is located at the foot of Mount Hermon, modern-day Bāniyās. Perhaps another lapse of memory on fra Riccoldo’s part.
12. Modern-day Qāqūn.
13. Built by the Templars starting in 1217 at ‘Atlit.

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I.5.14 George Akropolites (1217–82)

A Letter to John Tornikes on the Duties of Friendship and on Constantinople's Delights

DIVNA MANOLOVA (INTRODUCTION, TRANSLATION, AND
COMMENTARY) AND PAUL MAGDALINO (TRANSLATION)

Ed.: *Georgii Acropolitae opera*, ed. A. Heisenberg, vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1903), p. 67–69

MS.: Florence, Biblioteca Laurentiana, Conv. Soppr. 627 (s. XIII), ff. 11v–12r

Other Translations: None

Significance

The second part of Akropolites' letter contains a laudatory description of Constantinople which follows the convention for *ekphrastic* urban rhetorical praise characteristic for the Greek literature of the Roman empire and the early Byzantine literature up to the seventh century. While praises of cities are for the most part absent from later Byzantine literature, the genre resurged during the Palaiologan period² and this is reflected also in Akropolites' letter.

The Author

The ambassador, *megas logothetes* and teacher of philosophy George Akropolites³ belonged to a prominent Constantinopolitan family which, since the early eleventh century, had produced a number of fiscal and court officials of the Byzantine civil administration. After receiving his initial education in the capital, at the age of seventeen, Akropolites began his higher education at the court of emperor John III Vatatzes (r.1222–54) in Nicaea under Theodore Hexapterygos and Nikephoros Blemmydes. During the 1240s, Akropolites served as tutor for the future emperor Theodore II Laskaris (r.1254–58). Theodore wrote

I should like to thank Aglae Pizzone, Stratis Papaioannou, and Niels Gaul for their advice concerning the translation and Foteini Spingou whose patience and attention to detail ensured that Akropolites' voice was revealed as accurately as possible. Above all, I thank Paul Magdalino who refined the translation and guided me towards the most elegant solution. I would not have been able to complete the present contribution without the generous support of the Institute of Research in the Humanities of the University of Bucharest and New Europe College. This contribution was finalized as part of the project UMO-2015/19/P/HS2/02739, generously supported by the National Science Centre, Poland. This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 665778. The responsibility for any errors is my own.

1 Not consulted.

2 Saradi 2014: 438.

3 *PLP* 518. On the term *megas logothetes* see Glossary.

an encomium of Akropolites and in response, in 1252, Akropolites compiled his student's letter-collection and equipped the edition with introductory verses.⁴

While under John III Vatatzes Akropolites seems to have been appointed *logothetes tou genikou*,⁵ under Theodore II Laskaris he was promoted and allegedly served as *megas logothetes* from 1255.⁶ In 1256, Akropolites was given the title of *praitor* for Albanon and western Macedonia, thus assuming military and fiscal duties.⁷

Immediately after the recapture of Constantinople, Akropolites returned to the capital, where he witnessed the entrance of Michael VIII Palaiologos (r.1259–82)⁸ on August 15, 1261 and composed thirteen prayers for the occasion (now lost). Thereafter, Akropolites became the head of the restored Constantinopolitan institution of higher education, perhaps as early as 1262, where he taught philosophy and rhetoric.⁹ Among his students were George (Gregory) of Cyprus (c.1241–90)¹⁰ and John Pothos Peditasimos (c.1240 to between 1310 and 1314).¹¹

As a supporter of Michael VIII's unionist policy, Akropolites participated in the Council of Lyons as the emperor's representative and pledged obedience to the Pope on the emperor's behalf.¹² In reaction, some of his works, for example a theological composition, were destroyed by anti-unionists in 1283.¹³

Sometime before 1256 Akropolites married Eudokia, a relative of emperor Michael VIII, and had two sons, namely, Constantine Akropolites¹⁴ and the monk Melchisedek.¹⁵ Constantine Akropolites married Maria Komnene Tornikina, perhaps the niece of his father's addressee the *sebastokrator* John Tornikes.¹⁶ After her death, Maria was buried in the Monastery of the Resurrection (*Anastasis*) in Constantinople whose restoration Akropolites had undertaken in the 1260s or 1270s.¹⁷ George Akropolites must have been also the restorer of a church of the Virgin dedicated in 1267, an act recorded by the owner of the Souidas manuscript. According to Kougeas, George Akropolites should be identified with the manuscript owner and thus, in all likelihood, he was also responsible for the restoration.¹⁸

Akropolites' best-known work is his *History* or *Chronike syngraphe*. Its narrative starts with the conquest of Constantinople in 1204 and ends mid sentence mentioning an

4 For the most comprehensive and up-to-date account of Akropolites' biography and works see Macrides 2007: 5–29.

5 Macrides 2007: 22.

6 Macrides 2007: 23.

7 Macrides 2007: 12.

8 *PLP* 21528.

9 On the chronology of Akropolites' life see Macrides 2007: 28–9.

10 *PLP* 4590.

11 *PLP* 22235.

12 Geanakoplos 1976, 1959.

13 Macrides 2007: 76.

14 *PLP* 520.

15 *PLP* 523.

16 *PLP* 29126; see also Macrides 2007: 19 and n. 106.

17 Delehaye 1933; see also Talbot 1993: 256 and Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 20–22.

18 Kougeas 1949; Talbot 1993: 256.

occasion on which Akropolites was going to deliver an oration before the emperor. The *History* reads as a defence of Michael VIII and a critique of Theodore II and the Laskaris family overthrown by Michael VIII.¹⁹

Akropolites also composed verses for an icon of the *Theotokos*, a funeral oration for emperor John III Vatatzes, two discourses on the Procession of the Holy Spirit, a letter addressed to John Tornikes, an interpretation of *Oration XXIX* of Gregory of Nazianzos, an encomium of the apostles Peter and Paul, and an *Oration on the Transfiguration* (BHG 1995n).²⁰ His encomium for St. George remains unpublished.²¹

Text and Context

The letter, which is the only surviving missive authored by George Akropolites, was written in response to an earlier communication by the *sebastokrator* John Tornikes, in which the latter reproached Akropolites for profiting unduly from imperial support by providing services (judicial and educational) that could easily be performed by Tornikes himself.

John Tornikes, who was related by marriage to emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos,²² was the son of the *parakoimomenos* Demetrios Tornikes (d.c.1251) and the brother of Constantine and Andronikos Tornikes.²³ In 1258 he served as *doux* of the *Thrakesion theme*, that is, the thematic province located in western Asia Minor; later he was granted the dignity of a *sebastokrator*.²⁴ Thus, the reference to Tornikes' title and to Akropolites' teaching activity in Constantinople serve to establish a *terminus post quem* for the letter's composition of 1261.²⁵

Akropolites' and Tornikes' families were in fact related through marriage as Akropolites' son Constantine married Maria Komnene Tornikina, possibly John Tornikes' niece.²⁶ However, Akropolites and Tornikes did not form the same allegiances. While the Tornikioi had suffered under the rule of Theodore II Laskaris, Akropolites was his tutor. Later, both men served Michael VIII and were related to him through marriage, but while the *sebastokrator* Tornikes was friendly with patriarch Arsenios and helped restore him to his throne in 1261,²⁷ in 1267 it was Akropolites who was charged with the punishment of the supporters of the Arsenite faction.

Scholars have been interested in Akropolites' letter chiefly for the information it provides concerning Akropolites' activities in Constantinople after 1261.²⁸ The letter attests,

19 Macrides 2003: 210; for a comprehensive introduction to Akropolites' *History* see Macrides 2007: 29–65.

20 Ed. M. Kalatzi 2007, 13–46.

21 On Akropolites' works see Macrides 2007: 76–78.

22 Constantinides 1982: 34. John Tornikes is referred to as “the emperor's brother, and his father-in-law” in Akropolites' *History* §89, as well as in the opening address of Akropolites' letter.

23 Constantinides 1982: 35 n. 16.

24 Nicol 1965: 251.

25 Macrides 2007: 24.

26 Nicol 1965: 251; Macrides 2007: 19 and 19 n. 106.

27 Macrides 2007: §84, 370–71.

28 See, for instance, Constantinides 1982: 34; Macrides 2007: 14, 24.

first, to Akropolites' teaching of Aristotle in the capital. Second, despite the evidence provided by Akropolites' student George of Cyprus, namely that Akropolites was released from his public duties in order to dedicate himself to teaching, the letter provides evidence that while teaching Akropolites was also serving as *megas logothetes*, as it mentions Akropolites' engagement with the affairs of the *sekreton*.

As instances of friendship literature, Byzantine letters usually employ an array of friendship *topoi* and related formulae.²⁹ These are found in Akropolites' missive, as it reproaches its addressee for dishonoring the bond of friendship by requesting that Akropolites cede his position as a teacher of philosophy without first offering an equivalent gift in return.

The letter's opening address specifies the occasion on which it was written, namely that it was composed in response to Tornikes' earlier missive containing the accusation that Akropolites' employment by the emperor as a teacher of philosophy and a *megas logothetes* is undeserved. What follows is a complex narrative whose purpose is fourfold. First, it aims to represent Tornikes as a bad friend. Second, it portrays Akropolites as someone who, though wronged and hurt, abides by the laws of friendship. Third, the letter includes a description of Constantinople praising its beauty, thus extolling not only Akropolites' *patris*, but also by extension the emperor who re-captured and restored the capital city. Finally, returning to where he began, Akropolites re-fashions Tornikes' initial accusation and presents it as a petition to switch positions in life, which a true friend has no choice but to oblige. However, Akropolites concludes, not only does Tornikes not really desire his correspondent's inferior position, nor is it in his power to argue against their different allotment in life, since they both serve the emperor and he is the one who assigned them their respective duties.

²⁹ See the Commentary, esp. n. 11.

Text

[p. 67] Ἐπιστολή τοῦ σοφωτάτου μεγάλου λογοθέτου γραφεῖσα πρὸς τὸν περιπόθητον συμπεπτηρὸν τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἀγίου ἡμῶν αὐθέντου καὶ βασιλέως παντευτυχέστατον σεβαστοκράτορα κύριν Ἰωάννην τὸν Τορνίκην, γράψαντα αὐτῷ μετρίως καὶ φιλικῶς ὅτι «ψευδῶς κήθησαι καὶ τρώγεις τὸ ψωμὶ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐντὸς τῆς Κωνσταντίνου πόλεως· τὴν δουλείαν γάρ, ἦντινα ποιεῖς σύ, δύναμαι ἐλθεῖν καὶ ἐκπληροῦν καὶ αὐτός, ἦγουν ἐρμηνεύειν τοὺς παῖδας τὸ ὄργανον καὶ τὰς τοῦ σεκρέτου διεξάγειν ὑποθέσεις».

Ἡράκλεις, μουσόληπτος ἑξαπίνης ὁ φίλτατός μοι σεβαστοκράτωρ, κάτοχος ἄγαν τῷ Ἑρμῇ ἀναπέφανται· ἐξηκόνισται γὰρ τὴν γλώτταν πρὸς τὴν εὐφράδειαν, ἀπέξεσται τὸν φθόγγον πρὸς τὴν ἐμμέλειαν, καὶ ὄλος χαρίτων Ἀττικῶν ἀναπέπλησται. μὴν οὖν δάφνην ἐψώμισται πρὸς μου<σῶ>ν καὶ οὕτως ἐξαίφνης ἔλλογιμώτατος, ὡς τὸν Ἄσκηθεν οἱ πάλαι μυθεύονται, ἢ καταδαρθῶν καὶ ἀφυπνισθεὶς εὖρε μελίττας σίμβλον κατεργασαμένης τῷ στόματι, καθά πού τινες περὶ τῆς Θηβαίας λύρας ἐξιστορήκασιν; ἔγωγ' οὖν μὰ τοὺς λόγους ἐκπέπληγμαί, φρίκης τε καὶ θάμβους ἐμπέπλησμαί ἐν οὕτω μεγάλοις καὶ θαυμαστοῖς, θᾶττον ἢ λόγος γεγενημένοις πράγμασι. πεπίστευκα γὰρ ἐναργῶς καὶ εὐφραδῆ σε τυγχάνειν καὶ φιλοσοφίας ἀνάπλεων, καὶ πλημμύρα εἶναι σοι λόγων, καὶ διδάσκειν τοὺς βουλομένους δυνάμενον καθὼς καὶ ἐδήλους τῷ γράμματι. πῶς γὰρ ἂν εἶχες μὴ τάληθῆ λέγειν τοῖς ἐών; ἀλλ' ἀπεφθονήκας μοι τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ βάσκανον ὄμμα τοῖς τῷ φίλῳ θυμῆρσιν ἐναποπέπομφας [p. 68] καὶ ἐναλλάττειν βίους προήρησαι, χάλκεια ὄντως χρυσεῖων ἀνταλλάξαι βουλόμενος. οἶσθα καὶ γὰρ ὡς μέγα τι χρῆμα ὁ λόγος καὶ κλέος τούτου οὐπὸτ' ὀλεῖται καὶ τὰ τῆς φήμης τῶν διδαγμάτων ὁ σύμπας αἰὼν οὐ διαφθεῖρειν δυνήσεται. πρὸς γοῦν τὸ μεγαλεῖον ἀπειδεις τοῦ πράγματος, καὶ τοῦ ὕψους ἐστοχάσω καθεστηκότος αἰθεροβάμονος, καὶ διὰ ταῦτα παρ' οὐδὲν τὸν φίλιον θέμενος ἀφελέσθαι ταυτὶ τοῦ ἀγαπωμένου προήρησαι, καὶ ἑαυτῷ μὲν περιθέσθαι τὰ κάλλιστα τε καὶ τιμιώτατα, ἐκείνῳ τε δοῦναι τὰ σὰ ἥττω πολὺ τούτῳ τῶν τοιοῦτων λελογισμένα· καὶ σὲ μὲν τῆς ἀπὸ τῶν λόγων εὐκλείας ἀπολαῦσαι καὶ τῆς τιμῆς, ἐκείνον δὲ περιπέζιά τινα καὶ χθαμαλὰ λαβεῖν παρὰ σοῦ. τί γὰρ πρὸς τὰ μεγάλα ταῦτα καὶ νοερά θεωρήματα καὶ τῆς ὕλης ὑπερανωκισμένα καὶ τοῦ συγκρίματος κυανόχροα δέρματα καὶ τὸ εὐτυχές τοῖς ἔξω χρωματιζόμενον, κἂν μετ' ἐπιτάσεως γράφηται;

Ἐγωγ' οὖν εἰ καὶ μετὰ δυσφόρως ἐχούσης καρδίας καὶ λύπη δακνομένης βαρυαλαγῆ τὴν τοῦ φίλου ἀξίωσιν δέχομαι. τί γὰρ ἂν καὶ πάθοι τις ὁπότεν φίλος βιάζεται; συνανταλλάξαι δὲ τοῖς βίοις καὶ τὰς τύχας τῶν ἀναγκαίων ἐστίν· οὐδὲ γὰρ τόπους ἀμείψαι ἡμᾶς ἀλλὰ βίους γεγράφηκας, βίῳ δὲ τύχη ἀκολουθεῖ καὶ βίος τύχη συμπάρεστιν. ἤδη γοῦν αὐτός τὰ τῆς φιλίας πεπλήρωκα· ἄλλον γὰρ αὐτὸν οἶδα τὸν φίλον ἐν ἀναπτύξει τῆς φύσεως. ἀλλ' – ὃ με τοῦ γράμματος λέληθεν – ὥνπερ ὁ φίλος ὡς πρωτίστων καὶ τιμιωτέρων – ἐρῶ δὲ κατ' αὐτόν – καὶ ἡδυτέρων καὶ προσηνεστέρων ἀπεμνημόνευσεν, αὐτός οὐδ' ὄλως μνήμην πεποίημαι, τὰ ἡδέα λέγω τῆς Κωνσταντίνου, τὰ ἐνδιασκεύως τούτῳ περιηγηθέντα τῷ γράμματι, κἂν οὐκ εἰς τέλος αὐτῷ τὰ τῆς διατυπώσεως γένοιοντο ἔνθα περὶ τρυφῶν διελέγετο ὑδάτων τε διειδῶν καὶ ἄερων εὐκραῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων τερπνῶν. παραλέλοιπε γὰρ τὰ κρείττω τούτων πολὺ, τὰ κάλλη καὶ μεγέθη τῶν δομημάτων σῶν ἐν τοῖς ναοῖς καὶ οἰκίμασι. τί λέγεις; οὐ τὴν ὄψιν ἡδύνη ἐκ τῆς τῆς θαλάττης ἐπιφανείας,

Translation

Letter by the most wise megas logothetes¹ addressed to the much-beloved father-in-law of the mighty and holy lord and emperor of ours the most fortunate Sebastokrator² kyr³ John Tornikes, who wrote to me gently and in the spirit of friendship that “you sat and eat undeservedly the emperor’s bread in the City of Constantine; for the service, which you provide, I am able to come and fulfill also myself, that is to say, to interpret the Organon⁴ to children and to administer the matters of the sekreton.”⁵

By Heracles, my dearest *sebastokrator* being suddenly inspired by the muse has shown himself to be very much overcome by Hermes. For he sharpened his tongue towards eloquence, polished his voice towards harmony, and he was entirely full of the Attic graces. Surely he has fed himself with laurel from the Muses and thus, suddenly <he became> extremely learned, as the ancients say about the one from Askra,⁶ or <could it be that> after falling asleep, on waking he discovered bees making a honeycomb in his mouth, exactly as some described in the story about the Theban lyre?⁷ I myself, then, was astounded at your words, I was filled with awe and amazement at such great and wonderful events that happened more quickly than a word.⁸ For I clearly believed that you were eloquent and quite full of philosophy, and that you were flooded with learning, and that you are able to teach those who are willing just as you also declared in the letter. For how would you be able to say an untruth being such as you are? But you had envied my good things and you had cast an evil eye on the delights enjoyed by your friend [p. 68] and you preferred to exchange lives, wishing to exchange things that are indeed of copper for gold. For you also knew that learning is a great thing and that its glory will never perish and that the whole of eternity will not be able to corrupt the fame that comes from teaching. Yet, you looked at the greatness of the subject, and you set your sights on its highly placed skywalking eminence.⁹ For these reasons you set the god of friendship at naught, and you chose to remove this very same thing from your beloved friend, while surrounding yourself with what is most beautiful and precious, to give him those things of yours that he considers much inferior. <You also chose> to enjoy the fame and honor from learning, while he is to receive pedestrian and lowly things from you. For how can one compare those great and intellectual objects of contemplation which dwell far above matter and composite human constitution, with skins colored in dark blue and the good fortune colored by external things, even if it is depicted with intensity?¹⁰

I myself accept the request of the friend, although with a heavy heart, which is stung by painful grief. For what should one feel when a friend imposes himself? Of necessity, exchanging lives means exchanging fortunes (*tychai*). For you did not write to change our places but <our> lives, yet fortune (*tyche*) follows life and life is present with fortune (*tyche*). So I have already performed the duties of friendship – for I know that the friend is another self – as a natural development.¹¹ But – the subject of the letter which escaped my notice – the very things the friend made a mention of as principal and more precious – I am citing him – , and sweeter and more pleasant as well, I have not mentioned at all, namely the pleasures of <the City> of Constantine, which were elaborately outlined in the

οὐ τοὺς λουτήρας καθαίροντας καὶ πολλὴν παρεχομένους τὴν ἡδονήν; ἢ καὶ τὰ πολυειδῆ τῶν [p. 69] ἰχθύων ἔθνη ὡς οὐδὲν ἡγή καὶ τὰς διαφόρους ὀπώρας καὶ τὰς ἀνθοσμίας τῶν οἴνων, οἷς καὶ μᾶλλον τρυφῶμεν οἱ τῆ γαστρὶ χαριζόμενοι, ὧν ἡ Κωνσταντίνου μετέσχεν ὑπερπλησμίως; ἀλλ' ὦ τάν, τὰ μὲν ἔφησθα, τὰ δ' οὐκ ἔφησθα. καὶ ὅτι μὲν ἐν ἡμῖν τοιαῦτα λογίζη, ὅτι δὲ ἔτερ' ἄττα κρείττω πολὺ παρὰ σοί, οὐδ' ὀπωστιοῦν ἐνθυμῆ. καὶ ὅτι σὺ μὲν τῷ κοσμικῷ ἡλίῳ τυγχάνεις σχεδὸν καὶ ἀμέσως τῶν ἀκτίων αὐτοῦ ἐμφορῆ καὶ τῶν ἀμαρυγμάτων εἰς κόρον μεταλαμβάνεις, ὡς καὶ ἡλιοειδῆ σε παρὰ πᾶσι καὶ εἶναι καὶ ὀνομάζεσθαι, ἡμεῖς δὲ Κιμμέριοι πεφύκαμεν ἀντικρυς ψύχει καὶ ζόφῳ ἐκπικεζόμενοι, οὐδ' ὄλως ἐπιτίθης. καὶ ὅτι σὺ μὲν παρὰ τῆ μεγίστη τοῦ παραδείσου καθειστήκεις πηγῆ, ἐξ ἧς οἱ τέτταρες τῶν ἀρετῶν ἀναβλυστάνουσι ποταμοί, καὶ τῶν ναμάτων ἐπαπολαύεις τῶν ζωηρρῦτων καὶ δίψης πάθος οὐδ' ὄλως ἔχεις, ἡμεῖς δὲ τῶν παρ' αὐτῆς ἀλλομένων ὑδάτων ἀσχάλλομεν στερισκόμενοι, πρὸς οὐδὲν λογίζη. ἀντάλλαξον τὰ σὰ τοῖς ἔμοις, αὐτὸς γὰρ ἤδη συντίθεμαι, καὶ ἐλεύσομαι πρὸς Ἄρην καθὼς εἰρήκεις σφριγῶν, κἂν ἀπο<δειλιῶ τὸ τῆς μάχης> ἀλλοπρόσαλλον· ὁ θῶκος δέ σοι ὁ διδασκαλικὸς παρεσκευάσται, ηὐτρέπισται δε σοι καὶ ἡ καθέδρα τῶν κρίσεων. καὶ δίδασκε μὲν τοὺς πρὸς παιδείαν φιλόσοφον προσερχομένους σοι τᾶληθῆ, δίκη διίθνε θέμιστας. <γενέσθω δ' οὖν ἡμῖν> ἢ ἀντάλλαξις τῶν βίων γνώμη τοῦ κρατοῦντος ἀμφοῖν· οὔτε γὰρ αὐτὸς οἰκεία βουλήσει τυγχάνεις <τὰ τοῦ σεβαστοκράτορος διεκπληρῶν> οὔτε ἔγωγε πρὸς οἷς ἀποτέταγμα. αὐτὸς μὲν οὖν ὡς ὄρᾳς τὰ τοῦ φίλιου ἐκπέπληκα· σὸν δ' ἂν εἶη τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦδε ἐνεργεῖσθαι σου τὴν ἀξίωσιν.

letter, even if the aspects of his description were not complete where it spoke about waters delicate and clear, gentle winds and all the other delights. For it omitted the much better things, the beauty and the greatness of buildings¹² <manifested> in churches and houses. What do you say? Do you not take pleasure in seeing the appearance of the sea nor in the purifying baths and the great pleasure they offer? Or do you think nothing of the diverse kinds [p. 69] of fish, and the different fruits and the fine bouquets of the wines, in which we who oblige the stomach especially delight, of which the <City> of Constantine has a superabundant share?¹³ But, my good friend, you said some things, but others you did not say. Namely that, on the one hand, you consider us to have such advantages but, on the other, you do not consider in any way whatsoever that other things are much better with you.¹⁴ <The fact> that you happen to be near the worldly sun [i.e. the Emperor] and you may fill yourself with its rays directly and you partake in their radiance to satiety, so that you both are and are referred to by all as sun-like, while we Cimmerians¹⁵ are by nature the opposite, oppressed by cold and darkness, <is something that> you do not add at all. And you think nothing of <the fact> that you stand beside the greatest spring of Paradise, whence the four rivers of the virtues gush forth, and that you revel in the streams flowing with life and suffer no thirst at all, while we are vexed by deprivation of the waters which spring from it.¹⁶ Exchange your things for mine; for I myself already agree, and I will go to Ares, as you have said, willingly, even if I may be afraid of the fickleness of battle. The teaching seat is prepared for you and the judgment seat¹⁷ has been made ready for you. So teach the truth to those who approach you for philosophical education, and pass judgments in justice! But the exchange of lives should happen to both of us with the decision of our ruler. For it is not voluntarily that you are performing <your functions>,¹⁸ or <that I perform> those to which I have been appointed. So, as you see, I myself have fulfilled the duties of friendship; it is now up to you to put your request into effect.

Commentary

1. A high office in the Byzantine imperial administration which replaced the so-called *logothetes ton sekreton* (used through the twelfth century), the latter being established by Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118) as responsible for the entire civil administration. According to the testimony of Pseudo-Kodinos, in the fourteenth century Andronikos II (r.1282–1328) moved the *mezas logothetes* up from twelfth to ninth rank in the hierarchy of imperial offices. During the same period the *mezas logothetes* was predominantly responsible for administering foreign affairs, such as drafting the imperial correspondence with foreign rulers, thus acting as head of the imperial diplomacy. Eventually, during the fourteenth century the *mezas logothetes* assumed a role similar to today's function of a prime minister.³⁰
2. A title first introduced by Alexios I for his brother Isaac Komnenos. During the Komnenian period, *sebastokrator* was among the highest court titles and was reserved for the emperor's male relatives by blood or marriage. Under the Palaiologoi, the *sebastokrator* remained among the three highest-ranking titles below *despotes* and above *caesar*. Pseudo-Kodinos distinguishes those three title holders as dignitaries who enjoy privileges different from those of other office holders.
3. The honorific address *kyr* designates a person of distinction and wide recognition.³¹
4. While no commentary on Aristotle written by Akropolites survives, according to Pérez Martín, the Aristotelian codex *Ambrosianus* M 71 suppl. (525) which was partially copied by George of Cyprus, could serve as evidence for Akropolites' own exegetical work on Aristotle.³² The codex contains Aristotle's *Categories*, *On Interpretation*, *Prior and Posterior Analytics*, *Topics*, and *Sophistical Refutations*, or in other words the so-called *Organon*. *Organon* is a group denominator for Aristotle's logical works given by his ancient commentators and never used by Aristotle himself. According to George of Cyprus, Akropolites first taught Aristotle and then proceeded with Euclid's geometry and Nicomachus' arithmetic.³³

According to Pérez Martín, Akropolites could be identified with the scribe who copied some of the initial folia (ff. 1–3, 5–10) of *Ambrosianus* M 71 suppl. (525). Those were added later than the original core starting on f. 11 and contain a commentary by Ammonius, Porphyry's *Isagoge*, and Aristotle's *Categories*. The same scribe copied some further parts of the manuscript and added marginal scholia next to parts copied by others, thus acting as the volume's "editor."
5. The supreme judicial tribunal in Constantinople.
6. A village in Boeotia where Hesiod was born.
7. Akropolites probably had in mind the myth of Amphion who together with his twin brother Zethus built the walls of Thebes. Having been taught to play so masterfully the golden lyre given to him by Hermes, Amphion enchanted the stones used for the

30 Guiland 1971: 101–02.

31 Kontogiannopoulou 2012: 209–26.

32 Pérez Martín 1995: 413.

33 Macrides 2007: 13.

construction of the city wall. The composite image of the Theban lyre and the honey-bees as metaphors for eloquence is also used in the twelfth-century satirical dialog *Anacharsis*, in which the Theban lyre is referred to as “full of grace and sweetened with honey” (Θηβαία λύρα μεστή χαρίτων καὶ μελιτόεσσα).

8. In this introductory passage, Akropolites employs a sequence of personification (Hermes who in the classical tradition is considered the god of rhetoric), an allusion (the Attic graces), myth (the stories about Hesiod who ate the laurel of the Muses and about Amphion and the lyre presented to him by Hermes), and a metaphor (the honey-bees, commonly used to designate eloquence), all of which refer to achieving eloquence and mastering rhetoric. Thus, an emphasis is put on Tornikes' epistolary address as purposefully displaying a mastery of language and persuasion.
9. Literally, one who walks or wanders in the ether. The term αἰθεροβάμων seems to appear in the eleventh century and to gain wider circulation in the twelfth. Having in mind the reference to Hesiod's eloquence in the beginning of the letter, it is worth noting that the term is used by the twelfth-century scholar John Galenos³⁴ in his allegorical interpretation of Hesiod's *Theogony*. Galenos employed it in his commentary to the beginning of Hesiod's poem, namely the episode in which the Muses encounter Hesiod as he is shepherding his sheep at Mount Helicon. This is precisely the episode referred to by Akropolites in his letter's opening (p. 67, ll. 14–15; see also n. 8 above). Galenos uses the adjective αἰθεροβάμων in reference to those most “penetrating” (διαβατικωτάται) souls for whom the most pleasant thing is the ease of the desirable salience of the pure thoughts of the intellect. It is with this easiness that those souls “dance” up to the top of Mount Helicon as Hesiod's Muses, leaving ignorance behind, as they are enlightened by the intellect.

Αἰθεροβάμων is also found in Stephanos Skylitzes' commentary on Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (first half of the twelfth century) where it is given as a synonym of ἀεροβάμων or one who walks in the sky.

Both Eustathios of Thessaloniki (*Oration* 7) and Euthymios Tornikes (*Oration* 1), writing in the twelfth century, use αἰθεροβάμων in reference to actual or presumed excellence, intellectual or moral. Both link αἰθεροβάμων with another epithet, namely οὐράνιος or heavenly. Their contemporary John Tzetzes, however, in the opening of his commentary to Aristophanes, uses αἰθεροβάμων ironically.

10. The context of this sentence is clear, namely that while Tornikes in his request to exchange lives with Akropolites chooses for himself the position of a philosopher contemplating the loftiest of subjects, he offers something inferior in return. The precise wording of the text, however, is difficult to interpret. The κυανόχροα δέρματα or skins colored in dark blue mentioned by Akropolites could possibly refer to Tornikes' dignity of *sebastokrator* which was distinguished by the color blue of the court attire and by the reserved usage of the same color ink. If this interpretation is correct, then δέρματα could designate either parchment leaves (perhaps containing

34 On the little-known John Galenos see Roilos 2014: 231–46.

Tornikes' earlier letter) written upon with blue ink or the blue-dyed leather of Tornikes' Sebastokratorial shoes.

11. A reference to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book IX dedicated to the theory of friendship. Aristotle's dictum concerning the friend being "another self" is a formula ubiquitous in Byzantine letters and a common place in constructing friendships in Byzantine literature.
12. While the reading in Heisenberg's edition is παραλέλοιπε γὰρ τὰ κρείττω τούτων πολὺ, τὰ κάλλη καὶ μεγέθη τῶν δομημάτων σῶν ἐν τοῖς ναοῖς καὶ οἰκήμασι, the possessive σῶν does not fit with the overall sense of the passage; we have thus omitted it in the translation as a possible mistaken transcription.
13. Late antique urban *encomia* typically list the city's wonders and praise its favorable location, the beauty of its architecture, the climate, and local production, including the urban economic activities, and the intellectual and moral achievements of the citizens.³⁵ The most famous late antique examples of urban *encomia* are Aelius Aristides' *Panathenaios* and Libanius' *Antiochikos*. Palaiologan *encomia* employ the same elements and emphasize in particular the architecture and beauty of churches and walls.³⁶ Among the most prominent Palaiologan examples of urban *encomia* as standalone texts one should mention Theodore II Laskaris' *Enkomion to the great city of Nicaea* (before 1254), *Nikaeus* or Theodore Metochites' praise of his fatherland Nicaea (1290), the latter's encomium of Constantinople *Byzantios*,³⁷ John Eugenikos' praises of Corinth (1443–50) and Trebizond (1447–50), and Bessarion's encomium of Trebizond (c.1436). Other urban *encomia* were included in larger narratives, for instance, Philotheos of Selymbria's praise of the city of Nikomedeia in the *Homily on St. Agathonikos*, Theodore Metochites', Nikephoros Gregoras', and Nicholas Kabasilas' respective praises of Thessaloniki in their *encomia* of St. Demetrios, Nikephoros Xanthopoulos' praise of Constantinople in his *Miracles* of the Monastery of Zoodochos Pege,³⁸ and Manuel Chrysoloras' encomium of Constantinople. The latter provides an important parallel to Akropolites' praise of the capital city, since Chrysoloras included it in a letter addressed to emperor John Palaiologos.³⁹

The ekphrastic praise of Constantinople inserted in Akropolites' letter is introduced as the actual subject of his correspondent's preceding missive. According to Akropolites, Tornikes had described the delights of the capital city and had mentioned, among others, the city's clear waters and gentle winds, thus indicating that Tornikes' laudatory description of Constantinople followed at least some of the conventions of the genre of urban *encomia*, such as praising the natural surroundings of the settlement and its climate. However, Akropolites notes, his correspondent's letter was not exhaustive in its description as it failed to mention the most significant

35 Saradi 2014: 437.

36 Saradi 2014: 438.

37 See I. Polemis, I.8.1 and I.8.9 in this volume.

38 See A. Alexakis, I.2.4 and I.8.2 in this volume.

39 Saradi 1995: 46–47.

markers of Constantinople's beauty,⁴⁰ namely the greatness of its architecture exemplified by its churches and houses. Akropolites continues by way of listing other features of the Constantinople's splendor, namely its location on the sea and its appearance, its baths, as well as the diversity of the products of its land and its economy, such as fish, fruits, and wine. Thus, Akropolites completed the praise of Constantinople allegedly inserted in Tornikes' letter by adhering more closely than his correspondent to the rhetorical conventions of the genre. Thus, the insertion of a concise version of a traditional urban praise can be read as a subtle criticism by Akropolites, the professor of philosophy, towards Tornikes who claimed that he could easily substitute the *meGas logothetes* in his educational duties, but failed to execute the task of composing an urban encomium.

Akropolites fails to mention at least two features, which would be common for a rhetorical praise of a city such as Constantinople, namely he does not refer to its harbor, or its walls and does not mention the achievements of its citizens. It is probable that those were already included in Tornikes' letter.

14. Akropolites refers to the hierarchy of titles at the Byzantine imperial court. Since the *sebastokrator* Tornikes held a title higher (second in rank) than the one of *meGas logothetes* (ninth in rank) held by Akropolites, the latter observes that Tornikes' status is much greater and that his request of exchanging places in life is not in fact sincere.
15. A reference to *Od.* 11.14, where they are described as a mythical tribe living near the Oceanus, beyond which lies the location of the entrance to the underworld. In Homer, the land of the Cimmerians is characterized as covered by cloud and mist, a place of perpetual darkness never to be lit by the sunlight. Akropolites employs the Homeric imagery in order to emphasize the difference in proximity to the emperor between him and Tornikes, namely, while the latter is so close to the emperor/sun that he is referred to as "sun-like" (ἡλιοειδής), Akropolites never even sees its light.
16. Akropolites' elaborate metaphor constructs the imperial figure as the source of light, warmth, and water, three vital conditions for maintaining one's life and, wittily in this case, for Akropolites' and Tornikes' livelihood.
17. A reference to Akropolites' judicial duties within the *sekretion*. See n. 5.
18. It ought to be noted that here Heisenberg has filled a lacuna with the reading τὰ τοῦ σεβαστοκράτορος διεκπληρῶν which we have decided to omit in the translation.

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⁴⁰ On the *topos* of urban *kallos* see Saradi 1995: 37–56.

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I.5.15 John Apokaukos (c.1155–1233)

A Seljuq-Style Hall in Nafpaktos

FOTEINI SPINGOU AND ALICIA WALKER¹

Ed.: A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, “Συμβολή εις τὴν ἱστορίαν τῆς ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Ἀχρίδος,” in *Recueil de memoires en l’honneur de l’academicien B.J. Lamanskij = Sbornik stateĭ, posviashchennykh pochitateliami akademiku i zaslužennomu professoru V. I. Lamanskomu*, vol. I (St. Petersburg, 1907), 244–50, esp. 245, 17–247, 23 (no. 7)²

MS.:² St. Petersburg, RNB, Φ no. 906, gr. 250 (= Granstr. 454) (s. XIII), f. 27r–v

Other Translations: Paul Magdalino in Redford 2013, 41 n. 3 (partial)

Significance

In the first part of the text below John Apokaukos, metropolitan of Nafpaktos, recounts how the local governor, Constantine Doukas, erected a reception hall of “Persian” style in the former episcopal palace. The passage offers an unusually detailed description of a secular monument. Apokaukos emphasizes the foreign, non-Christian origin of this architectural addition, and he presents it as a symptom of the governor’s corruption and unworthiness. His account therefore offers a noteworthy instance of a building being interpreted as a reflection of its patron’s character.³ The second part of the passage recounts Apokaukos’ inferior, new residence. It provides a rare glimpse of the living circumstances for non-elite populations in provincial Byzantium. Discussing the trials that he, as the local metropolitan, was called to judge, Apokaukos also describes the work of a blacksmith in Nafpaktos.

The Author

See T. Tsampouras and F. Spingou, I.2.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

In this letter, John Apokaukos, the metropolitan of Nafpaktos, writes to his protégé and close friend, Demetrios Chomatenos, archbishop of Bulgaria (1216–36), about his

¹ The contributors wish to thank Oya Pancaroğlu, Assef Ashraf, and Bihter Esener for their generous assistance in identifying textual and material evidence for the Seljuq models on which Constantine Doukas’ “Persian *soufa*” may have been based.

² Consulted.

³ For similar instances of a building being used as a rhetorical device to convey the quality of a person’s character, see A. Walker, I.5.12 in this volume.

troublesome relationship with the local secular authority, Constantine Doukas, who was the governor of the southern part of the Despotate of Epirus and the brother of the Emperor of the Despotate, Theodore Doukas.⁴ The conflict between Apokaukos and Constantine Doukas started in 1212 and lasted until 1228; it focused on the severe taxation that Constantine imposed on the inhabitants and the metropolis of Nafpaktos, as well as on disagreement over who held the authority to appoint local priests.⁵ In the year 1220, from when the letter dates, Doukas forced Apokaukos to leave his beloved episcopal palace and reside in a humble cottage owned by the church.⁶

The initial part of the letter is missing from the manuscript.⁷ In the preserved section of the document, Apokaukos begins with general thoughts, then turns to his misfortunes. He lists the unjustified and highhanded actions of Doukas: his appointment of priests (which Apokaukos considers to be inappropriate for a secular ruler), his confiscation of Apokaukos' land, his imposition of high taxation, and his personal mockeries of Apokaukos. In his most extended complaint, Apokaukos describes how Doukas appropriated the *episkopeion* (bishop's palace) for his own purposes and built within it a new structure in "Persian" (i.e. Seljuq) style.⁸ Apokaukos calls this addition a "*soufa*" and provides a detailed description of it, emphasizing its elaborateness and its foreign character.

The extra effort that Apokaukos expends in describing the *soufa* (and how Doukas used it) draws attention to Doukas' profligacy and lack of decorum. Doukas not only abuses the bishop's palace by undertaking an extravagant architectural renovation that introduces non-Byzantine, non-Christian forms, he also employs this structure to promote his own authority in an excessive and unbecoming fashion. In criticizing the local governor for displacing him, Apokaukos stresses the travesty of a "Persian" hall in a holy place. The foreign, non-Christian identity of the architectural structure is essential to the description's operating as a thinly veiled indictment of Doukas.

In the remainder of the letter, Apokaukos describes how Doukas forced him to reside together with local peasants in a cottage owned by the church of Nafpaktos. The metropolitan recounts the ignominy of his new reality, wistfully remembers the pleasures of the intellectual life in Constantinople, and asks for consolation from his friend. The nuanced comparison of the governor's luxurious hall and the metropolitan's humble lodging epitomizes the hardship endured by Apokaukos. The two passages – and the buildings they describe – work together to convey Apokaukos' fall from fortune and his dismay at the injustice that has beset him.

4 On Demetrios Chomatenos see Prinzing 2009, 28–29.

5 On the conflict see Stavridou-Zafraka 2009, 17–19.

6 On the *episkopeion* see F. Spingou, I.8.5 in this volume.

7 The manuscript does not preserve the original foliation.

8 For discussion of the term "Persian" in Middle Byzantine discourse and its association, by the thirteenth century, with the Seljuqs of Rum see Durak 2009, esp. 76–77.

Text

... [f. 27r/p. 245] Ἐν τούτοις ὧν οὐ τρίβω τὴν αὐθεντικὴν τοῦ ἐπισκοπείου καθέδραν, ἦν καὶ ταύτην αὐτὸς κοινωσάμενος ἀντὶ ἐπισκοπείου πορνεῖον καὶ ἀνθ' ἱεροῦ ἰδιωτικὸν αὐτὸ κατεστήσατο, καὶ σὺν τοῖς ἄλλοις ὠκοδομήσατο καὶ σουφᾶν. οἰκίας ὄνομα περσικῆς ὁ σουφᾶς· δηλοῖ δέ, ὡς εἰκάζειν ἔστιν ἀπὸ τοῦ σχήματος, ἐν ταυτῶ¹ παρύψωσιν καὶ ὑπόβασιν.² ἔστι γὰρ τὸ οἰκημάτων³ πρόμηκες.⁴ καὶ τούτου κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν. τούτου γοῦν τὴν ἔκτασιν καθ' ἐν τῶν ἄκρων παρατεμόμενος, καὶ τῶ τμήματι τούτῳ χῶμα ἐπιστοιβάσας καὶ τοῦ λοιποῦ προσανασπάσας ἐδάφους, λίθοις τὲ⁵ τὸ [p. 246] χῶμα διαλαβῶν ὡς μὴ πρὸς τὸ ὑποβεβηκὸς καταρρῆ, κιγκλίδας ἄνω τούτου τοῦ διαστήματος ἐστήσατο στοιχηδὸν καὶ σχῆμα ἐπισκοπικοῦ θρόνου,⁶ ὅς δὴ κοινῶς καλεῖται στασίδιον, διὰ τούτων ἐκαιουργήσατο, ὡς ἀριστᾶ μὲν αὐτὸς ἐν τῶ μετεώρῳ καὶ ἀπ' ἐκείνου ρήγνυσι τὸν διάλογον, καὶ ὡς ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ τεχνητοῦ βροντᾶ ὡς ὁ Σαλμωνεύς· τὸ δ' ὑποβεβηκὸς καὶ τὸ πρόσγειον εἰς δίαιταν εἰς ἀκρόασιν τοῖς τὴν τύχην ταπεινότεροις ἀπένειμεν. εἰ δέ που τινὸς (leg. τινὲς) εἰς πλῆθος αὐτῶ ἐντυγχάνοιεν, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἀριστίνδην τούτους ἀπολεγόμενος ἑαυτῶ συνιστᾶ, τῶ χυδαίῳ δὲ τὸν κάτω δίδωσι τόπον καὶ τοῖς ὁμοτύχοις συνίστησιν. ὕψος δὲ τῶ ἀνασπάσματι τούτῳ, ὅσον τὸν κάτω τῶ ἄνω διαλεγόμενον τὸ χεῖλος ἔχειν πρὸς τοῖς ἐκείνου ποσίν· καὶ ταύτην τὴν θέσιν καὶ τοῦτο τὸ σχῆμα καλοῦσι Πέρσαι σουφᾶν. οὕτως ὁ κράτωρ τῶν ἡμετέρων, ὡς δ' αὐτὸς συνέθετο κοινόν τι τοῦτο ἀξίωμα, ὁ ῥηγοκρατάρης, ἀνὰ μέσον διαστέλλων ταπεινότητός τε καὶ ὑψηλότητος, δέον ὄν ἀνὰ μέσον ἀγίου καὶ βεβήλου μάλλον ποιεῖσθαι διαστολὴν καὶ μὴ μιγνύειν ταῦτα τὰ ἄμικτα. ἀλλ' αὐτὸς μὲν οὕτως· ἐγὼ δ' ἐφάπαξ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἐκκρουσθεὶς καὶ ἀπὸ μητροπολίτου εἰς χωρεπίσκοπον καταβάς, ἐν παροικίᾳ⁷ ὑπὸ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ποιοῦμαι τὴν δίαιταν, καὶ σύνειμι χωρικοῖς καὶ παρὰ⁸ βόας ἔχω καὶ βῶλον καὶ ἄροτρον, καὶ πονοῦμαι περὶ ὑδραγωγούς, καὶ ὀρχάτους ἀνακαθαίρω φυτῶν, καὶ δίκας δικάζω ὁ μητροπολίτης (ὁ γνωρίμος ἐν Ἐφέῳ, ὁ ἐν Ἐσπέρᾳ μὴ ἄγνωστος, ὁ ἐν τῇ Βασιλευούσῃ πάλαι ὑποβλεπόμενος, ὡς οἱ πολλοὶ μὴ ὀρθῶς δοξάζουσιν, ὁ ἐλλόγιμος), ὅσας κλοπῆ συνίστησιν ἀμαξῶν, ὅσας ὄνοι ἀλλότρια βρωματιζόμενοι λήια καὶ τὰς οὐράς ἐντεῦθεν ἀποκοπτόμενοι, καὶ ὅσας φώριόν τι σκεύους γεωργικοῦ· φούρτιβον δὲ τὸ κλέμμα γλώσσα καλεῖ ῥωμαίζουσα. ἤδη δὲ καὶ χαλκεὺς ἀρεστί μοι κριθησόμενος, ὅτι τὴν τοῦ γείτονος ὕιν οὐ κατὰ τέχνην ἐχάλκευσε, οὐδὲ σχῆμα ταύτη τὸ πρέπον [p. 247] ἐνέθετο, οὐδὲ κατὰ βραχὺ τοῦ πυρὸς ἐξάγων χειρολαβίδι καὶ σφύρα τύπτων εἰς ἐντελὲς αὐτὴν ἐξεργάσατο, ἀλλὰ τῶ πυρὶ [f. 27v] λιπᾶνας εἰς διαρκὲς καὶ καταχαυνώσας οὕτω τὸν σίδηρον, εἴτα σφυρηλατῶν τὸν ὄγκον ταύτης ἠλάττωσε. ταῦτα τὰ κρίματά μου, τοῦ ποτὲ τὰ κρίματα τῆς περιβλέπτου συνόδου χειρογραφοῦντος εἰς <εὐ>στοχίαν, ὥσπου ἐλέγετο. ὁ δὲ τόπος, ὃν παροικῶ, καθήλιος, δέσποτα, καὶ καταυγάζει τοῦτον τὸν τόπον οὗτος ὁ γίγας, ἀφ' οὗ τὸν ἐξῶν ὀρίζοντα ὑπεραναβάς σκεδάσει τὴν ἀκτῖνα πρὸς γῆν, ἕως καὶ τὸν ἐσπέριον παραμείψεται. [...]

[p. 247, ll. 14–26] Καὶ ὡς αὐτὸν διαγράψασθαι, αὐλαία μεγάλη τετραγώνος ἐστὶ καὶ ἰσόπλευρος, καὶ διαλαμβάνουσι τὰ μήκη καὶ τῶν τεσσάρων πλευρῶν ταπειναὶ οἰκίαι καὶ παλαιαί, διαιρεταὶ εἰς κελλάθρας, αἷς ἐνσκηνοῦμεθα. ἀδιαίρετον δὲ ὄν τὸ τοῦ τετραγώνου τούτου χωρίον, ὡς δὲ γεωμέτραι λέγουσιν ἐμβαδόν, καὶ μὴ διαιρεθὲν ὡς ἐχρῆν εἰς αὐλὴν αὐτὴν καὶ εἰς μέσαυλον, ὡς ἐν τούτῳ μὲν τὴν ἐκ ζῶν ἡμετέραν ὑπαρξιν ἐνοικίζεσθαι, ἡμᾶς

Translation

... [f. 27r/p. 245] Being in the middle of this situation, I do not spend my time at the legitimate seat of the episcopate. After he [i.e. Constantine Doukas], in fact, seized this [i.e. the seat of the episcopate], he turned the site of the episcopal palace into a brothel and a holy space into an unholy one. What is more, he also built a *soufa*.⁹ *Soufa* is the name of a Persian structure. It indicates – as it seems by its form – a structure with a raised area and a lowered area; for, it is an oblong enclosure. And “we hear its fame but we know nothing about it.”¹⁰ So, he inscribed on the ground the four corners for its [prospective] area and he piled up soil at that spot, raising the remaining ground. Furthermore, he supported the soil using stones, [p. 246] so that the soil does not slip to a lower level.¹¹ He built upon that [i.e. the platform] a row of latticework, with intervals, to form a bishop’s throne (which is called a *stasidion*¹¹ in common parlance), so that he could dine elevated at a higher spot and would engage in discussions from there,¹³ such that he would thunder from an artificial sky, as Salmoneus [did];¹⁴ he left to his inferiors the lower earthly [part of the room] to dine and to address him. It occasionally happens [for Doukas] to approach someone from the crowd; but he chooses him [i.e. the person from the crowd] according to his merits, and then he [i.e. Doukas] positions him [i.e. the person from the crowd] next to himself: he places the commoners below and he is next to those of similar [social] stature to himself.¹⁵ This platform is so highly elevated,¹⁶ so that if one being below speaks to the one above, he would have his lips at the height of the other person’s feet.¹⁷ This form and position the Persians [i.e. Seljuqs] call *soufa*. These are the deeds of the ruler of our affairs, who, being such, invented a civil rank, that of the *regokratarches*,¹⁸ placing himself as someone between the humblest and the most important – although it is more appropriate to make the distinction between holy and unholy and not to mix those that cannot be mixed.¹⁹

He [i.e. Doukas] is living thus, while I, being immediately discharged from the episcopal palace and demoted from a metropolitan to a village-bishop,²⁰ stay at a nearby cottage owned by the church. I mix with villagers, cows, clods of dirt, and ploughs, I labor to fetch water²¹ and I clear up rows of plants. I, the metropolitan, [who was] renowned to the East and not unknown to the West, the one who formerly used to be regarded in the Queen of the Cities as erudite – as many erroneously think –²² I now judge trials about what constitutes the theft of wagons, about donkeys who eat other people’s crops and lose their tails there,²³ and about evidence regarding farming implements;²⁴ the Latin language calls theft “*phourtivon*.”²⁵ Even a blacksmith has already come before me to be tried, having been accused of not casting the ploughshare of his neighbour skillfully,²⁶ and that he did not form it into the appropriate shape [p. 247]. [He was] also [accused of] not bringing the work to perfection by taking it out of the fire [f. 27v] with tongs²⁷ and hammering it; but instead made [the iron] sleek in the fire and in this way he softened the plough, and then reduced its volume when he wrought it. These are the decisions that I must take, I, who used to record with accuracy the decrees of the most-admired synod until I was elected [metropolitan].²⁸

δὲ τῷ ὑπολοίπῳ μέτρῳ τῆς αὐλῆς ἐνσκηνοῦν, ἐσμέν ὁμοῦ χρήματα πάντα, ἄνθρωπος ἵππος νῆττα καὶ χῆν καὶ σύες, περιστερὰ πρόβατα βοῦς τε καὶ κύων, σῆτος κριθή καὶ κέγγρος, ὄσπριον λῖνον ἄχυρον ἢ καὶ χόρτος, ὡς δὲ καὶ ξύλον· καὶ ἔνθεν μὲν βληχᾶται τὸ πρόβατον, ἐκεῖθεν δὲ μυκᾶται ὁ βοῦς, ἵππος τε χρεμετίζει καὶ παππάζει ὁ χῆν, καὶ περιγυλλίζουσι τὰ δελφάκια, καὶ φωνεῖ τορὸν ὁ μεγαστόφωνος ὄρνις, καὶ διαλέγεται ἄνθρωπος [...]

Yet, the place where I temporarily dwell, my lord,²⁹ is overwhelmed with sunlight and the great sun shines upon that place whence he ascends to the East and scatters his rays to the earth until leaving behind the West ...

[p. 247] As for describing this [place]: it is a rather big, square courtyard with equal sides, the length of the four sides is occupied by humble and old houses, which are divided into cells and in which we live. But the middle space of the square remains undivided – this is what the geometers would call an “area.” It is not evenly divided into a “main courtyard” and an “inner courtyard,” as it should have been in order to keep our livestock there and to leave the remaining area of the court free for us to reside. Instead, all things are close together: human, horse, duck, geese, boar, dove, sheep, bull and dog, grain, barley and grains of millet, pulses, flaxseeds, chaffs, even fodder, and even more wood!³⁰ And here the sheep bleats, there the bull bellows, the horse whinnies, the goose honks,³¹ the piglets try to squeal,³² the rooster with its great voice calls with a piercing noise, and the human chatters ...

Commentary

1. ταῦτ' ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameus.
2. The phrase παρῦψωσιν καὶ ὑπόβασιν describes how the building has an upper and lower area, features that are emphasized in the subsequent description of how the space functions during receptions.
3. The Greek word οἰκημάτιον is the diminutive of οἶκημα and literally means “small house,” but can also have the connotation of a “chamber” or “room” as well as “stable” or “stall.”⁹
4. The punctuation at this point is slightly altered from that offered in Papadopoulos-Kerameus’ edition.
5. τὲ Papadopoulos-Kerameus.
6. Although Papadopoulos-Kerameus corrected the text to θρόνου (throne) the manuscript at this point clearly reads ὀρθρόνου, which could be understood as a (half-) standing seat.
7. Rather than παροικία (“sojourning”), which is offered in both the manuscript and Papadopoulos-Kerameus edition, the intended word is likely the substantive of the adjective “πάροικος” (“dwelling beside or near”).¹⁰
8. περὶ cod.
9. Apokaukos here transliterates the Persian word *şoffa*, which derives from the Arabic *şuffa*.¹¹ The term has several related meanings. As a reference to architectural structures, it denotes a covered alcove with a raised floor.¹² The term *şoffa/şuffa* could also refer to a bench-like or bed-like piece of furniture, an association which produced the term *sofa* in Ottoman Turkish, from which derives (via French) the English term “sofa” (a couch or settee).

Tenth- to thirteenth-century Persian sources employ *şoffa* in decidedly secular and royal contexts, and predominantly in reference to palaces and throne rooms.¹³ Over time, the term *şoffa* also came to be associated with sacred architecture,¹⁴ but the point at which this connotation developed is unclear. The Arabic term *şuffa* held a religious connection in the medieval era, referring to covered alcoves and benches, including those in a mosque. This association was disseminated through the name of an early Islamic mendicant group attested in *ḥadīth* accounts, the Ahl al-Şuffa (“people of the bench”), a band of indigent but devout Companions of the Prophet, who lived in a porch of the Prophet’s house (the first mosque of Islam) in Medina.¹⁵

⁹ LSJ, s.v. “οἶκημα” and “οἰκημάτιον.”

¹⁰ LSJ, s.v. “παροικία” and “πάροικος.”

¹¹ Dehkhoda 1947–73: s.v. “صفا.”

¹² In this respect, it is synonymous with *ayvān* (Arabic, *iwān*, *liwān*), the term more commonly used in reference to monumental arched porches, especially those in late antique and medieval Islamic and pre-Islamic palaces. For discussion of the term *ayvān* and its connection to the term *şoffa* see O. Grabar, “*ayvān*,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, III/2, 153–55, www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ayvan-palace (accessed December 2020). For examples of *suffas* from Seljuq elite domestic structures see Yavaş 2007.

¹³ Dehkhoda 1947–73: s.v. “صفا.”

¹⁴ Grabar, “*ayvān*.”

¹⁵ Roberto Tottoli, “Ahl al-Şuffa,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 3, ed. K. Fleet et al., http://dx.doi.org/proxy.brynmawr.edu/10.1163/1573-3912_eij_COM_22663 (accessed December 2020).

It is unclear if Apokaukos perceived the *soufa* built by Doukas to be modeled on Seljuq palatial structures (and therefore associated with the political authority of a Byzantine enemy) or to be a feature of Islamic sacred architecture (and therefore a blasphemous intervention in the semi-sacred space of the bishop's palace) or to be a combination of both secular and sacred Islamic architectural forms. Apokaukos' description of how Doukas used the structure as a reception hall and throne suggests an origin in Seljuq royal architecture, while his reference to Doukas' inappropriate combination of "holy and unholy" things suggests that Apokaukos perceived the *soufa* to be affiliated with Islamic sacred buildings.

10. *Il.* 2, 486. The verse is from the invocation to the Muses at the beginning of the "Catalogue of Ships":

ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι:

ὑμεῖς γὰρ θεαὶ ἐστε πάρεστε τε ἴστε τε πάντα,

ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν.

Tell me now, ye Muses, that have dwellings on Olympus,

for ye are goddesses and are at hand and know all things,

whereas we hear but a rumor and know not anything.

Apokaukos employs the quotation as a rhetorical device to introduce his *ekphrasis* on the *soufa*, but his meaning is ambiguous. He may imply that the *soufa* built by Doukas did not accurately follow a Seljuq model, because Doukas had only heard about it and never seen it. Alternately, he may be acknowledging that his audience is not familiar with Doukas' construction, so Apokaukos makes clear that he is assuming the role of a first-hand witness, who can provide accurate information and dispel rumor.

11. A *stasidion* is a seat for a member of the clergy. The word is sometimes translated as "stall." It can take various forms, including a bench or series of chairs running along the walls of a church. When associated with a patriarch or bishop, it is synonymous with a "cathedra."¹⁶
12. I.e. a retaining wall was constructed to support a raised platform of dirt.
13. The description of Doukas' "throne" has much in common with Seljuq royal thrones, which resemble raised beds framed by wooden latticework. For example, see the thirteenth-century wooden throne associated with the Seljuq Sultan of Rūm Kaykhusraw III (r.1265–84) (fig. I.5.15), now in the Ethnographic Museum, Ankara, Turkey.¹⁷ The extent of the latticework screens in Doukas' *soufa* is not specified. It is possible that they may have been quite tall, creating a private enclosure around the platform where Doukas was seated.¹⁸
14. Salmoneus was a son of Aeolus (the god of the winds) and Enarete. Being the king of Elis, Salmoneus ordered his subjects to worship him under the name of Zeus. He built a bridge of brass on which he drove his chariot so as to imitate the noise of thun-

16 See "stasidion" in *ByzAd*, <http://typika.cfeb.org> (accessed December 2020); *ODB*, s.v. "cathedra."

17 For discussion of the throne and its relationship to the Kızılbey Camii in Ankara see Çam and Ersay 2012: 25–27, figs. 28–30.

18 As suggested by Hunt 1984: 145–46 and 155 n. 73.



Fig. I.5.15 Throne associated with the Sultan of Rüm Kaykhusraw III (r. 1265–84). Seljuq, thirteenth century, wood
© Ethnographic Museum, Ankara, Turkey

der. At the same time, torches were thrown into the air to represent lightning. Zeus considered this an act of hubris and struck down Salmoneus with a thunderbolt.¹⁹ By comparing Doukas to Salmoneus, Apokaukos portrays the governor as arrogantly claiming a mark of status and authority – the *stasidion* – that is not rightfully his.

15. Apokaukos' description of Doukas' plucking commoners from the crowd and re-arranging the seating at receptions may constitute a subtle criticism. Apokaukos characterizes Doukas as someone who wished on occasion to appear as "one of the people," but faulted Doukas for becoming undignified by lowering himself to the level of his subjects. In addition, Doukas' act of disrupting the proper social order at a banquet might have carried negative connotations. While it is unclear if the households of provincial governors followed the same formalities as the imperial palace in Constantinople, the tenth-century *Book of Ceremonies* describes how in the capital, strict orders of protocol were observed for the positioning of courtiers during imperial ceremonies and appearances.²⁰ Royal banquets were also controlled by established rules of precedent.²¹ As a former patriarchal notary in Constantinople, Apokaukos would have been familiar with these practices (see n. 28). It is possible that in this section of his letter, Apokaukos exposes Doukas as incapable of good rule because he is unversed in – or brazenly flouts – the proper codes of ceremonial conduct.
16. I.e. it is very tall.

¹⁹ Ps. Apollodorus, *Library*, ch. 1, sect. 89

²⁰ See *The Book of Ceremonies*.

²¹ See Oikonomides 1972.

17. Extant Seljuq *soffas* are not well preserved, and it is impossible to determine the exact height of the platform in relation to the floor of the hall.²² However, an eighteenth-century reception room at the Gulistan Palace in Tehran, Iran, shows a throne on a platform that creates a comparable relationship between ruler and audience to that described by Apokaukos. The place of this modern throne within a long history of Persian royal structures reaching back to the late antique era substantiates its relevance to the kinds of Seljuq palatial structures that may have inspired the *soufa* installed by Doukas.²³
18. The Greek word ῥηγοκρατάρχης, used here with a pinch of irony, is a hapax legomenon. It is a compound of two words widely used in medieval texts to indicate persons in power: κρατάρχης (ruler) and ῥῆξ (Lat., *rex*).
19. Apokaukos negatively characterizes Doukas as an innovator, who creates titles that undermine the social order, much as Doukas' architectural interventions mix disparate forms (i.e. an episcopal palace with a Seljuq reception hall) in improper ways. Apokaukos' highlighting of these deeds could be intended to present Doukas as uncivilized, arrogant, and unworthy of the political authority he holds.
20. Χωρεπίσκοποι (country bishops) were appointed to serve in small towns or large villages and had significantly less power than that of a proper ἐπίσκοπος (bishop).²⁴ The metropolitan of Nafpaktos was indeed the most senior ecclesiastical office in the Despotate.
21. On the importance of water in Nafpaktos see, I.8.5 in this volume.
22. Apokaukos adds this phrase to show humility.
23. The case involving the donkey is absurd, but that seems to be Apokaukos' point. He was called to judge a dispute in which a donkey trespassed on private land and ate the owner's crops. Presumably, the owner of the crops then cut the animal's tail in revenge. Apokaukos cites this case as an epitome of the downfall of his career as an intellectual.
24. Priests and bishops held considerable power in their dioceses. Thanks to his fame as an erudite man, Apokaukos was called to preside over cases that were ordinarily outside the jurisdiction of local bishops or priests.²⁵
25. From *furtivus* (Lat., stolen). This phrase seems an interpolation of a marginal comment.
26. The Greek here reads κατὰ τέχνην (literarily, "according to his art").
27. Χειρολαβίς usually notes "a plough handle"; in this instance, the word has the meaning of "χειρολαβή" (a handle).²⁶
28. Apokaukos served as a patriarchal notary between 1186 and 1199 or 1200.²⁷
29. I.e. the archbishop of Bulgaria, Demetrios Chomatenos.²⁸

22 For examples of preserved *soffa* structures in Seljuq monuments see Yavaş 2007.

23 For discussion of the Gulistan Palace throne and reception area see Soucek 1993: 119–21.

24 On the jurisdiction χωρεπίσκοποι see the work of the fourteenth-century canonist, Mattheos Blastares, Epsilon 31, in Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, vol. 6, 238–301; see also Papadopoulos 1990–93: 367–68.

25 See Laiou 2009: 43–57.

26 LSJ, s.v. "χειρολαβίς" and "χειρολαβή."

27 Lamproroulos, *Απόκωνος*, 60–62.

28 See Text and Context above.

30. Here Apokaukos continues the themes introduced in his earlier criticism of life in the episcopal palace under Doukas, which he characterized as marred by an inappropriate mixing of sacred/profane, Byzantine–Christian/Persian–Islamic, and rulers/commoners. Apokaukos complains about the disorder of his new residence, where the expected divisions of rural habitations are not observed, and instead humans mix with animals and other stuff of agricultural life.
31. LSJ, s.v. παππαζω, provides the definition “to call anyone papa.” In Apokaukos’ letter, the word is an onomatopoeia deriving from the noise that ducks, geese, and hens make in Greek (/pa-pa/); meaning “to honk” or “to quack.”
32. Περιγυλλίζω is a *hapax legomenon*.

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I.6 Art and Devotion in Later Byzantium

Introduction

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Christian devotion was the backbone of Byzantine culture. Its importance was spread equally across all social strata and geographic locations. More precious artworks were often employed by the emperor and higher social echelons to manifest such religious worship. The texts that are included in the section address the close relationship between art and devotion.

The first two texts connect artworks expressing devotion with personal diplomacy or foreign affairs. The first contribution in this section presents a letter sent by the fourteenth-century bishop and intellectual Matthew of Ephesos to an anonymous high-ranking military commander (Alexander Riehle, I.6.1 in this volume). The letter accompanied an exceptionally personal gift: a cameo encolpion, which the receiver could use in his daily worship. Gifts with an avowedly Christian character helped Byzantium to seal alliances (Ida Toth, I.6.3 in this volume). The two texts discussed by Toth are directly connected to a silk of enormous size (H 128 cm x W 376 cm) with scenes from the martyrdom of St. Lawrence that was presented to Genoa during the negotiations that took place before the Treaty of Nicaea in 1261. Notably, the inscriptions on this custom-made diplomatic gift were written in Latin instead of Greek. Toth translates and comments on both the inscriptions and an excerpt from an encomium to Michael VIII (r.1259–82) penned by Manuel Holobolos that was delivered soon after the signing of the Treaty and that refers directly to the silk.

Three contributions concern artefacts commissioned as votive offerings to churches: they include textiles offered by high-ranking officials known for their piety (Alice-Mary Talbot, I.6.2 in this volume), frescoes in Cyprus commissioned by donors from diverse ethnic backgrounds (Annemarie Weyl Carr, I.6.4 in this volume), and precious revetments on icons donated by the emperor himself (Luisa Andriollo, I.6.5 in this volume). The text discussed by Talbot is a secondary source reporting an offering, while the texts discussed by Carr and Andriollo were part of the dedication, since both were intended to be inscribed on artworks.

The last three contributions are about forms of art and the cult of relics. Relics were openly venerated in Byzantium: the concentration of relics in the capital and in imperial churches (Michael Featherstone, I.6.6 in this volume) as well as the special cult for the *acheiropoieta* (Reinhart Ceulemans, I.6.7 in this volume) are well known. However, these two texts are particularly precious since they were composed only a few years before the

events of 1204 and the loss of many of Constantinople's valuable relics.¹ The last contribution in this chapter is a selection of epigrams on reliquaries (Brad Hostetler, I.6.8 in this volume).² As Hostetler notes, these epigrams give a number of references to the pragmatics of reliquaries: they talk about the materials used, their contents, and the viewer's response to the artwork and its content.

None of the aspects of devotion discussed in this chapter has its first appearance in later Byzantium, but some became particularly prominent only in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Most importantly, *enkolpia*, that often bore epigrams, became central to the expression of personal hopes, dreams, and wishes. Furthermore, epigrams were often employed to dedicate such objects:³ this special relationship between word and image for expressing devotion is a characteristic of the culture of later Byzantium.⁴

Bibliography

Summarizing the existing bibliography on the subject of Byzantine devotion is impossible given the sheer volume of contributions on the subject. Brief introductory articles on different aspects of the subject matter in question may be found in the volume edited by Derek Krueger (2006), see especially the contributions by Charles Barber, Alice-Mary Talbot, and Brigitte Pittarakis. For a recent discussion of expressions of personal devotion through word and image in later Byzantium see Ivan Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*. On art (often religious) and diplomacy see Cecily Hilsdale (2014). One may also wish to consult edited volumes and books, such as those by Maria Vassilaki (2000) and Bissera Pentcheva (2006), on the Mother of God and Her cult, as the cult of the Theotokos was fundamental in medieval Byzantium.

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1 On the Latin attempt to justify the stealing relics see the texts discussed by Perry 2015.

2 For the discussion of more epigrams on reliquaries by the same author see also Hostetler 2016.

3 See also F. Spingou, Introduction, II.4 in this volume.

4 See p. xlvi in this volume.

I.6.1 Manuel Gabalas/Matthew of Ephesos (1271/72–1359/60)

Letter (to John Kantakouzenos?), On an Amulet Depicting Christ and St. John the Apostle

ALEXANDER RIEHLE

Ed.: D. Reinsch, *Die Briefe des Matthaios von Ephesos im Codex Vindobonensis Theol. Gr.* 174 (Berlin, 1974), 183

MS.:¹ Vienna, ÖNB, Theologicus Graecus 174 (s. XIV), ff. 56v–57r

Other Translations: Reinsch, as above, 355 (German)

Significance

The letter attests to the Byzantine practice of gift-giving in the framework of epistolary exchange, which often met pragmatic needs. In this case, the gift was intended to reinforce the author's plea for military support for his bishopric. This gift – a cameo-enkolpion with a double-sided depiction of St. John leaning on Christ's chest – must have been remarkable for its value and extraordinary artistic design.

The Author

A native of the city of Philadelphia in Asia Minor, Manuel Gabalas grew up under the tutelage of the famous metropolitan of his hometown, Theoleptos.² He pursued an ecclesiastical career, was appointed to the office of chartophylax in 1321, and in the following year took monastic vows with the name Matthew. Travels to Constantinople brought him in contact with the capital's educated elites, with whom his patron Theoleptos maintained close ties. With the help of this network, Gabalas attempted to gain the see of Philadelphia after Theoleptos' death (1322), yet without success. It was only under the regime of the new emperor Andronikos III (r.1328–41) that he would achieve his goal of becoming a metropolitan, even if not of his home town. On the recommendation of one of the younger Andronikos' most important supporters, Syrgiannes, Gabalas was appointed in 1329 to the see of Ephesos. Due to the Turkish occupation of the city, he was not to take up residence in his bishopric until 1339. After his return to Constantinople (1342/3) he became entangled in the Hesychastic controversy and was condemned twice for his anti-Palamite positions. He died around 1359/60.

¹ Consulted.

² On his life and literary oeuvre see *PLP* no. 3309; A.-M. Talbot, s.v. "Gabalas, Manuel," *ODB* 2, 811–12; "Gabalas (Manuel G.)," in Buchwald *et al.* 1982: 260–61; Treu 1901; Kourouses 1972.

Gabalas, who had received a thorough classical education, has left us a colorful literary oeuvre, which in part survives in autograph copies. Besides his theological, philosophical and philological works, Gabalas is notable for his rhetorical writings, which also include c.90 letters, addressed to the leading figures of contemporary political and intellectual life.

Text and Context

Gift-giving was an essential part of Byzantine social exchange, as we know from hundreds of letters giving thanks for or commenting on presents received or sent. Be they foodstuff, textiles, books, or sacred objects, gifts were meant to foster relationships and/or to convey messages, as they often bore symbolic value and supplemented the text of a written missive.³

Gabalas claims that the present he is sending his addressee is a stone (λίθος) originating from the tomb of Christ's beloved disciple, the apostle St. John. Tradition had it that St. John's grave in Ephesos – around which the famous basilica of St. John was built under the aegis of emperor Justinian I – cast up “holy dust” every year on May 8 – a miraculous event that was commemorated in churches across the Empire.⁴ The object Gabalas describes was in all likelihood a gemstone on the surface of which the scene depicting Christ with his disciple St. John was carved. A considerable number of such cameos – i.e. semiprecious stones with figures cut in high relief – representing Christ, saints, and (rarely) narrative scenes from the New Testament – are preserved from the Byzantine era.⁵ They were usually given a metal frame and worn as protective amulets on a chain around the neck, hence their designation as ἐγκόλπια (“lying in/on the bosom”). This is the notion that Gabalas plays with in his description of the stone.

In the theological tradition, the apostle John is called ἐπιστήθιος, on the basis of Jn. 13:25, where he is recorded as “leaning on Jesus' chest” (ἀναπεσών ἐπὶ τὸ στήθος τοῦ ἠησοῦ) at the Last Supper, indicating a close intimacy (thus ἐπιστήθιος/*epistethios* = “bosom-friend”). Later Byzantine representations of the Last Supper regularly show John leaning on Christ's chest.⁶ Gabalas' amulet probably depicted this scene, which would constitute a unique example of the isolation of Christ and St. John in Byzantine art, comparable to the so-called *Johannesminne* (or *Christus-Johannes-Gruppe*) known as an artistic motif from Western Europe (primarily in fourteenth-century southern Germany).⁷ Although several Byzantine cameos depicting St. John survive, none of them

3 Karpozilos 1984: 20–37; Karpozilos 1995: 68–84; Mullett 1990: 182–83; Grünbart 2011; Riehle 2011: 266–67; Bernard 2020.

4 Cf. *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, ed. Delehaye, 665.

5 Wentzel 1978; Mango and Mango 1993: 57–78. Examples, for instance, in Durand 1992: 277–88 (nos. 184–204) and 438–40 (nos. 329–32); Evans and Wixom 1997: 174–80 (nos. 126–29, 131–135); *Byzanz: Pracht und Alltag*, 224–27 (nos. 162–67); see also fig. I.6.

6 Wessel 1966: 10–11.

7 Reinle 1980: 585 and 588 (bibliography).



Fig. I.6.1 Reverse side of a serpentine *Enkolpion* with Saint John the Forerunner, 4 x 25 cm, 1100–1300. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 1981.414; the inscription reads: αγκ(ιος) ο προ(ο)φιτ(ης) ιω(αννης) ο προ(δρομος): the Prophet Saint John the Forerunner

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shows him with Christ.⁸ Interestingly, from around the same period, we have a distich and a tetrastich by Manuel Philes for amulets with St. John: the first is designated as a δαιμονόλιθον λίθον ἐγκόλπιον (amulet made from a black stone),⁹ the second is simply identified as an ἐγκόλπιον.¹⁰ The text of the epigram on the latter object could suggest that St. John was depicted here as ἐπιστήθιος/*epistethios*, as he is referred to as “he who was Christ’s bosom-friend” (ὄν εἶχεν ἐγκάρδιον ὁ Χριστὸς φίλον).

Gabalas’ description of his gift is accompanied by the wish that, just as St. John rested on Christ’s chest, so may the amulet rest on the recipient’s bosom in order to help him in both peace and war. What is more, the unusual representation of Christ and St. John, which isolated them from the remaining attendants at the Last Supper, allowed Gabalas to reinterpret this scene for the present context: according to him, the amulet showed the Son of God and his beloved disciple not at the Last Supper, but mourning, as it were, over the barbarian occupation of Ephesos and considering what to do in order to liberate

8 Cf. Wentzel 1978: 914; Dennert 1998: 159 (no. 41).

9 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, par. no. 16, ed. Miller, 2, 58.

10 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, par. no. 167b, ed. Miller, 2, 191.

the city. This re-interpretation served to encourage his addressee to take up the arms and expel the Turks from his bishopric.

The letter bears no heading in the sole surviving manuscript, Vienna, ÖNB, Theologicus Graecus 174, which constituted Gabalas' personal copy of his writings. The anonymous addressee appears to be a high-ranking military commander and close associate of the emperor. Given that the letter was written and dispatched from Ephesos, where Gabalas resided between 1339 and 1342/3, the emperor should be identified with Andronikos III (d.1341). The recipient could therefore very well have been the *meġas domestikos* and right-hand man of the emperor, John Kantakouzenos.¹¹ Be that as it may, with his letter and precious gift Gabalas attempted to convince his addressee and the emperor to liberate Ephesos, which had been conquered in 1304 by the Turks of Aydın and had since remained under Turkish rule. If such an expedition was ever planned, it was frustrated by Andronikos' death and the ensuing civil war. The city, like virtually the whole of Asia Minor, was never to return to Byzantine sovereignty.

¹¹ See Treu 1901: 51. This identification has been accepted by Reinsch in his edition; Kourouzes 1972: 265 also considered Alexios Apokaukos as a possible addressee.

Text

Εἰ καὶ ἀνθρωπίνως ἡμῖν οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἀπολαύειν τῆς οὐκ ἐφετῆς ταύτης Ἐφέσου τῶν βαρβάρων δυναστευόντων, ἀλλ' οὖν θείως καὶ μάλιστα ἀπολαύομεν. οὐ γὰρ κὰν τούτῳ δύναιτ' ἂν ἡμᾶς οἱ ἀσεβεῖς ἀδικεῖν οὐδ' ἀποκλεῖσαι τοὺς θησαυροὺς τοῦ θεοῦ οὐδ', ὅσα τῷ μαθητῇ καὶ φίλῳ Χριστοῦ παρέσχηται θεουργικὰ πράγματα, εἴρξαι· πολλοῦ γε δέουσιν. ἀλλὰ τῶν πάλαι βλυζόντων ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ μνήματος μετὰ τῆς κόνεως λίθων ἐντυχόντες ἐνὶ ἀπεστάλκαμέν σοι, τῷ μεγάλῳ ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἥρωϊ. ἔχει δ' ὁ λίθος ἐφ' ἑκάτερα τῶν νώτων τὸν διδάσκαλον καὶ τὸν μαθητὴν οὐ συνδειπνοῦντας ὡς ἐπὶ τῆς μυστικῆς ἐκείνης τραπέζης, ἀλλὰ συναλγοῦντας, οἶμαι, καὶ συσκευπτομένους, ὅπως ἂν τὸ βάρβαρον ἐξελάσωσιν. ἄριστον οὖν ἔγνωμεν, ἴν', ὡσπερ ἐπιστήθιος οὗτος ἐκείνῳ γέγονεν, ὡς ἂν ἀρύηται τὰ τῆς θεολογίας μυστήρια, γένηται δὴ καὶ σοὶ ἕτερον τρόπον αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἐπιστήθιος, ἴν' ἐν μὲν πολέμου καιρῷ τὸ τοῦ φρονήματος ἀρρενωπὸν αὔξη, ἐν δ' εἰρήνης τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς λογιζόμενον ἀνακαθαίρη καὶ πάντα σοὶ διδῶ, ὅποσα καὶ αὐτὸς εἴληφε. δέξαι δὴ τὸ μέγα τουτὶ δῶρον, φιλαπόστολε καὶ φιλευσεβὲς ἄνθρωπε, καὶ καθ' αὐτὸ μὲν ἴσως μέγα, μάλιστα δ' ὅτι ἐκ γῆς ἐρήμου καὶ ἀβάτου παρὰ δόξαν δεδωροφόρηται τεκμαιρόμενον, οἶμαι, καὶ προκηρύττον τὴν ἐσομένην αὐθις ἡγεμονίαν τῆς χώρας καὶ τὴν ὅσον οὕτω σὴν ἐνθάδ' ἔλευσιν μετὰ τοῦ μεγάλου καὶ θειοτάτου μοι βασιλέως. καὶ γένοιτο, θεῆ σῶτερ· καὶ γένοιτο, θεῆ φιλάνθρωπε.

Translation

Although from the perspective of human affairs it is impossible for us to enjoy being here under barbarian rule in the unpleasant city of Ephesos, we do greatly enjoy it with regard to matters divine. For, the infidels should not have the ability to harm us also in this sphere and to close the treasures of God or to lock up the divinely wrought things that were entrusted to the disciple and friend of Christ. Far from it! Since we came upon one of those stones that for a long time have been gushing forth from the sacred grave along with the dust,¹ we have sent it to you, the great hero among men. The stone shows on both of its sides the master and his disciple² not supping together at that mystical table,³ but grieving together, I believe, and taking counsel on how to expel the barbarian people. We therefore thought it best that – like he [John] leaned on His [Christ's] bosom, so that he be initiated in the divine mysteries – this [stone] might become attached to your bosom in a different way, so that in times of war it may strengthen your manly spirit, and in times of peace it may cleanse the reasoning of your soul and provide you with everything that he [John] also received. Accept this great gift, you apostle-loving, pious man, which is perhaps great in itself, but all the more so because it arrived unexpectedly as a present from a deserted and inaccessible land, evidencing, I believe, and heralding the future restoration of power over this country and your prompt arrival along with my great and most divine emperor. So may it happen, God our savior! So may it happen, God our benefactor!

Commentary

1. See Text and Context above with n. 4 for the miracle of dust coming up every year from St. John's tomb in Ephesos.
2. Cameos with carved figures on both front and back seem to have been rather exceptional, as only very few examples survive.¹²
3. That is, the Last Supper. See Text and Context above for the scene described here.

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¹² See Wentzel 1978: 905; for examples see Papanikola-Bakirtze 2002: 518–19 (no. 711) and fig. I.6.1, which shows St. John the Forerunner on one side and the Virgin with Christ on the other.

I.6.2 Maximos the Deacon (c.1300)

A Gift of a Textile in Thanksgiving for a Miraculous Cure by Sts. Kosmas and Damian

ALICE-MARY TALBOT

Ed.: L. Deubner, *Kosmas und Damian. Texte und Einleitung* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1907), 193–206 at 198–99

MS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus VII.1 (coll. 937) (s. XIII/XIV)

Other Translations: French translation of new miracles by Maximos in A.-J. Festugière, *Sainte Thècle, Saints Côme et Damien, Saints Cyr et Jean (extraits), Saint Georges* (Paris, 1971), 191–213 at 198–200

Significance

This text provides the only evidence for what must have been a splendid deluxe silk textile of the early Palaiologan period, commissioned by a distinguished member of the aristocracy. Its brief description of the iconography indicates that the two saints Kosmas and Damian were depicted, along with the figure of Theodora, perhaps rendered in a kneeling position before the saints. The textile was further decorated with a short epigram, no doubt expressing Akropolites' gratitude to the saints for their cure of his daughter.

The Author

Nothing is known about Maximos the Deacon except that he lived in Constantinople around 1300, during the reign of Andronikos II Palaiologos; he was a monk at the monastery of Kosmas and Damian. His only surviving work is a rewriting (*metaphrasis*) of the sixth-century miracle collection of Sts. Kosmas and Damian; it has never been published. Maximos appended to this *metaphrasis* a description of miracles that occurred at the shrine in his own time; these were edited by Ludwig Deubner, and have been translated into French by André-Jean Festugière.²

Text and Context

Miracle no. 40 describes the healing of the daughter of Constantine Akropolites at the shrine of Sts. Kosmas and Damian, which was located just outside the northwestern walls of Constantinople. The healing shrine had been functioning since the sixth century, and offered some medical facilities and treatment in addition to miraculous

¹ Not consulted.

² On Maximos and his work see A.-M. Talbot 2004: 227–37.

cures, normally effected through incubation, a practice that involved the patients falling asleep and dreaming that they were visited by the physician saints. After the recovery of Constantinople by the Byzantines in 1261, the shrine revived and Maximos documents some of the miracles that occurred there.

Constantine Akropolites (mid 13th century–c.1324) was a high court official (*me-gas logothete*) and prolific author of saints' lives.³ In thanksgiving for the healing of his daughter Theodora from an unspecified illness, he donated to the shrine a textile woven with gold and silk threads, and inscribed with an iambic epigram.

³ *PLP* no. 520.

Text

[p. 198] τῷ Ἀκροπολίτῃ ἐκείνῳ, ὃς λογοθέτης εἶναι τε καὶ ἀκούειν τετίμηται παρὰ βασιλέως, μέγας δὲ πρὸς τοὺς τῆς αὐτῆς τῶν ἐτέρων λογοθετῶν κλήσεως κοινωνοῦντας ἀντιδιασελλόμενος τούπισημον καλούμενος ἦν· τῷ δὲ τοιαύτης καὶ προσηγορίας καὶ ἀξίας τυχόντι θυγάτηρ ἦν· κλήσις τῇ παιδί Θεοδώρα. ἥκιστα μὲν οὔσα μονογενής, φιλάτῃ δ' οὖν ὅμως ... ἡ οὖν οὕτω καλὸν οὔση τῷ πατρὶ χρῆμα σύρροιαί τινες νοσημάτων ἐκ πρώτης τῆς τριχὸς ἐπιούσαι θάνατον πρὸ τῆς ὥρας δεινὸν ἠπεῖ [p. 199] λουὺν ἐπαγαγεῖν, καὶ ἦν ὁρᾶν ἑαυτῇ μαχομένην τὴν φύσιν καὶ ὃ εἰς τὸν βίον ἐλθεῖν τῷ δημιουργικῷ προστάγματι καθυπούργησε τοῦτ' αὐθις ἐκ μέσου θέσθαι φιλονεικοῦσαν ... ἃ δὲ καὶ ὁρῶν ὁ πατήρ, τὸ μὲν ἰατροῖς καὶ ἔτι τὰ τῶν ἰάσεων ἐπιτρέπειν μετὰ πείραν ἀπαγορεύσας, τοῖς ὑπὲρ φύσιν καὶ πολιτευσάμενοις καὶ γενομένοις καὶ νῦν οὖσιν ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς, οὗ εἰκὸς τοὺς οὕτω βεβιωκότας τυγχάνειν, ἐπιρρίπτει φέρων τὴν παῖδα. οἱ δὲ τὴν πίστιν ἐκείνου ἀποδεξάμενοι ἰλεῶν τ' ἐπέιδον τῇ κόρῃ καὶ πρὸς βοήθειαν διανέστησαν· καὶ ἀοράτῳ δὲ καὶ μηδεμίαν αἴσθησιν παρασχούση ἐπιστασίᾳ τὸ ῥαγδαῖον ἐκείνο τῶν νόσων νέφος διασκεδάσαντες ἀγαλμά τι καινὸν τῷ τε πατρὶ καὶ τῷ βίῳ τὴν κόρην δωροῦνται. κἀντεῦθεν ἀντιφιλοτιμούμενος ὑπὲρ τῆς θυγατρὸς ὁ πατήρ πέπλον τινὰ χρυσοῦ καὶ Σηρῶν νημάτων ἐξυφασμένον τοὺς τε τύπους παρ' ἑαυτῷ τῶν ἀγίων καὶ δὴ καὶ τῆς θυγατρὸς ἰστοουργῶ ἐξεικονισθέντας φέροντα τέχνη πρόσεισιν ἄγων ἀντίλυτρον τοῖς ἀγίοις· ἐν κύκλῳ δὲ καὶ ἰάμβους ἐγχαράξας τῷ πέπλῳ καὶ μετὰ θάνατον τῷ θαύματι μαρτυρεῖ καὶ προτροπῇ τοῖς κακῶς τὸ σῶμα διακειμένοις τῆς ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀγίους καταφυγῆς γίνεται.

Translation

[p. 198] The celebrated Akropolites, who was honored by the emperor as a *logothetes*, and was called great logothete to be distinguished from the other logothetes who shared the same title; this man, who had such a title and rank, had a daughter; the girl's name was Theodora. Although she was by no means an only child, she was most dear to him ... But from earliest infancy a confluence of illnesses afflicted this child who was so treasured by her father, threatening her with a dreadful premature death. And one could see nature battling with itself, and striving to destroy what it had brought to life by order of the Creator ...

When her father saw this, after an initial attempt he gave up on the idea of entrusting her treatment any longer to physicians, but brought the girl and entrusted her to the physicians who, having conducted themselves and lived in supernatural fashion, even now are superior to us, as is reasonable for those who have lived such a life. And the [saintly physicians], welcoming his faith, gazed mercifully upon the girl, and set about helping her. And dispersing that violent cloud of diseases with an invisible and imperceptible visitation, they restored the girl to her father and to life like a wondrous statue.

Therefore, as a reward for his daughter's restored health, the father approached the saints, bringing as a kind of ransom payment a textile woven of gold and silk threads, bearing the images of the <two> saints and his daughter, portrayed by a weaver's skill. And inserting iambic verses around the textile, he bore witness to the miracle even after his death, and it became an incentive for those afflicted with bodily illness to seek recourse from the saints.

Commentary

1. On Akropolites see Text and Context, above.
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I.6.3

The Genoese *Pallio*

IDA TOTH

Significance

The silk believed to have changed hands in order to ratify the treaty between Byzantium and Genoa, signed in the spring of 1261 in Nymphaion (Asia Minor), still exists today. Monumental in size, purple-dyed, and elaborately embroidered, it represents one of the most outstanding examples of Byzantine imperial largesse ever granted to a Western polity. In modern scholarship, this textile is variably referred to as the Pallium of Michael VIII, the *Pallio* of San Lorenzo, and the Genoese *pallio*.

Introduction

The Genoese *pallio* is a unique object.¹ Unlike many other Byzantine textiles employed in diplomatic exchange, this silk was commissioned as an imperial gift for a specific occasion. Measuring 1.28 x 3.76 meters, it is truly outstanding in size. Moreover, it makes a remarkable use of both image and text: it features Michael VIII Palaiologos (r.1259–82) surrounded by a hagiographic story rarely represented in Byzantine religious art, that of the Martyrdom of St. Lawrence; the inscriptions that accompany its visual program are strikingly detailed; they are also written in Latin – a language highly unusual for such prestigious Byzantine artefacts.

The Byzantine scholar and orator Manuel/Maximos Holobolos is the author of an oration for Michael VIII, which describes the signing of the Treaty of Nymphaion in 1261. He provides the only surviving account of the diplomatic gifts sent from Byzantium to Genoa on that occasion. This piece of Byzantine encomiastic oratory gives vital evidence for the design and manufacture of the Genoese *pallio*, and for the events and rituals involved in the validation of this intricate object as an imperial gift.

Text A | Unknown (after March 1261)***The Genoese Pallio: Latin Inscriptions***

Ed.: E. Parma-Armani and I. Toth; previous editions: the full list of inscriptions on the *pallium* was first published by X. A. Siderides, “Μανουήλ Ὀλοβόλου Ἐγκώμιον

¹ The most recent studies of the Genoese *pallio* also include detailed bibliographies and surveys of the *status questionis*: Hilsdale 2010; Toth 2011; Kalavrezou 2014, Paribeni 2014.

εἰς Μιχαὴλ Ἡ' Παλαιολόγον,” *EEBS* 3 (1926), 376–78; Siderides’ edition was emended by E. Parma Armani, “Nuove indagini sul ‘pallio’ bizantino duecentesco di San Lorenzo in Palazzo Bianco a Genova,” *Studi di storia delle arte* 5 (1984), 42. In the text that follows, I provide my own reading from the photographs that have been kindly provided to me by Loredana Pessa, the conservator with the Collezioni Tessili, Raccolte Ceramiche, Museo Luxoro in Genoa. I use Parma-Armani’s edition for the inscriptions, which are not clearly visible from the photographs

Monument/Artefact: The Genoese *pallio* is on permanent display in the Museo di Sant’Agostino in Genoa; the silk underwent extensive restoration and conservation in the Opificio delle Pietre Dure in Florence between 2010 and 2018. See also fig. I.6.3

Other Translations: I. Toth, “The Narrative Fabric of the Genoese Pallio and the Silken Diplomacy of Michael VIII Palaiologos,” in *Objects in Motion: The Circulation of Religion and Sacred Objects in the Late Antique and Byzantine World*, ed. H. G. Meredith (Oxford, 2011), 92, 102 (English); Siderides, as above, 376–78 (Greek)



Fig. I.6.3 The *pallio* of St. Lorenzo, before the restoration in 2018

© Museo di Sant’Agostino, Genoa

Significance

The Genoese *pallio* bears trustworthy witness to the extent to which traditional and novel modes of communication became integrated into Byzantine and Genoese diplomacy and material culture in the second half of the thirteenth century and, even more crucially, to the high degree of interaction between the two cultures. The iconography and the text of this object uncover influences from diverse cultural traditions, and an artistic *lingua franca*, whose elements can be traced in a number of *comparanda* from Byzantine and Western illuminated manuscripts and wall paintings

² Consulted. I was able to see the *pallio* during the workshop “Il Pallio di San Lorenzo: dopo il restauro e prima del suo ritorno a Genova,” organized in February 2018 by the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, the Opificio delle Pietre Dure, and Genoa’s Museo di Sant’Agostino in Florence, I owe gratitude to Gerhard Wolf and Mabi Angar for their invitation to participate in this event, and for the many new insights and ideas that the workshop generated.

as well as textiles, mosaics, ivories, and metal artefacts.³ The techniques of execution and decoration found on the *pallio* belong to the traditions of Palaiologan church embroidery,⁴ even if the theme of the martyrdom of St. Lawrence remains without parallel in the Byzantine textile production. Moreover, no other fabrics survive whose visual displays combine a hagiography and an imperial composition in the way that this silk does, nor is there anything that matches the detail and the distinctive treatment of the story of the martyrdom of St. Lawrence, St. Sixtus, and St. Hippolytus found in the narrative program of the Genoese *pallio*.⁵ On the other hand, a remarkable, and perhaps not entirely fortuitous, *comparandum* can be found in a literary source: the *ekphrasis* of St Sophia by Paul the Silentary, who describes Justinian I's donation of an altar cloth of purple silk featuring both miracles of Christ and Justinian's imperial works.⁶

It must be stressed that the significance of this kind of largesse surpassed any artistic or monetary value that such pieces might have possessed. Even though luxury fabrics had become more readily available in the West from the thirteenth century onwards,⁷ Byzantine imperial silks maintained their prestigious character because of their uniqueness and rarity, and because of the diplomatic relationships that they epitomized. The same was true of the Genoese *pallio*, whose symbolism was further underscored by its hagiographic subject and linguistic medium, both of which show a great consideration on the part of the Byzantine commissioner for the intended recipients of the silk in Genoa.⁸

Although we lack evidence for its immediate reception, the *pallio* was undoubtedly a fitting gift for a maritime republic, whose cityscape in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries was especially marked by a motivation to assimilate and display foreign – and that included Byzantine – architectural and artistic features.⁹ Therefore, Genoa's (most probably enthusiastic) response to this diplomatic gift must be understood in the context of its growing economic, political, and material exchange with Byzantium. However, it is also important to note that the survival of the Palaiologan silk has been attributed to its high relevance to Genoa's own religious identity, and to the distinct place that the *pallio* gained in Genoese society. This eventually led to the loss of any

3 Hans Belting used the term “Mediterranean *lingua franca*” to explain the hybrid artistic style that emerged across the Eastern Mediterranean in the thirteenth century: Belting 1979: 1–8; Belting 1982: 35–53; for artistic comparanda see Johnstone 1976: 105–07; Calderoni-Mansetti 1999; Hilsdale 2010: 168–90; Maxwell 2016: 175–216.

4 The use of the couched metal thread, the frame of a narrow border of vegetal decoration, and the background scattered with decorative motifs of a Greek cross inscribed in a circle all point to the Palaiologan tradition of church embroidery: see Johnstone 1976: 102.

5 The majority of imperial silks known to us conform to a repertoire of courtly themes. They use decorative or figural scenes, but with very little or no accompanying text. Ecclesiastical silks, with or without donor compositions, customarily depict biblical figural imagery selected for their liturgical function: Muthesius 1992: 240–41; Parani 2007: 120–21.

6 Paul the Silentary, *Description of St Sophia*, 755–801.

7 Hollberg 2017.

8 Kalavrezou 2014.

9 Nelson 2007; Di Fabio 2005; Müller 2018.

understanding of the original ideological and political premises by which the silk reached its Italian destination.¹⁰

Text and Context

The *pallio*'s rich iconographic and textual program consists of twenty inscribed scenes, arranged equally into two registers, and framed with a narrow ornamental border. Its execution is intricate and sophisticated: the textile is embroidered with silk, silver, and gold threads, some couched directly on the surface, some over padding, to create a three-dimensional effect; it also features crosses in circles scattered over the background, which both decorate and strengthen the delicate fabric. The donor composition is more detailed than the other scenes on the *pallio* such that it dominates the iconography of the entire piece. It includes three figures: the imperial patron of the silk, Michael VIII Palaiologos, in the presence of St. Lawrence and St. Michael.¹¹ Michael VIII is represented in full imperial regalia, and identified by a solemn inscription embroidered in gold. The winged archangel has his hand placed protectively on the emperor's shoulder, while the martyred deacon leads the emperor by the hand towards his eponymous church. The composition conveys the ideological and political motivations behind the manufacture and presentation of this silk as a diplomatic gift.¹² Meanwhile, the imposing structure of the Genoese church – whose architecture seems strikingly Byzantine – provides a backdrop for the first scene of the narrative sequence, thus allowing for a smooth transition between the two generically and chronologically diverse themes, imperial and hagiographic. It serves as the setting for the passion of St. Lawrence, St. Sixtus, and St. Hippolytus, and it unites the places of St. Lawrence's worship (Genoa) and of his martyrdom (Rome) into one conjoined *locus sanctus*.

The markedly religious character of the *pallio* as a whole, the arrangement of the donor composition, and the allegorical representation of the church of San Lorenzo as an active participant in the forging of the alliance, all suggest that the intended location for this silk may have been the Cathedral of Genoa.¹³ The charitable actions of the saints as they are illustrated on the *pallio* closely relate to the act of imperial generosity, which is

¹⁰ Di Fabio 2005.

¹¹ The Genoese *pallio* preserves the oldest surviving image of this emperor, and it is one of the very few that are extant today (for the full list see Parani, *Reconstructing*, 320).

¹² It has long been acknowledged that the *pallio* was manufactured and presented as a result of the signing of the Byzantine–Genoese treaty: Canale 1846: 55–61. Although we do not know when exactly this silk reached Genoa, the Byzantine–Genoese alliance provides a *terminus post quem* for its manufacture. On the events surrounding the Byzantine–Genoese negotiations and the subsequent conclusion of the alliance see Geanakoplos 1973: 75–91; Origone 1992: 119–23. For the Latin text of the treaty and a detailed discussion of the contents of the document see *The Treaty of Nymphaion*, 751–58, 791–809; Geanakoplos 1973: 87–89.

¹³ In fact, the *pallio* was kept in the Cathedral of San Lorenzo in Genoa until 1633, when its custody was transferred to the city authorities: Parma Armani 1984: 40–41. The damage that the silk suffered over the centuries provides some evidence of its display and storage. According to the information provided by the conservators in the Opificio delle Pietre Dure in Florence, Licia Triolo, Marina Zingarelli, and Azelia Lombardi, who have worked on the most recent restorations of the *pallio*, the silk was used as an altar cloth, but was also folded and stored away for a considerable length of time.

embedded in the very nature of this silk as a diplomatic gift. Beyond this, the *pallio* performs the same educational function as any written or depicted hagiography. Its role to edify and improve and, ultimately, to inspire the emulation of universal Christian values, is nowhere clearer than in its message that salvation could be achieved through good deeds and self-sacrifice.

A similar principle may be identified in the way in which the imperial scene relates to the episodes of martyrdom. The lack of a decorative border, which would separate the donor composition from the surrounding story, allows the viewer to situate the imperial image in the context of the hagiographic account, which starts in the sixth scene of the upper register, and depicts the Pope Sixtus ordering St. Lawrence to dispose of church property. In the next two scenes, Lawrence carries out Sixtus' orders: he sells church treasures and distributes the profits to the poor. In the ninth scene, Sixtus argues with the emperor Decius about Lawrence's actions while the next scene, the tenth in the upper register, shows Sixtus' execution. At this point, the viewer needs to return to the beginning of the upper register where the story continues, first by depicting Lawrence arguing with Decius about the sale of the church treasures, then Lawrence presenting to the emperor the people to whom he distributed the money and, finally, Lawrence being flagellated and imprisoned. The lower register continues this storyline, and it reads uninterruptedly from left to right. In the first scene, Lawrence, imprisoned, heals the ailing. In the second, a prison guard lies prostrate before Lawrence, who baptizes him in the next scene. The fourth scene represents Lawrence's martyrdom on a gridiron. The fifth scene portrays the saint's burial carried out by his fellow martyr, Hippolytus. In the sixth scene, Hippolytus argues with Decius; in the seventh, he is tortured by iron nails; then, in the eighth, he is being torn apart by horses. The final two scenes in the lower register depict the burials of Lawrence's fellow martyrs, Hippolytus and Sixtus.

Every scene on the *pallio* carries a descriptive inscription in Latin. The epigraphs seem to have been added after the visual program had already been put in place. Furthermore, the execution of the texts departs from the traditional practices of Byzantine embroidery. Rather than being laid horizontally across the strokes, the thread follows the shape of the letters. This has been interpreted as evidence of Latin workmanship.¹⁴

The inscriptions read as follows:

¹⁴ Johnstone 1976: 76.

Text**Scene One (Fifth, Upper Register)**

S(anctus) Lau(rentius) in duce(n) s altis|simum | Imp(er)atorem Gre|co(rum) D(omi)
n(u)m Mich(ae)l(em) Duca(m) Ang(e)l(u)m Co(m)nenu(m) Paleo|logu(m) in Ecc(les)
iam Ian(uensem)

Scene Two (Sixth, Upper Register)

S(anctus) Xistus Ep(i)s(copus) Rome | p(rae)cipien(s) S(anc)to Laur(entio)
Archid|iac(ono) dispensare vasa | Eccle(sie)

Scene Three (Seventh, Upper Register)

S(anctus) Laur(entius) | venunda(n)s | vasa Ec|clesie

Scene Four (Eighth, Upper Register)

S(anctus) Laurent(ius) p(e)cu(niam) vaso(rum) | q(uae) vendit disp(e)rgens pau|peribus

Scene Five (Ninth, Upper Register)

S(anctus) Xistus disputans im|peratori Decio

Scene Six (Tenth, Upper Register)

S(anctus) Xistos gladio ca|pite amputatus

Scene Seven (Tenth, Lower Register)

S(anctus) Xist(us) | sepultus

Scene Eight (First, Upper Register)

S(anctus) Laurenti(us) disputan(s) impera|tori Decio de vasis que | vendidit

Scene Nine (Second, Upper Register)

S(anctus) Laur(entius) qui opperabat veiculis | claudos et cecos quibus disp(o)su(i)t |
precium vasorum ad imperatorem

Scene Ten (Third, Upper Register)

S(anctus) Laurenti(u)s vapulatus

Scene Eleven (Fourth, Upper Register)

S(anctus) Laurentius in carcere

Scene Twelve (First, Lower Register)

S(anctus) Lau(rentius) curans in carcere | om(ne)s infirmos ad eu(m) venientes

Translation

All participles used in the Latin captions have a deictic function. The translation of each inscription listed below should therefore be preceded by ‘This scene shows ...’

Scene One (Fifth, Upper Register)

St. Lawrence, leading the Supreme Emperor of the Greeks, the Lord Michael Doukas Angelos Komnenos Palaiologos, into the Church of Genoa¹

Scene Two (Sixth, Upper Register)

St. Sixtus,² the Pope of Rome, commanding the Archdeacon St. Lawrence to distribute church vessels

Scene Three (Seventh, Upper Register)

St. Lawrence, selling the vessels of the Church

Scene Four (Eighth, Upper Register)

St. Lawrence distributing to the poor the money [collected] from the sale of the vessels

Scene Five (Ninth, Upper Register)

St. Sixtus, arguing with the Emperor Decius

Scene Six (Tenth, Upper Register)

St. Sixtus, decapitated by a sword

Scene Seven (Tenth, Lower Register)

St. Sixtus, buried³

Scene Eight (First, Upper Register)

St. Lawrence, arguing with the Emperor Decius over the vessels that he sold

Scene Nine (Second, Upper Register)

St. Lawrence, who drove on carts to the emperor the maimed and the blind to whom he divided the money from the [sale of the] vessels

Scene Ten (Third, Upper Register)

St. Lawrence, flogged

Scene Eleven (Fourth, Upper Register)

St. Lawrence in prison

Scene Twelve (First, Lower Register)

St. Lawrence in prison, healing all the ailing who come to him

Scene Thirteen (Second, Lower Register)

Tiburcius Calinicus pre(ce)ptor | carceris credens in Cr(ist)o

Scene Fourteen (Third, Lower Register)

S(anctus) Laurentius baptisans | Tiburcium Calinicum

Scene Fifteen (Fourth, Lower Register)

S(anctus) Laur(entius) sartaginibus | ignis excensi Deo sp(iritu)m | com(m)endans

Scene Sixteen (Fifth, Lower Register)

S(anctus) Ypolitus sepe|liens S(an)c(tu)m Laurentium

Scene Seventeen (Sixth, Lower Register)

S(anctus) Ypolit(us) di|sputans impe|ratori Decio

Scene Eighteen (Seventh, Lower Register)

S(anctus) Ypolit(us) unguibus | eneis laceratus

Scene Nineteen (Eighth, Lower Register)

S(anctus) Ypolitus p(er) equos | feroces tractus

Scene Twenty (Ninth, Lower Register)

S(anctus) Ypolitus | sepultus

Scene Thirteen (Second, Lower Register)

Tiburcius Calinicus, the prison guard, believing in Christ

Scene Fourteen (Third, Lower Register)

St. Lawrence baptizing Tiburcius Calinicus

Scene Fifteen (Fourth, Lower Register)

St. Lawrence on a hot gridiron commending his spirit to God

Scene Sixteen (Fifth, Lower Register)

St. Hippolytus burying St. Lawrence

Scene Seventeen (Sixth, Lower Register)

St. Hippolytus, arguing with the Emperor Decius

Scene Eighteen (Seventh, Lower Register)

St. Hippolytus, tortured by iron nails

Scene Nineteen (Eighth, Lower Register)

St. Hippolytus, pulled apart by wild horses

Scene Twenty (Ninth, Lower Register)

St. Hippolytus, buried

Commentary

1. The inscription omits to mention that St. Michael, the patron-saint of the Byzantine emperor, also appears in this scene as a champion of the alliance. It is unclear whether this omission was deliberate or forced due to the lack of space. The iconography of the central scene strikes a distinctly Byzantine tone, while the inscription seems to favor the Western interpretation of the newly forged union. Moreover, the title by which Michael VIII is referred to, *Imperator Graecorum*, also bears a Western slant.¹⁵
2. The immediate textual source for the Latin captions on the *pallio* has not yet been conclusively identified.¹⁶ The spelling of Sixtus' name as "Xistos" suggests a Greek provenance, as do the storylines in the inscriptions themselves, which bear a remarkable similarity with the text of the martyrdom of Sts. Lawrence, Sixtus, and Hippolytus in the *Synaxarion* of the Byzantine Church.¹⁷ It is highly likely that the inscriptions were custom-made rather than having been excerpted directly from any specific text. It is reasonable to assume that they had been planned in advance as accompaniment to the iconographic narrative on the silk, and that their detail and length were adjusted to the extent of available space.
3. Even though the burial of St. Sixtus features as the last, tenth, scene in the lower register, it belongs to the storyline of the pope's martyrdom, and would be expected to immediately follow the scene of his execution, which is the tenth in the upper register. The spatial arrangement thus appears out of sequence. This might have been prompted by practical reasons, namely, by the lack of space in the upper register. However, it seems more likely that the order of scenes, such as they appear on the *pallio*, was intentionally altered to allow the sepulchral theme to be placed at the end of the visual narrative, as befits Byzantine *vita-cycles*.¹⁸

¹⁵ The Latin translation of the Treaty of Nymphaion uses the same wording: *Treaty of Nymphaion*: 791–92.

¹⁶ On possible hagiographic sources see Johnstone 1976: 104–05; Schreiner, 1988: 256–57; Falcone 1996: 342; Paribeni 1999: 234–36.

¹⁷ Toth 2011: 101–02, 109. The hagiographic dossier related to St. Lawrence is considerable (including at least 11 texts: *BHG* 976–78), and it has not yet been fully explored.

¹⁸ Kalavrezou 2014: 236.

Text B | Manuel/Maximos Holobolos (c.1245–after 1299)**On the Genoese *pallio***

Ed.: X. A. Siderides, “Μανουήλ Ὀλοβώλου Ἐγκώμιον εἰς Μιχαήλ Η΄ Παλαιολόγον,” *ΕΕΒΣ* 3 (1926), 186–89 (used); other editions: M. Treu, “Manuelis Holoboli orations,” *Programm des königlichen Victoria-Gymnasiums* (1906), 45–47

MS.:¹⁹ Vienna, ÖNB, Philologicus Graecus. 321 (s. XIII), ff. 136α–141β

Other Translations: No complete translation of this oration exists. Some sections regarding the diplomatic exchange between the Byzantines and the Genoese have been translated in I. Toth, “The Narrative Fabric of the Genoese *pallio* and the Silken Diplomacy of Michael VIII Palaiologos,” in *Objects in Motion: The Circulation of Religion and Sacred Objects in the Late Antique and Byzantine World*, ed. H. G. Meredith (Oxford, 2011), 91–109 (English); P. Schreiner, “Zwei Denkmäler aus der frühen Paläologenzeit: ein Bildnis Michaels VIII. und der Genueser Pallio,” in *Festschrift für Klaus Wessel zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. M. Restle (Munich, 1988), 249–58 (German)

Significance

The first of the five imperial orations for Michael VIII Palaiologos composed by the Byzantine scholar and orator Manuel/Maximos Holobolos provides the only written account of the diplomatic gifts sent from Byzantium to Genoa on the occasion of the signing of the Treaty of Nymphaion in 1261. The evidence given in this oration suggests that the *Pallio* of S. Lorenzo in the Museo di Sant’Agostino in Genoa can be identified as the silk that Michael VIII presented to Genoa in acknowledgment of the newly forged allegiance.

The Author

Manuel Holobolos is first mentioned in a Byzantine source describing the events of 1261, when he acted in his capacity as *grammatikos* in the service of the Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos.²⁰ The same source reports that the young court officer suffered at the hands of the emperor, who had his nose and lips mutilated for showing distress over the blinding of John IV Laskaris.²¹ Thereafter, Holobolos seems to have entered the Monastery of St. John Prodromos in Constantinople, where he stayed for the following four years as the monk Maximos.²² In 1265–66, Holobolos was rehabilitated, granted the title *rhetor*

¹⁹ Consulted. On Holobolos’ potential involvement as a scribe of Phil. Gr. 321, see Agapetos and Angelov 2018: 56–60.

²⁰ The main historical source for Holobolos’ life is Pachymeres, *History*, ed. Failler, 1, 259; 2, 368–71, 479, 501, 503; on Holobolos see also Constantinides 1982: 52–59; Angelov 2006; Hannick 1981; Heisenberg 1920: 112–32; *PLP* 21047; Treu 1896: 538–59.

²¹ Pachymeres, *History*, ed. Failler, 1, 259, l. 8–10.

²² Pachymeres, *History*, ed. Failler, 1, 10–11; on the identification of the monastery see Hörandner 1970: 116–19.

ton rhetoron (ῥήτωρ τῶν ῥητόρων), and appointed head of the re-established Patriarchal School, where he taught logic, and several other subjects of the *enkyklios paideia*.²³

Holobolos lost the emperor's favor for the second time in 1273, when he openly declared himself an opponent of the union with the Church of Rome. Subsequently, he spent a year incarcerated in the monastery of Hyakinthos in Nicaea, after which he was brought back to Constantinople, publicly humiliated, and finally exiled to the monastery of Megas Agros on the Sea of Marmara.²⁴ Rehabilitated after Michael VIII's death, Holobolos regained his title as the *rhetor ton rhetoron*, and his office at the Patriarchal School. He also played an important role in the public prosecutions of the unionists.²⁵ During the patriarchate of Gregory of Cyprus (1283–89), Holobolos was appointed *meas protosynkellos*.²⁶

A monody for Holobolos composed by one of his last students, George Galesiotes, seems to suggest that he continued teaching until the end of his life in the first decade of the fourteenth century. Holobolos' literary output consists of rhetorical and theological works. As a teacher, Holobolos composed commentaries on *technopaegnia*, Theocritus, and Aristotle. Some of his letters also survive, and they show that he was well connected to, and respected by, many of his contemporaries. He also wrote twenty poems for Michael VIII and his son Andronikos II to accompany the Epiphany *prokypsis* ceremony, and five prose encomia dedicated to the same emperors.²⁷ Manuel/Maximos Holobolos was fluent in Latin.²⁸ He translated Boethius into Greek, drafted an imperial letter to the Pope Clement IV, and probably traveled to Venice to sign a treaty on behalf of the Byzantine emperor.²⁹

Text and Context

One of Holobolos' encomiastic compositions – written for the emperor who had him mutilated, humiliated and exiled – provides vital evidence for the diplomatic gifts of silks granted to Genoa in the context of the Treaty of Nymphaion of 1261.³⁰ The use of imperial textiles in the early Palaiologan period is well attested: numerous testimonies, mainly surviving in the historical work of George Pachymeres, reveal extensive production of luxury fabrics before and after the Treaty of Nymphaion.³¹ Although the full extent of

23 Pachymeres, *History*, ed. Failler, 2, 368–71; see also Constantinides 1982: 50–59.

24 Pachymeres, *History*, ed. Failler, 2, 501–05.

25 Holobolos opened the discussion at the Second Synod in the church of the Blachernai in 1285, when John Bekkos, Constantine Meliteniotes, and George Metochites were convicted of heresy: Pachymeres, *History*, ed. Failler, 3, 35, 103.

26 Constantinides 1982: 58 and n. 40.

27 Holobolos' works have been listed in *PLP* 21047; on Holobolos' authorship of the fifth imperial oration see Angelov 2006.

28 On Holobolos as a bilingual scholar see Fisher 2012.

29 Geanakoplos 1973: 201; Constantinides 1982: 58.

30 The oration has been edited twice: Manuel/Maximos Holobolos, *Encomium I* (Treu and Siderides). It has been dated variably to 1261, that is, the time closer to the events it describes (Dölger 1961: 185) and to, or immediately after, 1265, i.e. the time of the author's appointment as *rhetor ton rhetoron* (Macrides 1980: 18–19, 37).

31 In his account of the discovery of the remains of Basil II the Bulgar-Slayer, Pachymeres reports that Michael VIII provided silks embroidered in gold on which to lay the body (Pachymeres, *History*, ed. Failler, 1: 175–77); a figure of Michael VIII as the Thirteenth Apostle was embroidered on a peplos, commissioned by

Michael VIII's diplomatic largess remains unverified, we know of a magnificent altar cloth, the emperor's own gift to the Church of St. Sophia in Constantinople, which was subsequently reused as a present for the Pope. This silk was irretrievably lost in a sea storm together with a cargo of treasures, which was destined for Lyons, where the Byzantine delegation traveled in order to negotiate the union of the Church in 1274.³² The Roman pontiff eventually received a new, custom-made pallium from Michael VIII, who presented it to the Vatican to mark the proclamation of the Union of Lyon. This lavish textile is known only from a near-contemporary inventory of the papal treasury, which describes it as an embroidered purple imperial silk, inscribed in both Greek and Latin, featuring Michael VIII and Pope Gregory X, and depicting scenes from the lives of the apostles, and the figures of Christ, the Virgin, the angels, and St. Peter.³³ Clearly, this intricate fabric echoed the ideas and symbolism of the Genoese *pallio*. Both of these artifacts can be seen as effective tools of Michael VIII's elaborately designed "silken diplomacy," the tenets of which can also be found articulated in Holobolos' rhetorical composition commissioned to celebrate this Palaiologan monarch.

Holobolos' text is an imperial encomium. As such, any topic that it covers must be understood as being subordinate to the main requirement, to unequivocally praise the honorand. The oration as a whole deals with Michael VIII's early reign in Asia Minor. It opens with the recollection of the ancient custom of presenting a *peplos* to the emperor once a year. By offering his own encomium – his verbal embroidery – Holobolos entreats the emperor to receive his gift favorably.³⁴ In keeping with the encomiastic practice, Holobolos praises the emperor's parents, ancestry, upbringing, accomplishments, and actions. Among the latter, he lists the signing of the Treaty of Nymphaion, reporting the words spoken by the Genoese envoys, and describing the gift of the two *peploi* that Michael VIII sent to Genoa on that occasion.³⁵ It is here that Holobolos shows some familiarity with the maritime republic of Genoa.³⁶ He states that the Genoese ambassadors have sailed from afar in order to petition the emperor to become Byzantine subjects,³⁷ asking Michael VIII to reward their loyalty by presenting them with his own image on a *peplos*. With their request having been granted, the envoys receive two of the finest *peploi*, whose *ekphrasis* is given in the continuation of the oration. Holobolos' description of the first textile is rather vague as it mentions only that the *peplos* bore the emperor's likeness fashioned in beautiful colors. Holobolos provides more detail about the second

the Constantinopolitan Patriarch Germanos III, and later displayed between two porphyry columns at the west end of the Cathedral of Constantinople (Pachymeres, *History*, ed. Bekker, 614, II. 9–15); when Michael VIII's illegitimate daughter Maria was sent as a bride to the Mongol ruler Hulagu Khan in 1265, her entourage carried a *skenikos* (probably a portable chapel in the shape of a tent) made of sturdy new silk peploi depicting gold-embroidered images of saints (Pachymeres, *History*, ed. Failler, 235, 2: 13–18.); the Mongols themselves were also recipients of Michael VIII's silks (Pachymeres, *History*, ed. Failler, 447, 1: 26–449, l. 11)

³² Pachymeres, *History*, ed. Bekker, 384, I 10–385, l. 8.

³³ Molinier 1885: 18–19, no. 811.

³⁴ Holobolos (Treu), *Encomium I*, 30–32; cf. Macrides 1980: 28–30.

³⁵ Holobolos (Treu), *Encomium I*, 45–47.

³⁶ Holobolos (Treu), *Encomium I*, 45, ll. 6–20.

³⁷ Holobolos (Treu), *Encomium I*, 46, ll. 25–28.

peplos, indicating that it was embroidered with gold, and that it featured scenes from the life and martyrdom of St. Lawrence and his fellow martyrs. Holobolos' language is vivid and evocative: he stresses that the scenes of the martyrs' ordeal were so compelling that the viewers themselves could almost experience the *agonia* of the holy men. Holobolos arouses empathy and horror among his audience by listing specific instruments of torture under which the martyrs suffered. He also notes that the images on the *peplos* were elucidated by explanations in Latin. Continuing, he gives a clue for the viewing of the hagiographic story: he claims that the *pallio* is a book, and implies that, as with any book, it reads from left to right and from top to bottom. His references to the narrative strategies of Michael VIII's diplomatic gift indicate that Holobolos himself thought that the order of scenes needed further clarification. More pertinently, these passages testify to Holobolos' intimate knowledge of the Byzantine–Genoese negotiations, which he may have witnessed, and in which – to add a further conjecture based on his linguistic proficiency – he may have directly participated as Michael VIII's secretary and a Latin speaker. Given his detailed description of the *pallio*'s visual and textual content, it is conceivable that young Holobolos was involved in the preparation, and perhaps even in the presenting of, Michael VIII's diplomatic gifts to the Genoese.³⁸

Holobolos' text addresses Michael VIII directly: the passage quoted below includes parts of the Genoese speech to the emperor and an ekphrasis of the two imperial gifts of silks that the Genoese ambassadors received from Michael VIII.

³⁸ Toth 2011: 102.

Text

“... Ἄγγελος σὺ καὶ ἄγγελος φωτός· ἄγγελος ἀγαθός. λοιπὸν κατεύθυνον ἡμῶν τὸν τοῦ βίου μετέπειτα πλοῦν. ἰμάτιον ἔχεις, βασιλεῦ, ὅταν χρυσοῖς στήμοσι τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐξύφανέ σοι λαμπροπρεπῶς [λαμπροπρεπῶς Treu] ὁ καὶ κρίνα ἐνδύων τὰ τοῦ ἀγροῦ ἐνδυμα σωτηρίας, εὐφροσύνης χιτῶνα· λοιπὸν κατὰ τὸν μεγαλοφρονότατον οὕτω πως προφήτην εἰπεῖν ἀρχηγός ἡμῖν γενοῦ· ἀρχῆς ἀρχὴν αἰτοῦμεν, τὴν κρείττω καὶ ὑψηλοτέραν καὶ τὴν ὑπεράρχιον ἀρχὴν εἰκονίζουσας τῆς δημώδους καὶ χθαμαλῆς· οὐκ ἀπὸ σκοποῦ τὸ τοιοῦτον ἡμῖν· ἔχοντα ἀπόρρητά τινα τῆς Μυκηναίας κόρης καὶ τοῦ Παρθενοπαίου πρὸς τοῦτ’ αὐτὸ συμβάλλοντα ποιητοῦ. κέλευσον τοίνυν, ὦ αὐτοκράτορ, γενέσθαι καὶ ἐν τῷ Ἄδριᾳ τὴν τῆς σῆς βασιλείας ὁδὸν καὶ τὰς τρίβους τοῦ κράτους σου ἐν ὕδασι πολλοῖς, δὸς ὡς δυνατὸν σεαυτὸν τῇ σῇ πόλει καὶ ἡμετέρᾳ παρηγόρησον διὰ τοῦ σοῦ χαρακτηῆρος πέπλω καὶ γραφαῖς ἐγκειμένου τὸν ταύτης διαπρύσιον ἔρωτα· μέγα τοῖς ἔρωσι φάρμακον καὶ γεγραμμένον τὸ τοῦ ἐρωμένου πέφυκε μὀρφωμα· δύναταί σου καὶ ἡ εἰκὼν, ἂν ἡμῖν παρείη, πολλὰ· ἀμυντήριον ἔσται κατὰ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἀντιπάλων στερρόν, πάσης ἐπιβουλῆς ἀποτρόπαιον, ἔπαλις τῇ σῇ καὶ ἡμετέρᾳ πόλει κρατερὰ, προπύργιον ἰσχυρόν καὶ τεῖχος ἀντικρὺς ἀδομάντινον. κρείττον ἡμεῖς ἐπὶ ταύτῃ ἐγκαυχησόμεθα, ἢ Ἄβαρις τῷ τόξῳ, ἢ Γύγης τῷ δακτυλίῳ, ἢ Κροῖσος ἐκεῖνος ἐπὶ τῇ ἀκροπόλει τῶν Σάρδεων.”

ταῦτ’ ἐκεῖνοι ὅσα καὶ λιγεῖς ἀγορηταὶ ῥητορεύσαντες· δεινοὶ γὰρ ἦσαν εἰπεῖν καὶ πρὸς τοῦτ’ αὐτὸ γεγυμνασμένοι καὶ ἐντριβεῖς· ὅλον τὸν εὖνον ἀφοσιώσαντες καὶ τὰ πιστά σοι δόντες ἐνώμοτα, διττοὺς τε λαβόντες πέπλους περικαλλεῖς, τὴν τοῦ σοῦ κράτους φιλότιμον δωρεάν καὶ τοῦ παντός ἀξίαν ἐκεῖνοις. τὴν εἰς οἶκον ἐτράπησαν διατόρῳ στόματι τὴν σὴν ἀνευφημοῦντες χρηστότητα καὶ βασιλέα σε οἶον οὐκ ἄλλον πανταχοῦ μεγαλοφώνως ἀνακηρύττοντες. τῶν δὲ πέπλων—δεῖ γὰρ μοι τὰ περὶ τούτων καταλιπεῖν—ὁ μὲν τὴν σὴν θεοειδῆ περιεῖχε μορφήν· οὐκ ἐκ χρυσοῦ ἢ τινος ἄλλης πολυτίμου ὕλης ἐσκευασμένον, ἀλλ’ ἐκ χρωμάτων κομωτικῶν. τὴν γὰρ περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα μακρὰν φιλοτιμίαν τῷ τῶν Ἀσσυρίων ἐκεῖνων ἀφῆκαν παιζέσθαι βασιλεῖ. τῷ δ’ ἄλλῳ ἐκ χρυσοῦ πρὸς κλωστήρα τετορευμένου οἱ τοῦ καλλινίκου μάρτυρος Λαυρεντίου καὶ τῶν σὺν αὐτῷ περιφανεῖς ἐνεχαράχθησαν ἀγῶνες καὶ τὰ μέχρι θανάτου διὰ Χριστὸν σκάμματα. εἶδε τις ἂν ἐκεῖ τὰς πρὸ προσώπου τυρανικοῦ τῶν σοφῶν μαρτύρων παραστάσεις, τὰς γενναίας αὐτῶν ἐνστάσεις, τὰς παρὰ τῶν βασανιστῶν σκευοφορούμενας τούτοις πολυειδεῖς καὶ πολυτρόπους κολάσεις, τοὺς σιδηροῦς ὄνυχας, τοὺς τροχαντήρας, τοὺς καταπέλτας, τὸ πῦρ, τὰ ξίφη, τὰς ἀλύσεις, τὰ δεσμά, τὰς εἰρκτὰς καὶ πᾶν ἄλλο βασανιστήριον ὄργανον, ὧν ἕκαστον καὶ ἐπιστήμασι δι’ Ἰταλικῶν γραμμάτων ἐνεσημαίνετο· οὕτως ἔφερε θαυμασίως ὁ μέγας πάντα πέπλος ἐκεῖνος τὸ ἱερόν τοῖς γενναίοις ἀνάθημα μάρτυσιν οἰκονομία βασιλικῆ, ὡς ἄρα οὐ πέπλος ὁ πέπλος ἦν, ἀλλὰ βίβλος· καὶ βίβλος οὐ προσταγμάτων θεοῦ τὸ προφητικόν, ἀλλὰ σκαμμάτων νεανικῶν μαρτύρων Χριστοῦ. τί πρὸς τοῦτο τὸ ἔργον ὁ πέπλος ἐκεῖνος, ὃν ἰστοῦργον Ἀθηναῖοι τῇ πολιάδι τούτων Παλλάδι καὶ τέχνῃ ποικιλικῇ λαμπροῖς ἐφάρμασσον βάμμασιν, ὧ μῦθοί τινες καὶ τερατεῖαι ἰστούργητο, γίγαντες βάλλοντες λίθους εἰς οὐρανὸν καὶ βαλλόμενοι· Ζεὺς ὁ νεφεληγερέτης καὶ τερπικέρανος κεραυνοβολῶν καὶ πληγὰς εἰσδεχόμενος· Ἀθηνᾶ τῷ πατρὶ συμμαχοῦσα καὶ μεγάλα κατὰ γιγάντων αἴρουσα τρόπαια, δαιμόνων εὐρέματα σκοτεινῶν καὶ διανοίας ἀναπλάσματα κακοδαίμονος μεγάλα καὶ τῆς ἀρχαιότητος συναγωνιζομένης συνιστᾶν καὶ οὐκοῦν οἶον ἀπομαχομένης τὰ ἀσύστατα καὶ ἀνύπαρκτα.

Translation

“... You are an Angel, indeed an Angel of Light. A Good Angel.¹ From now on, therefore, keep the ship of our life on a straight course. Since The One Who Clothes Lilies in the Wild has most splendidly woven a garment of salvation and a tunic of joy for you with the gold threads of good fortune, ‘*You now have a cloak*, our emperor, so, – to use the words of the most resounding among the prophets, – *be our leader!*’² We request your exemplary leadership, the epitome of superior governance, more worthy and mighty than the communal rule of the humble.³ Such a notion, in our view, is not inappropriate; there are certain secrets of the Mycenaean maiden and Parthenopaeus according to a poet’s composition on the very same theme.⁴ And now, our emperor, command that the course of your imperial power and the path of your majesty manifest themselves in the Adriatic and many other seas!⁵ Devote as much of yourself as possible to our city which is also yours! Soothe Genoa’s great desire by [giving the city] your image authenticated by text, painted, and couched on a *peplos*.⁶ A likeness of the beloved, even when only depicted, provides a natural remedy for those who suffer from love.⁷ Your image, if it could be made available to us, would have great power: it would certainly become an effective safeguard against our adversaries, it would avert sedition, it would stand as a mighty parapet protecting your city and ours, a strong barrier, a wall insurmountable from without.⁸ We shall take greater pride in your image than Abaris in his arrow,⁹ Gyges in his ring,¹⁰ and Croesus in the acropolis of Sardys.”¹¹

The orators presented their speech eloquently – they were superb as rhetoricians, splendidly trained and accomplished in their delivery! Swearing their allegiance and giving their solemn pledges, they received two exquisite *peploi* as a lavish gift from your imperial highness, to them worth more than anything! They returned taking them home, praising your kindness and proclaiming you, and no other, as their sole emperor. Of the two *peploi* – for I should now set aside my account of the Genoese – the first featured your god-like image fashioned, not in gold or some other precious material, but in beautiful colors such as they made light of the haughty pride that those Assyrians took in representing their king’s image in an extravagant style.¹² As to the other *peplos*, it had the depictions of triumphant martyr Lawrence and those who were with him embroidered in gold showing their glorious struggles, trials, and deaths for the sake of Christ. You could also see the wise martyrs standing before the tyrant, their fearless patience, many devious designs of torment created by their persecutors, iron nails, racks, *catapelta*, fire, swords, chains, shackles, imprisonment, and every other instrument of torture, each labeled with inscriptions in Latin characters. By the imperial *oikonomia*, this magnificent *peplos* was a sacred offering to the heroic martyrs so wondrous that indeed it no longer was a *peplos*, but a book, describing neither prophecies nor God’s commandments but the suffering of the high-spirited martyrs of Christ.¹³ Even that famous colorful *peplos* that the Athenians skillfully wove for their Athena Polias fades in comparison! [The Athenian textile] featured some fictional and implausible stories: the Giants casting stones sky-high and being pelted in return; cloud-gatherer Zeus, delighting in thunder, striking with a thunderbolt and himself receiving blows; Athena, fighting shoulder-to-shoulder with her father, triumphant over the Giants – all inventions of the darkest demons and horrendous figments of evil minds! Antiquity strives to create, rather than in any way resisting, confusion and fantasy.¹⁴

Commentary

1. In his *Typikon* (ll.1215–16) for the Monastery of the Archangel Michael on Mount Auxentios near Chalcedon, Michael VIII calls the Archangel Michael his vigilant guardian, who has lead him to victory over both domestic and foreign foes.³⁹
2. Is. 3:6; Is. 61:10; Mt. 6:28; Lk. 12:27.
3. The phrase τῆς δημώδους καὶ χθαμαλῆς probably refers to Genoa's populist government, which saw the rise of the *popolo* as a major political force from the 1250s.⁴⁰
4. This sentence is highly problematic: the Greek is difficult to render, so the proposed translation is tentative at best; moreover, it is not clear who Holobolos' "poet" and "Mycenaean maiden" are. He may be drawing on Aeschylus, who devotes considerable space to the character of Parthenopaeus, one of the *Seven against Thebes* (ll. 525–65). A possible connection between the two texts may be the antithetical references to cities and images: in Holobolos' oration, the Genoese request the image of Michael VIII as a means of protection for Genoa, while Aeschylus' Parthenopaeus carries a shield with a depiction of the Sphinx (perhaps connoting ἀπόρρητὰ τινα) and of a Cadmean, both displayed as unlucky omens for the Thebans.
5. Ps. 77 (78):19.
6. Holobolos probably alludes to both imperial gifts. The meaning of the verb γράφω and its cognate noun γραφή is ambiguous as it could designate inscribing, describing, depicting, and decorating. The word γραφαῖς may be referring to the painted imperial image, which the Genoese were about to receive.
7. Holobolos' use of the Platonic concepts of *eros* and *pharmakon* coincided with the upsurge of Palaiologan vernacular romances, whose storylines included the allegory of Eros as "lord emperor, master of all the earth" (*Livistros and Rodamne*, N 317–20), in other words, as the mirror image of the Byzantine emperor.⁴¹
8. The martial similes in the subsequent section clearly reflect the terms of the Treaty of Nymphaion and the military help that the newly forged alliance was expected to provide. The image (εἰκῶν) of the emperor, here variably likened to ἀμυντήριον (safe-guard), ἀποτρόπαιον (evil-averting), ἑπαλξις (parapet), προπύργιον (barrier), and τεῖχος (defense wall) would, in the words of the ambassadors, serve as a powerful means of the city's defense and would also become the source of the greatest pride for Genoa.
9. Herodotus, *The Histories*, 4, 36.
10. Herodotus, *The Histories*, 1, 8–12.
11. Herodotus, *The Histories*, 1, 84.
12. My translation of this sentence is loose. Holobolos probably uses the ethnic "Assyrian" as a generic, not historic, category, to indicate the Eastern style of weaving or decoration.⁴² Maria Parani points out that the adoption of oriental fashion

39 For further textual and material evidence of this association see Talbot 1993: 258–60; Maguire 1997: 254–55.

40 Filangieri 2018.

41 Agapitos 2013.

42 Paribeni 1999: 230–31.

among ruling elites in the Byzantium of the Palaiologi came as a result of the high degree of cultural interaction and good diplomatic relations between Byzantium and the Seljuks of Rūm in Asia Minor, the Mamluks of Egypt, and the Mongols in the period of Michael VIII's reign.⁴³ I take “περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα” to refer back to the images made of gold and precious materials and therefore translate the phrase as “extravagant style.” Holobolos may also be referencing the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:31–33). I thank Efthymios Rizos for this suggestion as well as for his careful reading of Holobolos' passage as a whole, which informed my own translation of the text.

13. For Holobolos, the *peplos* is a *martyrion*, “a book of the trials of the martyrs of Christ.” In the Byzantium of Holobolos' time, the most widely available source that incorporated such hagiographical information about Sts. Lawrence, Sixtus, and Hippolytus, was a liturgical book, the *Synaxarion*, whose close reading indeed reveals many similarities with the text of the inscriptions on the Genoese *pallio*.⁴⁴
14. The concluding paragraph compares Michael VIII's gift of the embroidered silk with the most famous ancient example of such offerings: the *peplos* for the life-size statue of Athena, which was known to have been presented as a tribute on the occasion of the Great Panathenaia.⁴⁵ Holobolos describes the iconography of the Athenian textile, the Gigantomachy, accurately, but he declares it inferior to that of the Pallium of Michael VIII. His description of the Gigantomachy – including his disparagement of the representation of the ancient gods – was conceivably informed by Constantine of Rhodes' *ekphrasis* of the Gigantomachy on the gate of the Senate House in Constantinople and of the statue of Athena, which stood nearby.⁴⁶

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⁴³ Parani 2007: 114ff.

⁴⁴ See n. 16 and 17.

⁴⁵ For the exhaustive list of ancient sources for the iconography of the *peplos* of Athena see Michaelis 1871: 328–29.

⁴⁶ Constantine of Rhodes, *On Constantinople*, p. 26, l. 125 – p. 31, l. 161.

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I.6.4

Dedicatory Inscriptions in St. Nicholas *tis Stegis* Kakopetria, Cyprus

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Significance

St. Nicholas “of the Roof” is the most richly layered of Cyprus’ “palimpsest” churches, with fresco programs ranging from the early eleventh to the early seventeenth century. None of the major programs bears donor information, but two inscribed votive frescoes cast penetrating light on the impact of external interventions in the island’s culture during the crusading centuries. A monk adopts the Constantinopolitan style and vogue for poetic inscriptions implanted by Cyprus’ early twelfth-century military governors from the court of Alexios I Komnenos. Conversely, a couple with the garb and prayer posture of Cyprus’ Latin Catholic conquerors record a gift in the local Greek vernacular.

Introduction

St. Nicholas *tis Stegis* (lit. “of the Roof”) is located at the top of the Solea valley in the Troodos mountains, above the village of Kakopetria.¹ Of venerable age, it is among the most revered of Cyprus’ painted churches, and like Asinou is now a World Heritage Site. Its earliest fresco layer, attributed to the early eleventh century, proves that the building originated within decades of the Byzantine re-conquest of the island in 965, assuredly as a monastic *katholikon*.² Both its domed cross-in-square structure and its iconographic program are outspokenly Byzantine, and stand out sharply within an era offering notably little artistic evidence of Cyprus’ reintegration into the Empire. It is among Byzantium’s few surviving cross-in-square churches adorned with a full, Middle Byzantine mural program of saints and feast scenes. The building’s Byzantine rather than regional character is all the more striking in its mountainous setting; only one other cross-in-square church – the eleventh-century St. Herakleidios (probably originally St. Michael) in Kalopanagiotis – is known in the high Troodos. St. Nicholas must have been a well-endowed foundation, but nothing is known about its original patronage or dedication to St. Nicholas, and its long history as a functioning monastery, reaching into the eighteenth century, has left only scant trace in the documentary record.³ Its on-going vitality as an

1 On the church see Papacostas 1999: 2 no. 63, p. 114; Papageorghiou 1989: 247–49; Stylianou and Stylianou, 1946: 95–196; on its paintings see Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 53–75.

2 Papacostas 1999: 1: 119.

3 These are inventoried by Papacostas 1999: 2: 114.

institution is registered, instead, by its steady artistic embellishment. A narthex was added to the church in the years around 1100 CE, and new mural programs were installed in the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and sixteenth centuries, and in 1633. Most notably, a huge, gabled timber roof was built at some point in the twelfth century to protect its vaulting from the inclement mountain weather.⁴ This is unquestionably the origin of its nickname “of the Roof,” a denomination first attested in a huge icon of the late thirteenth century that was commissioned for the church by a crusading knight.⁵ The church’s paintings, like its history, include few texts. Two inscriptions are inventoried below, a poetic epigram from the twelfth century, and the record of a donation from the period around 1300 CE when Cyprus was a Crusader kingdom.

Text A | The Twelfth-Century Inscription

Ed.: *BEÜ* 1, no. 221, 317–18 with German transl. and earlier editions; see also A.

Stylianou and J. A. Stylianou, “Ο ναός τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου τῆς Στέγης παρὰ τὴν Κακοπετριάν,” *Κυπρ.Σπ.* 10 (1946), 130–35

Monument/Artefact: Donor inscription in a fresco of St. Nicholas in St. Nicholas *tis Stegis*, fig. I.6.4a, I.6.4b

Other Translations: None



Fig. I.6.4a Kakopetria, St. Nicholas *tis Stegis*. St. Nicholas with donor Monk, naos, east wall, south side © A. W. Carr

⁴ Papageorghiou 2012: 58–59.

⁵ See n. oo.



Fig. I.6.4b Kakopetria, St. Nicholas *tis Stegis*. Donor couple with inscription, narthex, east wall, north side © A. W. Carr

Significance

The poem speaks in the voice of the donor monk, making the image not a mere picture, but an on-going interchange, a petition played out in a perennial “now.” In contrast to his lay contemporaries at Koutsovendis and Asinou, the donor here is reticent with the first person, clearly speaking on a one-to-one basis to “you,” but delaying the “I” to the final, now abraded line.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

In the 1980s, the sixteenth-century iconostasis in the monastery church of St. Nicholas of the Roof (“*tis Stegis*”) near Kakopetria was disassembled and its beautiful icons by Paul Hierographos taken to the Byzantine Museum in Nicosia. Its removal unexpectedly exposed a superb, full-length fresco icon of Saint Nicholas on the wall to the south of the bema.⁶ The arched entrance to the building’s diaconicon had been walled closed, leaving a shallow, arched niche, and it was within this that the saint was represented. His head is flanked, as is customary, by figures of Christ and the Mother of God presenting his codex and omophorion;⁷ at his feet stands a man in monastic garb, hands raised in veneration and prayer. Silhouetted in light, luminous tones against a ground of glowing lapis blue, the figure of the saint captures more fully even than those of the Asinou Master the consummate elegance of the hierarchs in Eumathios Philokales’ Holy Trinity chapel, and attests again the importance of the work at Koutsovendis in transmitting metropolitan Komnenian tastes,

6 Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 63–65 and fig. 25; Hein *et al.* 1996, fig. 44.

7 As Triantaphyllopoulos 2006: 125 n. 46, says, this is the earliest example of this iconography on Cyprus.

materials, and techniques to Cyprus. The painter at work here stands apart from the early twelfth-century frescoes elsewhere in the church, including images in the southwest bay echoing the Asinou Master's compositions of the Forty Martyrs and Presentation of the Virgin,⁸ and he must have been retained independently by the monk portrayed at his feet.

The monk offers the earliest concrete proof of the monastic function of St. Nicholas *tis Stegis*. Like other patrons who seized the opportunity of conversant Komnenian masters, he commissioned – or himself composed – a dedicatory poem to give voice to the interchange that his fresco made visible. Elegantly traced in white letters in the interval above his figure, the inscription adopts epigraphic conventions used earlier at Koutsovendis, iterating the kinship seen in the style of the saint's figure. Unfortunately, the monk's name and – if it was included – the date of his fresco have vanished with the end of the epigram. The painting's attribution varies, but surely falls within the first third of the twelfth century.

8 Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 59–62.

Text

Θερμός προστάτης γενοῦ μ[οι], ἱεράρχα,
ἐν τῇ φρικτῇ Θεοῦ τῇ παρουσίᾳ·
τὸν ἱστορίσαντα πόθῳ τὴν σὴν εἰκόνα
εἰσδύ ...

Translation

Be the ardent protector of my race, hierarch,
in the terrifying presence of God:
the one who with yearning painted your image
...¹

Commentary

1. At this point, one would expect the name of the donor, and Stylianos and Stylianos, *Painted Churches*, 65, suggest that a date might also have been included.
-

Text B | The Fourteenth-Century Inscription

Ed.: A. Stylianou, and J. A. Stylianou, “Επανεξέτασις τῆς ἐν τῷ νάρθηκι τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ ἁγίου Νικολάου τῆς Στέγης κτητορικῆς ἐπιγραφῆς,” *Κυπρ.Σπ.* 15 (1951), 87; A. Stylianou, and J. A. Stylianou, “Ὁ ναὸς τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου τῆς Στέγης παρὰ τὴν Κακοπετριάν,” *Κυπρ.Σπ.* 10 (1946), 132–35

Monument/Artefact: Inscription accompanying the portrait of a couple in the narthex of St. Nicholas *tis Stegis* (see fig. I.6.4b)

Other Translations: None, though the interpretation of the curse invoked here is discussed by Darrouzès 1951: 83

Significance

Just who used what languages remains a lively question in the polyglot world of medieval Cyprus.⁹ The inscription here is remarkable in its mingling of identities.¹⁰ It seems to capture “language in action,” as it was spoken. Even if the words given here to the donor had been determined by the monastery, he or his heirs had apparently not resisted them. The inscription is of historical value, too, in being the earliest written reference to the monastic function of the church.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

The venerable monastery of St. Nicholas *tis Stegis* (lit. “of the Roof”) near Kakopetria in the Troodos mountains, first frescoed in the early eleventh century and given further imagery in the twelfth, was once again the recipient of extensive patronage in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century.¹¹ Cyprus had by this date been a Crusader kingdom for a century, governed by the French Lusignan family. By far the most famous addition at this time was the gigantic, two-meter-high panel painted icon of St. Nicholas – identified as “of the Roof” – flanked by a kneeling Latin knight in chain mail, his wife and child, and his caparisoned horse.¹² Possibly designed to compete with (even to occlude?) the fresco icon of St. Nicholas from the twelfth century,¹³ also with a donor portrait, the panel presents an undeniable but intensely equivocal testimony to the engagement of Latins in the life of the monastery. The Greek language of the inscriptions on the one hand, and the militancy of the patron, armed in the holy space of the saint, on the other, challenge any simple reading of the relationship it implies between Greek and Latin communities.¹⁴

9 See G. Grivaud, “Literature,” in Schabel and Nicolaou-Konnari 2005: 219–26 and *passim*.

10 For a related glimpse of language in action with mixed identities see the inscription penned in fluent but phonetically spelled Greek by a donor, whose name – Bertem Bodin – indicates that he was Latin, in Darrouzès 1951: 49.

11 Stylianou and Stylianou 1946: 132–36.

12 Eliades 2009; Folda 1995: 217–21; Papageorghiou 1992: 32–32b.

13 Ševčenko 1999: 159–60.

14 Zeitler 1993: 434–35.

The inscription presented here addresses this question. It is in the narthex, and accompanies the portrait of a couple, who kneel to either side of the text.¹⁵ They kneel in the Latin posture of prayer, and wear the clothing of upper-class Latins of the period.¹⁶ They seem to have been painted at the same time that the figures around them were, in an extensive restoration of the narthex and portions of the north arm of the naos. Though these murals are painted in a chunky, garishly colored version of early Palaiologan style, there is nothing outspokenly Latin about them, nor is there any intimation that the couple helped to sponsor them. Their portraits were included in the program in order to memorialize a different gift, spelled out in the words they flank. The words are Greek; indeed, colloquially Greek: the term *χανούτιν*, a shop or place of work, belongs to the popular language and is paralleled in church inscriptions only in the eighteenth century.¹⁷ The word *κααν* that follows it has not been explained; one wonders if it was *khan*, or caravanserai. Just who the couple might have been is tantalizing: a Latin couple so conversant with their Greek surroundings that they gave not only to the Greek church, but in the Greek language; or a Greek couple who had converted to the Latin faith but retained their loyalty to the monastery? The husband's face is too abraded to reveal whether it was bearded. In the end, what is most important about these people is the way they blur standard identities.

15 Stylianou and Stylianou, 1951: 85–89; Darrouzès 1951: 83. It is well reproduced in color in Kalopissi-Verti 2012, fig. 5.9.

16 See Stylianou and Stylianou 1946: 124–26 with further bibliography on the female clothing and 185–90 on the male garb.

17 Stylianou and Stylianou 1951: 88–89.

Text

[*Ε8]οκα ἐγὼ Ἰωάννης ὁ Καμ ... κα [εἰς] τὴν ἁγίαν μονὴ τοῦ ἁγίου Νικόλαου τῆς Στ(έ)γης τὸ χανούτην τὴν κάαν εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν Γερμανοῦ ἱερομοναχοῦ καὶ καθηγουμένου καὶ ἦτις ... νὰ τὸ διασεισεὶ νὰ ἔχει τὰς ἀρὰς τῶν τριακοσίων δέκα ὀκτῶ θεοφώρων πατέρων καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Νικολάου.

Translation

I, John Kam ..., gave to the holy monastery of Saint Nicholas *tis Stegis* the shop (in the khan?)¹ in the time of Germanos hieromonk and hegumen, and may ... anyone who disturbs it have the curse of the three hundred and eighteen fathers (of the council of Nicaea) and of Saint Nicholas.

Commentary

1. See Text and Context, above.

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I.6.5

Two Epigrams on an Icon of the Theotokos Adorned by the Emperor John II Komnenos

LUISA ANDRIOLLO

Significance

Two epigrams on Marian icons indicate the importance of the imperial cult of the Theotokos in Komnenian Constantinople.

Introduction

This dossier includes two epigrams, written by Nicholas Kallikles on behalf of the emperor John II Komnenos (r.1118–43), both intended to accompany a re-adorned icon of (possibly) the Virgin Hodegetria. The strong interest shown by John II toward the Marian cult and the veneration of Marian icons, particularly the Hodegetria's image, is well known.¹ During his reign, imperial devotion to the Theotokos played a significant role in the assertion of imperial legitimacy and the display of dynastic power.

The suggested link between Marian icons, official imperial piety, and Komnenian power appears most clearly in the commemorative rituals established by John II at the Pantokrator monastery. The *typikon* of the Pantokrator indeed provides detailed instructions for the performance of two ceremonies that blended civic piety and imperial devotion, capitalizing upon the popularity of the most important icons in Constantinople and their visibility in public space.² In accordance with the emperor's will, the weekly Friday procession coming from the shrine of the Blachernai should make a diversion to the Pantokrator complex. Here, the cortege of the faithful should halt at the church of the Virgin Eleousa, and then enter the *heroon* of St. Michael, the imperial mausoleum, and perform hymns and prayers.³ A new liturgy was also established for the annual funerary commemorations of the members of the imperial family. On those dates the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria was solemnly carried from the Hodegon monastery to the Pantokrator; there, it was venerated with night vigils and a morning service beside the imperial tombs, before going back to its church.⁴ A number of icons of the Virgin were also brought in procession, displayed and worshipped during these ceremonies: one or more sacred icons

1 Pentcheva, *Icons and Power*, 184.

2 Pentcheva, *Icons and Power*, 165–86; Magdalino 2013: 44–45.

3 Gautier 1974: 74–77, 80–83; transl. Jordan, *BMGF* no. 28, p. 753–56; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power*, 169–74.

4 Gautier 1974: 80–83; transl. Jordan, *BMGF* no. 28, p. 756; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power*, 173–74.

kept in the church of the Blachernai,⁵ the icons venerated at the Eleousa⁶ and, of course, the image of the Hodegetria, the most popular and most venerated icon of Constantinople.⁷ By bringing together traditional civic rituals and imperial commemorations, these ceremonies emphasized the ties between the *basileus*, the City, and the Theotokos, who traditionally acted as the guarantor of imperial victory and imperial legitimacy.⁸

That the rituals established at the Pantokrator deliberately aimed at the sacralization of imperial authority is demonstrated by contemporary literary works, such as the anonymous epigram celebrating the inauguration of the Pantokrator church.⁹ The ideological implications of the Marian cult promoted by John II Komnenos are clearly reflected also in Kallikles' epigrams. These texts could have played a role in the liturgy as inscribed or performed texts. As a result, court poetry appears to have complemented public liturgy not only in securing public intercession for the emperor, his wife and his designated heir, but also in mobilizing the civic body and its religious symbols in favor of the ruling dynasty.

The title of Text B (ed. Romano no. 20) points out that the icon in question represented the Virgin Hodegetria; it also explicitly names John II as being responsible for its embellishment. Text A (ed. Romano no. 15), instead, does not specify the identity of the imperial donor. However, since vv. 30–34 suggest that the anonymous ruler inherited the empire from his father, the emperor in question is most probably John II. Text A also lacks details allowing the safe identification of the sacred image to which it refers. Apart from mentioning the precious materials employed to adorn it, no explicit reference is made to a specific icon or iconographic type, nor to the place where such an object was kept.

Yet, it is possible that both poems were written on the same icon. Similarities in the occasion of composition and in their content support such a hypothesis. Both texts commemorate the decoration of the Theotokos' icon with a precious revetment; both evoke the protection granted by the Virgin to the *basileus*, particularly against the “envy” and “evil-minded nature” of his internal enemies. Allusions are made to the imperial legacy received by the emperor from his father, and to the prosperity of his reign, achieved with the aid of the Theotokos. Imperial power is metaphorically depicted as a tree, whose wide-spreading branches protect the subjects and the orthodox faith. Finally, in both epigrams the precious materials adorning the icon (pearls and precious stones) are interpreted as symbols for the mystery of the Incarnation.

5 Gautier 1974: 75. The sanctuary of the Blachernai possessed a number of icons of the Virgin, among which the Blachernitissa, which was carried in campaigns by the emperors in the eleventh century: Pentcheva, *Icons and Power*, 75–79, 154–61.

6 The *typikon* of the Pantokrator suggests that the church hosted at least three or four sacred images of the Virgin: Gautier 1974: 72–75.

7 Pentcheva, *Icons and Power*, 109–27.

8 Magdalino 2013: 45–46. It is known that John II used to carry in campaigns an icon of the Virgin and the Child; an icon of the Virgin was also carried on the triumphal chariot during the triumphal procession of the same emperor, in 1133 see Choniates, *History*, 15, 18–19; transl. Magoulias, 10, 12; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power*, 75–76.

9 Ed. Vassis 2013: 213–18; transl. Magdalino 2013: 49–52.

Despite these points of contact, the two epigrams differ considerably in length and might have served different purposes: Text A (no. 15) appears to be more suitable for oral performance, while Text B (no. 20) could well have been inscribed. As for the dating of the two texts, one can only make general assumptions. The allusion to conflicts at court could perhaps suggest situating it in the early 20s or in the 30s of the twelfth century, in conjunction with the plots of Anna Komnene and the *sebastokrator* Isaac, John II's brother.¹⁰

¹⁰ Choniates, *History*, 10–11, 32; transl. Magoulias, 8, 19.

Text A | On an Icon of the Theotokos Adorned by the Emperor

Ed.: R. Romano, *Nicola Callicle, Carmi: Testo critico, introduzione, traduzione, commentario e lessico* (Naples, 1980), 89–91 no. 15; previous edition: L. Sternbach, *Nicolai Calliclis Carmina* (Cracow, 1903), 17–19 no.16

MS.:¹¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 524 (s. XIII), f. 98r

Other Translations: Romano, as above, 139–40 (Italian)

Significance

This poem stands as an example of a dedicatory epigram that was probably intended to be performed at the moment of the dedication of the icon. It consists in a long supplication to the Virgin and bears traces of the renewed interest in hymnography and hymnographical exegesis under the Komnenoi.¹² At the same time, it can help shed light on the role played by Marian devotion in contemporary imperial ideology.

The Author

See no. II.4.2.

Text and Context

As suggested above, the poem is written to commemorate the embellishment of an icon of the Virgin Mary with gold, pearls, and precious stones. The donor (unspecified in the epigram) addresses the Virgin in direct speech: Kallikles employs the rhetorical device of *ethopoia*, which is quite recurrent in dedicatory poems. Such a long text of fifty-five verses was not likely to be actually inscribed; it is rather intended as a prayer to the Virgin, possibly performed when the re-decorated icon was dedicated and presented for veneration.¹³

The poem opens with a praise of the Theotokos as the temple of the Holy Wisdom through which the divine Logos came to the world (vv. 1–8). Subsequently, it evokes the

¹¹ Consulted.

¹² F. D'Aiuto, "L'innografia," in *Lo spazio letterario del medioevo. 3. Le culture circostanti. Volume I. La cultura bizantina* (Rome, 2004), 257–300 (esp. 292–93).

¹³ On the use of *ethopoia* in dedicatory epigrams intended to accompany religious objects, often taking the form of a prayer see Drpić 2014: 901 ff.; Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 89–95.

benevolence bestowed by the Virgin upon the *basileus* (vv. 9–29) and implores her help for the defense and the expansion of the empire (vv. 30–43). In this section of the poem, the protection granted by the Theotokos against internal and external enemies is presented as a sign of divine blessing for the ruler, and it is clearly connected to the legitimate transmission of imperial power within the established dynasty. The text emphasizes the role of Mary as a powerful intercessor, due to her paradoxical childbirth and to her privileged relation with Christ. The poem ends with a reference to the actual occasion for the composition of these verses: the emperor beseeches the Theotokos to accept his offering not as a mere ornament, but for its symbolic and spiritual value (vv. 44–55).

The highly rhetorical style employed here draws largely on biblical sources, as well as on patristic and hymnographic tradition;¹⁴ despite the re-employment of well-known *topoi*, the meaning of the text can be convoluted and elusive. The verse used is the Byzantine dodecasyllable, with fixed word accents before the fifth, the seventh, and the last syllable; two verses are lacunose.

¹⁴ Conostas 1995: 176–90; Hannick 2005; Peltomaa 2011.

Text

Τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν Θεοτόκον κοσμηθεῖσαν παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως

Εἰ καὶ σοφίας οἶκος, ἀγνή, τυγχάνεις,
 ἀλλ' αὐτὸς οὐ κοσμῶ σε τοῖς ἑπτὰ στύλοις·
 ἀρκεῖ γὰρ εἷς σοὶ στύλος ὁ ξένος τόκος·
 οὐ θύματα σφαγέντα σὸς κόσμος, κόρη·
 5 τεκοῦσα καὶ γὰρ θῦμα τὸν Θεοῦ Λόγον
 ἀνεῖλες ἅπαν θῦμα τοῦ πάλαι νόμου.
 οὕτως σοφίας οἶκον αὐτὸς σε γράφω,
 φρονῶν σε φυλακτῆρα τοῦ κράτους ὅλου.
 ὦ ποῖον οἶκον εὔρον, εἰς ὃν πολλάκις
 10 ὑποτρέχω, κἂν καῦμα κἂν ψύχος φθάσῃ
 κἂν ὄμβρος ὀχλήῃ <.....>¹
 εἰς ὃν φυγῶν χειμῶνος αἰθρίαν ἔχω
 καὶ καύματος φλέγοντος <.....>
 εὔρον δὲ καὶ κρατῆρα συγκεκραμένον,
 15 ἐμοὶ γλυκύν, πικρόν δε τοῖς ἐναντίοις·
 καὶ πίνομεν κύψαντες εἰς μίαν πόσιν.
 ἐγὼ μὲν αὐτὸς σὸν τὸ θαῦμα, παρθένε,
 ἐλαφρόν, ἡδύ, νῆφον, εὐκρατον πόμα·
 20 πλὴν κραιπαλᾶ σύμπασα δυσμενῆς φύσις,
 κἂν τοῖς κροτάφοις ἄλγος ἄγριον φέρει,
 μεθύσκον ἐκροφοῦσα τῆς δίκης πόμα.
 ἐντεῦθεν ἡμῖν εὐμαρῆ τὰ τοῦ δρόμου·
 πληροῖς φάραγγα πᾶσαν ἐκ βάθους ἄνω,
 βουνοὺς ταπεινοῖς, πᾶν ὄρος διηρμένον,
 25 διάστροφον πᾶν εἰς ὄδον λείαν τρέπεις
 καὶ πᾶν σκολιὸν εὐχερῶς ἀπευθύνεις.
 μὴ σὲ προὔμνεϊ Δαβίδ ὁ ψαλμογράφος
 ὡς ὑπερασπιστὴν τε τῶν βασιλέων
 καὶ καταφυγῆς ὠχυρωμένον τόπον;
 30 ἀλλ' ὦ πατρῶε κλῆρε καὶ κλήρου φύλαξ, —
 ἐμοὶ γὰρ αὐτῷ πατρικὴ πάλαι σχέσις
 ἀνῆψεν εἰς σὲ τοῦ βίου τὰς ἀγκύρας
 καὶ χρίσμα διπλοῦν εὔρον ἐν σοί, παρθένε,
 τὸ σωστικόν τε καὶ τὸ τῆς ἐξουσίας —
 35 φύλαττέ μοι τὸν κλῆρον ἧ καὶ προστίθει,
 βράβευσον αὐτῷ τοὺς παλαιτέρους ὄρους,
 Αἰθίοπας Ταρσεῖς τε καὶ γῆν Ἀρράβων,
 Βακτριανὴν καὶ Σοῦσα, πᾶσαν Περσίδα,
 τὸ σκῆπτρον ὕψου μᾶλλον αὐτῶν τῶν κέδρων,

Translation

By the same [author,] on [the icon of] the Theotokos adorned by the emperor.

Although you are the house of Wisdom, All Pure One,
 yet I do not adorn you with the seven pillars:²
 for only one pillar suffices for you: the Son of a strange nature;
 and no slaughtered victims are your ornament, Maiden:
 5 indeed, by engendering the Word of God as a victim,
 you suppressed every sacrifice of the old Law.
 Thus, I depict you as the house of Wisdom,
 considering you the guardian of all power.
 O what a house have I found, to which I often
 10 run for shelter, whether the sun's heat or the bitter cold overtakes [me],
 or whether the rain lashes <...>,
 [a house] to which I retreat and I enjoy a lull in the storm,
 and <...> from the burning heat,³
 and I have also found a cup of well-tempered wine,⁴
 15 sweet for me, bitter for [my] enemies:
 and yet, we drink bent over one same draught.
 I [sip] your wonder, Virgin,
 the light, the sweet, the sober, the well-blended drink;
 but every evil-minded nature is inebriated,
 20 and bears a harsh pain in its temples,
 swallowing a drink of justice that intoxicates it [i.e. the evil-minded nature]
 Henceforth the way (is) easy for us:
 you fill every ravine from its depths,
 you lower the hills [and] every rising mountain,
 25 you turn any twisted [path] into a smooth one
 and you easily straighten any winding [road].⁵
 Does not David the psalmist praise you
 as the protector of the emperors
 and a bastion of refuge?⁶
 30 But you, paternal legacy and guardian of (my) inheritance,
 – for long ago the rank that I inherited from my father
 has fastened to you the anchors of (my) life,
 and I have found in you a double anointment, Virgin,
 the one of salvation and the one for (my) authority –⁷
 35 guard my inheritance and even increase it,
 grant me the ancient borders,
 the Ethiops, the Tarsians and the land of the Arabs,
 the Bactriane, Susa, and all of Persia!⁸
 Raise my scepter higher than the cedars themselves!

- 40 τοῦτο πλατύναις ὑπὲρ ἀναδενδράδας,
καὶ συσκιάσει τοὺς ὅλους ὑπηκόους
ὡς πλατάνου τὰ φύλλα τῆς πολυκλάδου,
ὡς αἱ δασεῖαι καὶ σκιάζουσαι νάπαι.
ἀλλ' ὁ προεῖπον, στάμνε, βάτε, λυχνία,
- 45 μάργαρον ἢ χρυσίον ἢ στίλψιν λίθων
ὡς σύμβολον μέν, ἀλλὰ μὴ κόσμον δέχου·
ἦν γὰρ καθωράϊσεν ἄσπορος τόκος,
οὐ καλλυνεῖ μάργαρος ἢ κάλλος λίθου,
αἰνιγμάτων δὲ ταῦτα τυγχάνει λύσις.
- 50 ὁ τίμιος γὰρ καὶ καλὸς μαργαρίτης
ᾤκησεν ἐν σοί, τῷ καθαρῷ χρυσίῳ,
ὁ συνδέτης ἀμφοῖν δε τοῖν ἄκροιν λίθος
ἐκ σοῦ λαβῶν πρόσλημμα συνδεῖ τὰς φύσεις.
οὕτω Θεὸν τεκοῦσαν οἶδα καὶ γράφω,
55 οὕτως ἐγὼ τιμῶ σε κἂν τοῖς συμβόλοις.

40 May you spread (its power) wider than the vine,
 and it will shade over all (my) subjects
 like the leaves of the plane tree with many branches,
 like the bushy and shady dells.⁹
 But, as I said before, Urn, Bramble, Lamp,¹⁰
45 accept the pearls, the gold, and the glitter of stones
 as a token, not as an ornament:
 for, a pearl or the beauty of a stone will not beautify
 the one who was adorned with the Son conceived without a seed,
 and this is the solution for the enigmas.¹¹
50 Indeed, the beautiful pearl, source of honor,
 dwelled in you, the pure gold,
 and the stone binding the two extremities,
 having received from you the bodily garment, unites the [two] natures.¹²
 So I see and depict you, the Mother of God,
55 so I honor you, although with tokens.

Commentary

1. This verse lacks seven syllables; v.13, located a line below in the manuscript, on the same column, also presents a lacuna of five syllables. The manuscript does not appear to be damaged at this point: the lacuna was probably to be found in the original manuscript that the scribe of the AM had in front of him.
2. The image of the house of Holy Wisdom comes from Prov. 9:1–2: Ἡ σοφία ὠκοδόμησεν ἑαυτῇ οἶκον καὶ ὑπήρεισε στύλους ἑπτὰ· ἔσφαξε τὰ ἑαυτῆς θύματα, ἐκέρασεν εἰς κρατῆρα τὸν ἑαυτῆς οἶνον καὶ ἠτοιμάσατο τὴν ἑαυτῆς τράπεζαν/“Wisdom built herself a house and supported it with seven pillars. She slaughtered her own sacrificial victims; she mixed her own wine in a mixing bowl.” The number seven has a highly symbolic meaning in the Bible, related in the first place to creation narrative (Gen. 1–2). As Kallikles’ text implies, God’s action in human history found its fulfillment in the advent of Christ, the only pillar of Christian faith, who renewed and completed the divine Word of the Old Testament. The sacrifices required by the Old Law were abolished by the mercy of Christ, who offered his redeeming blood as the ultimate sacrifice for the salvation of mankind.

In orthodox theology, divine Wisdom is often assimilated to the divine Logos, the second person of the Trinity, which pre-existed the Incarnation.¹⁵ A close association is also established between the Wisdom of God and the Virgin Mary: through the Incarnation, Mary became the receptacle of the divine Logos and the living temple of divine Wisdom. Through her, the union of humanity and divinity was realized in Christ: therefore, the Theotokos is often described as “container of the uncontainable” or “space of the infinite,”¹⁶ where contradictions and enigmas incomprehensible to the human intellect are solved by the divine grace (cf. v. 49, p. 705). The anonymous poet of the *Akathistos* also praises Mary for her humility, which was exalted together with the Incarnation of the Logos, and for the role she played in Christian revelation, which resulted in demolishing pagan secular knowledge.¹⁷ This was already a *topos* in patristic literature, and especially in the work of Gregory of Nazianzos.¹⁸ In v. 8 of our epigram, the Theotokos is called “the guardian of all power.” Such an appellation prepares the reader for the passage to the second section of the poem.

3. The well-known metaphor of the Virgin as a shelter and harbor can be traced back to the patristic tradition.¹⁹ V. 10 alludes to the resolution of God after the deluge and his pact with mankind (Gen. 8:22). The metaphor of Mary as a shelter from the difficulties of one’s life reappears in v. 32 where the Theotokos is compared to a safe harbor.

15 See 1Cor. 1: 22–24 (Christ as the Wisdom of God).

16 Peltomaa 2011: 112.

17 Ed. Trypanis 1968: 31 (strophe 3, vv.15–17); 36–37 (strophe 17).

18 Peltomaa 2011: 114–15.

19 Conostas 1995: 178.

4. Cf. the *Akathistos*: χαῖρε, κρατὴρ κινρῶν ἀγαλλίασιν “rejoice, the crater serving what gladdens [the] heart.”²⁰
5. These verses paraphrase the famous prophecy of Es. 40:4 announcing the advent of the Messiah. These actions are presented here as an expression of Mary’s powerful intercession.
6. Kallikles resorts to the re-elaboration of a biblical passage [Ps. 30 (31):3] that had long since become a *topos* of Marian imagery. The presentation of Mary as a *strategos* and a *symmachos* of the emperor, strictly connected with her function of protector of Constantinople and with the notion of imperial Victory, is particularly relevant for Byzantine imperial ideology.²¹ This can be compared once more with the *Akathistos*, in particular the second prolog, where the Virgin is addressed as *hypermachos strategos*,²² and the strophe 23.²³ In our poem, such a connotation for the Theotokos could also contain an allusion to the emperor’s military program, notably to the campaigns led by John II to recover Byzantine territories in Asia Minor (see also vv. 36–38 and Commentary note 8).
7. These verses (30–34) suggest the identification of the anonymous donor with John II. The text seems to imply that the *persona loquens* has the Virgin as a special protector, and that such a privileged relation is a legacy of his father, who also bequeathed the empire to him. Mary’s benevolence appears to be strictly connected to the imperial office: since the Theotokos is the protector of the empire and of Constantinople in particular, she is also the defender of the emperor. Mary’s mercy is granted to the emperor because he lawfully inherited his rank within the family line which she had protected in the past. The sacral dimension of imperial power is also evoked, through the reference to the holy chrism. This is said to be “double,” i.e. used for two anointments: the anointment “of salvation” was the confirmation, celebrated during the baptismal rite, while “the one of authority” alludes to the bestowal of imperial authority.

It is uncertain whether the ceremony of imperial anointing was performed in Byzantium before the Fourth Crusade.²⁴ Dagron has warned against the traps set by the rhetorical and metaphoric use of references to imperial anointing in Byzantine sources prior to the thirteenth century.²⁵ Be that as it may, in Kallikles’ poem the reference to the holy chrism further supports the notion of an imperial legitimacy that results from being born in the purple.²⁶ The effusion of anointing oil as a metaphor for divine election also recurs in Marian hymnography.²⁷

20 Ed. Trypanis 1968: 38 (strophe 21, v. 15); transl. Dedes and Vaporis 1990: 35.

21 Pentcheva, *Icons and Power*, 61–103.

22 Ed. Trypanis 1968: 29.

23 Ed. Trypanis 1968: 39 (vv. 12–15).

24 Angold, *Church and Society*, 542–47; Dagron 1996: 281–83.

25 Dagron 1996: 281–83.

26 The notion of imperial legitimacy as a result of imperial descent and divine blessing is equally emphasized in the anonymous epigram for the inauguration of the Pantokrator church: Vassis 2013: 213, vv. 11–14; transl. Magdalino 2013: 49.

27 See, e.g., the canon of the *Akathistos*: ode 1, strophe 4 (*Triodion*: 309); ode 9, strophe 3 (*Triodion*: 317).

8. The poet here refers to the borders of the empire and its enemies in the East. The Ethiopians were traditionally considered to live on the furthest limit of the inhabited land,²⁸ but this hyperbolic description of the Empire's ideal borders could also contain an allusion to Egypt and the Fatimids. The reference to the Tarsians points to the Armenians of Cilicia, against whom John II led a campaign in 1136–37.²⁹ Finally, the area defined as “the lands of the Arabs, the Bactriane and Susa, and all of Persia” encompasses the territories that were under the control of the Grand Seljuks who, despite their internal fragmentation, occupied the lands from Khurāsān to Iran and the former ‘Abbāsīd caliphate.³⁰ The use of classicizing ethnic designations, particularly to indicate the enemies of Byzantium, is usual in high-brow Byzantine literature:³¹ it is also prominent, for instance, in Theodore Prodromos' poetry for John II.³² In our epigram, this linguistic choice is in tune with the evocation of the ancient borders of the Roman Empire. Thereby, the author promotes the idea of the just recovery of former Byzantine territories, and so he indicates the need for a heavenly blessing of the emperor and of the Empire.³³
9. These verses contain other popular biblical images from Ps. 79(80): 9–11. The metaphorical image of the tree, conveying notions of fertility, solidity, and protection, is commonly applied to both representations of family and to the Virgin.³⁴ The tree imagery was particularly suited for presenting the convoluted relations of kinship and marriage within the Komnenian aristocracy. This imagery is recurrent in Kallikles' and other “court” poetry.³⁵
10. This is a sequence of customary epithets for the Virgin, inspired from the Old Testament.³⁶ Mary is described as the jar, with a reference to the jar (στάρμυος) in which the manna was kept (Ex. 16:33): this typological image alludes to her role as the bearer of Christ, the living bread which came down from Heaven (Jn. 6:5). She is also named “lamp” (λυχνία), an allusion to the golden lampstand in the tent of Ark of the Covenant.³⁷ Finally she is depicted as the bush (βάτος) burning before Moses, whose branches were not consumed by fire (Ex. 3:2). This latest metaphor refers to Mary's virginity, which was unblemished by her divine motherhood.³⁸

28 Cf. the poem of Theodore Prodromos for the coronation of Alexios Komnenos, the eldest son of John II: Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 1, vv. 148–52, p. 181, 184.

29 Angold 1997: 187; Kinnamos, *Deeds*, ed. Meineke, 16, transl. Brand, 21–22.

30 On the formation and organization of the Great Seljuk Empire, and on its division after 1094 see Ducellier *et al.* 2006: 190–95, 224–25; Peacock 2015: 20–100.

31 Kaldellis 2013: 106–17.

32 See, e.g., Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems* no. 16, vv. 7–12, p. 277 (with the mention of the “*basileia* of Egypt”) and no. 29, vv. 6–16, p. 345–46.

33 The use of archaizing ethnic names is recurrent in Kallikles' epigrams for the Emperor: see *Poems* nos. 2, 25, 31: Kallikles, *Poems*, 79, 103, 113.

34 See the *Akathistos*, ed. Trypanis: 35 (strophe 13, vv. 10–11).

35 See nos. 1, 11, 20, 22: Kallikles, *Poems*, 77, 86, 95, 97–98.

36 Hannick 2005: 72–73; van Esbroeck 2005: 63–68.

37 Ex. 25:31–40; canon of the *Akathistos*, ode 4, strophe 1 (*Triodion*: 311).

38 Canon of the *Akathistos*, ode 6, strophe 4 and ode 8, strophe 2 (*Triodion*: 312 and 316).

11. Cf. Sap. 8:8. This verse contains a further allusion to the relation between the divine Wisdom of the Old Testament and the incarnated Logos of the New Testament.
12. The modesty of the donor is a commonplace in dedicatory epigrams on works of art. The dedicator values his or her gift unworthy to the benefaction or the properties of the dedicatee.³⁹ In this verse, the emperor invites the Virgin to view the symbolic meaning of the precious materials employed to adorn her icon. The pearl, the perfectly spherical object, was thought to be formed when light passed through water and entered into the oyster: therefore it metaphorically represents the mystery of the Incarnation and Christ himself.⁴⁰ The gemstones allude to the cornerstone (Act. 4:11), i.e. Christ, who united in one person the divine and the human natures. The word “πρόσλημμα” (here, “bodily garment”) refers particularly to the physical and human appearance of Christ.⁴¹ Finally, the “pure gold” covering the icon alludes to the Theotokos herself, understood as the true Ark of the Covenant: indeed, according to Ex. 25:11, God had ordered Moses to clad the Ark with this very same metal.

³⁹ Cf. Kallikles, *Poems* no. 2, vv. 12–20, p. 79; Spingou, *Words and Artworks*, 223.

⁴⁰ Kalavrezou 2012: 363–65; canon of the *Akathistos*, ode 5, strophe 5 (*Triodion*: 311).

⁴¹ The same word is frequently used by Gregory of Nazianzos (see, e.g., *Oration* 30, 12, l. 15; *Oration* 38, 45, l. 29) and it is reminiscent of the metaphor of the Incarnation as this was elaborated by Proclus of Constantinople: Consta 1995: 180–88.

Text B | Epigram for the Virgin Hodegetria

Ed.: R. Romano, *Nicola Callicle, Carmi. Testo critico, introduzione, traduzione, commentario e lessico* (Naples, 1980), p. 95, no. 20; previous edition: L. Sternbach, *Nicolai Calliclis Carmina* (Cracow, 1903), p. 20–21, no. 20

MS.:⁴² Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 524 (s. XIII), f. 99r

Other Translations: Romano, as above, 142 no. 20 (in Italian)

Significance

This short text could have been inscribed on a revered icon at the court of John II Komennos. It hints at the veneration of specific relics and icons that were favored by the Komnenian court in order to support dynastic legitimacy. Like Text A, Text B reflects the aesthetic and symbolic values attributed by the Byzantines to precious materials, which were traditionally used for adorning sacred images.

Text and Context

Like Text A, this epigram was written by Nicholas Kallikles to commemorate the embellishment of an icon of the Virgin Mary, which had been adorned with pearls and precious stones at the initiative of the Emperor. The text is in the first person and it gives voice to the donor who, in the final clause of the poem, identifies himself as John II Komnenos. The title specifies that the text refers to a depiction of the Virgin Hodegetria.

The first use of the epithet Hodegetria was that applied to a miraculous icon venerated at the Hodegon monastery, not far from the Great Palace, and it is only later that it came to indicate a specific iconographic type. According to the legend, the panel in the Hodegon monastery depicted the Virgin holding the Child and it was painted by the apostle Luke. The legend further reports that the icon was sent from Jerusalem (or from Antioch) on behalf of the empress Eudokia to her sister-in-law, Pulcheria, in the fifth century. In the eleventh century, this sacred image came to be the object of a special cult: every Tuesday morning a procession carried the icon from the Hodegon monastery to a different church in the City, where a stationary liturgy took place.⁴³ Later descriptions and reproductions of the original icon show the Hodegetria icon as a double-sided processional icon, portraying Mary carrying the Child on her left arm on the front and the Crucifixion on the back.⁴⁴

⁴² Consulted.

⁴³ For a definition of “stationary liturgy” see, e.g., Taft 1977: “Now in the 10th-century typicon of Hagia Sophia we see that the liturgy of New Rome, like that of Old Rome, was highly stationary in character. On many days in the church calendar the liturgy was celebrated not just anywhere, but in some specially designated church. This church was the ‘station’ of the day, and on more solemn feasts the crowd would gather with the clergy at some other sanctuary and process solemnly from there to the stationary church for the liturgy.” For a short definition, see also *LThK* (Freiburg, 2006), vol. 9, p. 934, s.v. “Statio, Stationsgottesdienst, Station-skirche.”

⁴⁴ On the iconographic type and its evolutions, the Hodegon monastery, the weekly procession and the legends concerning this famous icon see Pentcheva, *Icons and Power*, 110–36; on the Hodegon monastery see also the historical synthesis (somewhat outdated, but encompassing the late Byzantine period) by Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 208–16.

The cult of this icon received further impulse under the reign of John II Komnenos, who decided that the image of the Hodegetria would be the focus of imperial funerary ceremonies in the newly founded Pantokrator monastery.⁴⁵ The imperial interest in this icon fostered the popularity of its cult among the court aristocracy. Judging from the number of epigrams referring to various donations made by the members of the imperial family and of the imperial entourage, precious offerings to the Hodegetria, particularly those of embroidered veils (called *peplon* or *encheirion*), became fashionable signs of devotion within the highest Komnenian aristocracy.⁴⁶

Text B voices the promotion of the very same cult. In this text, as in the one discussed above, the Theotokos is presented as the protector of the legitimate heir to the empire. The verses for the Hodegetria allude in particular to rivalries that had arisen within the imperial family at the time of John II's accession. Regarding the imagery employed for the eulogy of the Virgin, this poem repeats many of the *topoi* already found in Text A. Kallikles describes the Theotokos as the guardian of the emperor and his powerful intercessor; the vegetal metaphor is used to represent the prosperity granted to John II's reign, here presented as a thriving tree; the symbolic value of the precious materials used to decorate the icon is also highlighted.

The epigram is rather short, and it could have been inscribed on the object, maybe on the precious revetment to which the pearls and stones were attached. The meter employed is the usual Byzantine dodecasyllable.

⁴⁵ See p. 698–99.

⁴⁶ Carr 1997: 81–99: 95; Drpić 2014: 901–05 and passim; Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 85–87, 103–05. On the appearance and function of the *encheirion* see also Nunn, “Encheirion.” Literary evidence is provided, for instance, by the epigrams of Kallikles on the *peplon* offered at the Hodegetria by John Arbatenos and his wife Anna, niece (ἀνεψιά) of the emperor John II: Kallikles, *Poems* nos. 1 and 26, 77–78, 104–05; or the poem by Prodomos on the *encheirion* donated by Eudokia Komnene, wife of Theodore Stypeiotes: Theodore Prodomos, *Historical Poems* no. 73, 525–26.

Text

Εἰς τὴν Ὁδηγήτριαν τοῦ αὐτοῦ

Φυτόν με μικρὸν προσλαβοῦσα πατρόθεν,
 φθόνου πνιγὲν, πάνταγνε, τραχείαις βάτοις,
 κέδρου παρέσχες ὕψος, ἢ κέδρου πλέον,
 κέδρους καταφλέξασα τὰς τοῦ Λιβάνου,
 5 τρόπους βραχίονάς τε τοὺς ἐπηρμένους·
 ἐκ σοῦ δὲ πλατυνθεῖσιν ἡμῶν τοῖς κλάδοις¹
 εὔρες² σκιασμόν ἠδὺν ἀμφὶ τοῖς κλάδοις.
 ἀλλ' ἐκ διασυῶν λάμβανε στέφος λίθων,
 λίθον τὸν ἀκρόγωνον ἢ δεδεγμένη,
 10 ὡς μάργαρον δὲ λάμπρυνόν μου τὸν βίον,
 ἐκ μαργάρων στεφθεῖσα λαμπρῶν, παρθένε.
 Ἰωάννης σοι ταῦτα, πορφύρας κλάδος,
 Ἄλεξιου παῖς βασιλεὺς βασιλέως.

Translation

On the Hodegetria, [poem] by the same [author]

You helped me [in the past], a little offshoot [sprouting from] my father,
 stifled by prickly brambles of envy, O All Pure,
 and you granted me the height of a cedar, [you raised me] even higher than a cedar,
 you, who have burnt down the cedars of Lebanon,
 5 the exalted natures and arms;³
 since our branches have been widened thanks to you,
 amidst those branches you have found sweet shadow.
 Yet accept a crown of radiant gemstones,
 you who received [in you] the cornerstone;
 10 as a pearl, make my life bright,
 [you], Virgin, who have been crowned with bright pearls.⁵
 John, the scion of the purple,
 the emperor son of Emperor Alexios⁶ [offers] you these.

Commentary

1. I understand this formulation as a periphrasis constructed with an absolute dative (see translation and the Commentary, n. 3).⁴⁷
2. Both editors of the text, Romano and Sternbach, print εὔρες, while the manuscript bears εὔρε; Sternbach underlines his tentatively editorial decision in the critical apparatus.⁴⁸ Indeed the meaning of vv. 6–7 is obscure: the passage seems to imply that,

⁴⁷ On the increasing independent use of dative in middle and late Byzantine literature see Wahlgren 2014: 170–75.

⁴⁸ Ed. Sternbach 1903: 20, n. to v. 7.

having been granted help and prosperity by the Theotokos, the emperor guarantees in return the protection and veneration of her icon.

3. The vegetal metaphor recurs through the text. In the first verse and in the final clause, the donor presents himself as “offshoot” (v. 1) and “scion of the purple” (v. 12), highlighting the legitimacy granted to him by the genealogical line. The same vegetal metaphor serves also to illustrate conflicts around the exercise of power: envy takes the form of “prickly brambles” (v. 2),⁴⁹ and the enemies of the *basileus* are associated to the image of the cedars of Lebanon, which have been burnt to ashes by the Virgin.

Vv. 4–5 are allusive and ambiguous. The term τρόπος (“way,” “manner”) takes here the meaning of “character” “nature”: in association with βραχίονας, it is related to the image of the cedars of Lebanon, a metaphor for the impious men. The syntactic structure is complicated by the *zeugmatic* construction: the participle ἐπηρμένους is referred to both τρόπους and βραχίονας, “the exalted minds and the arms (raised) [against the emperor].” The sense of this rather obscure passage becomes clear if read together with biblical quotations, specifically Ps. 36(37):35 (“I saw an impious one being highly lifted up and being raised up as the cedars of Lebanon. And I passed by, and look, he was not, and I sought him, but his place was not found”) and Ps. 28(29):5 (“The Lord’s voice, as he crushes cedars, and the Lord will crush the cedars of Lebanon”).⁵⁰

Contrary to the suggested image of destruction, the prosperous reign of the emperor is depicted, once more, as a tree with many branches, providing shadow and shelter to his subjects and to the Virgin herself.

5. On the symbolic value of precious materials, such as pearls and gemstone, see Kalavrezou 2012. V. 8 offers a further hint on the nature of the embellishment added to the icon: as it seems, a crown decorated with gemstones and pearls was applied to the panel, framing the Virgin’s halo.
6. The final verse of the poem employs two rhetorical devices to amplify the supreme authority embodied by John II and to emphasize the dynastic connection between the two first Komnenian emperors: the disposition of the cases in a chiasmus (Ἀλεξίου παῖς βασιλεύς βασιλέως: genitive nominative–nominative genitive) and the polypoton (βασιλεύς βασιλέως).

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⁴⁹ In Byzantium, φθόνος was perceived as a superhuman evil force, often connected with the devil’s action; on this connotation φθόνος, particularly in the case of envy directed against the emperor, see Hinterberger 2013a, esp. 177–79; Hinterberger 2013b: 51–65.

⁵⁰ Ps 36(37):35 εἶδον ἄσεβη ὑπερυψούμενον καὶ ἐπαιρόμενον ὡς τὰς κέδρους τοῦ Λιβάνου· καὶ παρήλθον, καὶ ἰδοὺ οὐκ ἦν, καὶ ἐζήτησα αὐτόν, καὶ οὐχ εὗρέθη ὁ τόπος αὐτοῦ. Ps 28(29):5 φωνὴ κυρίου συντριβόντος κέδρους, καὶ συντρίψει κύριος τὰς κέδρους τοῦ Λιβάνου.

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I.6.6 Nicholas Mesarites (c.1163–after 1204)

Relics of the Passion in the Church of the Pharos in the Account of the Usurpation of John Komnenos “the Fat”

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Ed.: A. Heisenberg, “Die Palastrevolution des Johannes Komnenos,” *Programm des k. alten Gymnasiums zu Würzburg für das Studienjahr 1906/1907* (1907), 29–32; textual revisions by E. Kurtz, *BZ* 18 (1908), 176–77

MS.: Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, F 96 sup. (s. XIII), ff. 21v–23r¹

Other Translations: M. Angold, *Nicholas Mesarites: His Life and Works (in translation)*, Translated Texts for Byzantinists 4 (Liverpool, 2017), 52–56; H. A. Klein, “The Crown of His Kingdom: Imperial Ideology, Palace Ritual, and the Relics of Christ’s Passion,” in *The Emperor’s House: Palaces from Augustus to the Age of Absolutism*, eds. M. Featherstone, J.-M. Spieser, G. Tanman, and U. Wulf-Rheidt, *Urban Spaces* 4 (Berlin, 2015), 201 (description of the Crown of thorns only) (English); F. Grabler, “Die Palastrevolution des Joannes Komnenos,” in *Die Kreuzfahrer erobern Konstantinopel, Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber* 9 (Graz, 1958), 285–90 (German).

Significance

Mesarites’ description of the relics in the palace church of the Pharos illustrates the symbolism of the palace church – and thus the imperial state – as the New Jerusalem, the sum of the Old and New Testaments.²

The Author

A high church official, Mesarites was *skeuophylax*, or sacristan, of the palace church of the Pharos until the conquest of the city in 1204. In 1207 he left for Nicaea and became metropolitan of Ephesos. In 1214 he led an ecclesiastical embassy to Constantinople for talks with the Latin Church. Besides the *Account* of the usurpation of John Komnenos, he wrote a description of the church of the Holy Apostles before the sack of 1204.³

1 Not consulted.

2 On the church of the Pharos, first attested in 768, see Guiland 1969: I, 315–18; Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 232–36. Many of the relics kept there are mentioned in the fifth and sixth century in the church of Mount Zion in Jerusalem: see most recently Klein 2015 passim. Biblical symbolism pervaded palace ceremonial, for example, the rod of Moses (kept in another palace chapel, St. Theodore’s in the Chrysotriklinos) together with the great (processional) cross of Constantine (kept in the old palace church of St. Stephen) regularly accompanied the emperor in procession to St. Sophia; cf. *The Book of Ceremonies*, ed. Reiske, 10.18–16.25.

3 On Mesarites see Kazhdan and Franklin 1984: 238–42; for his description of the Holy Apostles see Epstein 1982: 79–92 and I. Drpić, I.2.1 in this volume.

Text and Context

Ostensibly written in response to demands by all and sundry for details of events in the Great Palace during the failed coup d'état on July 31, 1200 by John Komnenos, a relation of the former ruling dynasty, against the reigning emperor Alexios III Angelos (r.1195–1203), Mesarites' *Account* is surely not to be seen simply as an occasional piece, but also a political pamphlet. Composed in high, albeit eccentrically vivid personal style, this text with its pronounced imperial piety and xenophobic tendency would appear to convey a message to the elite of the city of the dangers of shifting alliances in the years before the Fourth Crusade. John Komnenos' attempted coup had resulted in the intrusion of the rabble together with Latin mercenaries into the Great Palace and their near-profanation of the palace church of the Pharos, the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Empire with its famed relics of the Passion of Christ. Mesarites' injunction here to the marauding crowd, "Leave this church undefiled!" his pious catalogue of the relics and his subsequent account of John's gruesome end after fleeing from the palace hall of the Mouchroutas with its ceiling decorations in foreign style can be read as a warning against innovation, political, or otherwise.⁴

4 Transl. of the passage on the Mouchroutas in Mango, *Art*, 228–29; Walker 2010: 94–95; Angold 2017: 70–71. Walker 2010: 89 recognizes Mesarites' implication of the incomparability of Islamic with Byzantine art – cultural incompatibility, might one say? – in his description of John's death after fleeing the palace hall of the Mouchroutas with its painted decorations (on the coffered ceiling?) in foreign style by "kinsmen" of John's Persian (viz. Turkish) grandfather, which might be read as a warning against innovation, political or otherwise: Heisenberg 1907: 45.10–18; she does not, however, discuss the possibility that the Mouchroutas was not a new construction of the Komnenoi, but a re-building of the seventh-century Lausiakos which now disappears in the sources: cf. Guiland 1969: I, 154–60, 351–52, and, conversely, Johns 2016: 9–10. Interestingly, an earlier re-building of the Lausiakos under Theophilos, apparently to repair the roof, also included coffering, taken from the old palace of Basiliscus; cf. *The Continuation of Theophanes' Chronicle* IV 44, ed. Bekker, 147.10–11 (= ed. Featherstone and Signes, 210.5–8). Further on Mesarites' text see Angold 2015.

Text

12. Εἶχον μὲν οὖν τὰ πρόθυρα τοῦ νεῶ πνευστιῶντας ἡμᾶς ὡς κραιπνῶ πεφθακότας ποδί. καὶ ἀτενίσας ὄρῳ ἄνδρας ξιφήρεις, ... τὸ τοῦ ναοῦ πολυσοπὸν μιστύλλοντας δίθυρον, προκύπτοντας διὰ τοῦ δίκην ἐκείνου δικτυωτοῦ, παρακύπτοντας διὰ τῶν θυρίδων, κατ' εἰσπομπὴν εἰσορῶντας, τὰς ὡραίας πύλας ἐκείνας τὰς ἀργυρᾶς, ἀνοχλίσαι ταύτας πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἤδη συντιθεμένους βουλήν, λάξ μαιμωμένους καταβαλεῖ ν... ἀλλ' ἐπεσχέθησαν τῆνικαῦτα φανέντος μου τῆ συνεργίᾳ τῆς θεομήτορος... “ὦ” γὰρ «ὕμεις» ἔλεγον «ἀσεβεῖς, ... τὸν θεῖον ναὸν ἐάσατε ἄσυλον... δέδοικα γὰρ μὴ τῷ Ὁζᾶν ἐκείνῳ τὰ παραπλήσια ὑποσταίητε ἢ τῷ τῆς κλίνης ἀψαμένῳ τῆς θεομήτορος ἀπαιρούσης πρὸς τὰ οὐράνια. κιβωτὸς ἐνταῦθα καὶ νέα Σηλῶμ, κιβωτὸς καθ' ἕτερον τινα τρόπον φέρουσα καὶ δεκάλογον. καὶ προτεθῆμῃμα, λαὲ ἀργιέλαιε, εἰς καλλιέλαιον ἄρτι μετακεντρίσαι σε καὶ σου λαλήσαι ἐνώπιον οὐ τὴν παρὰ λόγους ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἀλλ' ἐς τὸ διπλάσιόν σοι τούτους παραμετρήσαι, ἵνα σου τὸ αἰσχροκερδὲς καὶ κακόσχολον μεταμείψω καὶ πρὸς τὸ εὐσεβέστερον μεταπλάσω καὶ μεταγάγω πρὸς τὸ εὐνούστερον. μάνθανε τοίνυν τὰς κλήσεις τῆς ἐντεθησαρισμένης ἐνταυθοῖ δεκαλόγου, καὶ τῆ κατόπιν ἐρχομένη σοι γενεᾶ διηγοῦ τὴν ἐξ ἐμῶν χειλέων ἐφερμηνευομένην θειοτέραν διήγησιν.

13. Πρῶτος εἰς προσκύνησιν ὁ ἀκάνθινος προτίθεται στέφανος, ἔτι χλοάζων καὶ ἐξανθῶν καὶ μένων ἀκήρατος, ὅτι μετέσχε τῆς ἀφθαρσίας ἐκ τῆς προσψαύσεως τῆς δεσποτικῆς Χριστοῦ κεφαλῆς εἰς ἔλεγχον τῶν ἔτι μενόντων ἀπίστων Ἰουδαίων καὶ τῷ σταυρῷ μὴ προσκυνούντων Χριστοῦ, οὐ κατὰ τὴν ἰδέαν τραχύς, οὐ κατὰ τὴν ἀφήν πληκτικός τε καὶ λυπηρός, ἀλλ' εὐανθῆς ὁραθῆναι καὶ εἰ συγχωρητὸν ἀφθῆναι ὀμαλός τε καὶ προσηνέστατος. ἐξανθήματα τούτου οὐχ ὅποια τὰ ἐν τοῖς φραγμαῖς τῶν ἀμπελώνων ἀναφυόμενα καὶ πρὸς ἑαυτὰ τὸ τέρμα τοῦ χιτῶνος καὶ τὴν ὦαν ἐπισυνάγοντα ὡς οἱ λωποδυτοῦντες τὰ φώρια, ἃ καὶ λυποῦσιν ἔστιν ὅτε ταῖς ἀμυχαῖς τὴν τοῦ ἐπισυρομένου πέζαν καὶ τοῖς ἀπηγριωμένοις τριβόλοις ἐκείνοις αἰμάσσουσιν, οὐ μόνον οὐδαμοῦ· ἀλλ' οἷα τὰ τοῦ Λιβάνου ἄνθη τὰ ἐς μικρότατον εἶδος ἔρνου ἀναφυόμενα κατ' ἀναθήλησιν λύγου, κατὰ φυλλαρίων φυήν.

Τίμιος ἦλος, ἰοῦ παντὸς μέχρι καὶ ἐς τὸδε καιροῦ ἀνεπίδεκτος διὰ τὴν ἀνεπιθόλωτον καὶ κακίας ἀπάσης ἀμέθεκτον σάρκα Χριστοῦ, ἦν περ ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τοῦ πάθους σὺν τρισὶν ἄλλοις διεπερόνησεν. ἦλος οὗτος τῷ μὲν τῆς θεότητος ἐξηνθρακώθη πυρί, τῷ δὲ κυριακῷ αἵματι ἦλος οὗτος ἐστόμωται. τῶν τοῦ παλαμναίου ἐγκάτων ἐντὸς ἦλος οὗτος εἰσέδου καὶ ἀρχεκάκου, καὶ τὸν μὴ θνήσκοντα κατὰ φύσιν ὡς ἄυλον τρόπον ἕτερον ἐθανάτωσε.

Φραγέλλιον σιδηροῦν καὶ αὐτό, κλοῖος ἐπαυχένιος, ὑπανοιγόμενος μὲν ὅτε κρατεῖται χερσὶ, συμπτυσσόμενος δ' ὅτε θήκης ἐντὸς ἀνέπαφος συντετῆρηται. ὡς κρίκον κάμψας τὸν τράχηλον <τοῦ> ὑψαύχενος σατανᾶ καὶ καταπάτημα θέμενος οὐκ ἀνδράσι μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ κόραισιν ἀπαλαῖς.

Ἐντάφιοι σινδόνες Χριστοῦ· αὗται δ' εἰσὶν ἀπὸ λίνου, ὕλης εὐώνου κατὰ τὸ πρόχειρον, ἔτι πνέουσαι μύρα, ὑπερτεροῦσαι φθορᾶς, ὅτι τὸν ἀπερίληπτον νεκρὸν γυμνὸν ἐσμυρνημένον μετὰ τὸ πάθος συνέστειλαν.

Ἐπενδύτης· λέντιον τοῦτο, ὡς ἡ τῶν πολλῶν φησὶ λεκτική, τὸ τεράστιον ἄχρι καὶ ἐς τὸδε καιροῦ συντηρούμενον, ὕδαρόν τε καὶ κάθυγρον τῆς τῶν ἀποστολικῶν ἐκείνων ὡραίων ποδῶν τῶν εὐαγγελισαμένων εἰρήνην ἐκμαχθείσης ὑγρότητας.

Translation

12. Thus the forecourt of the church received me, panting on my arrival with hasty foot.¹ Looking about I saw armed men ... who were cutting up the openwork of the church's double portal, peering through its lattice, peeping through the openings, gazing upon the entrance, those beautiful silver doors; they had already agreed on the plan of removing them, longing to cast them down underfoot ... But they were restrained when I appeared through the cooperation of the Mother of God ... "O ye godless," said I ... "leave ye the church undefiled ... For I fear lest ye should suffer the same as Uzzah of old, or as he who touched the bier of the Mother of God when she was departing to heaven."² In this place is an ark and a new Shiloh;³ an ark bearing a Decalogue in another wise. I am minded, thou people of the wild olive tree, to graft thee onto a beautiful olive tree⁴ and to speak to thee not of the Decalogue through words in church, but to measure out to thee the double of these latter, that I may reform thy sordid greed and frivolity, and remodel thee unto greater piety, and lead thee to greater discernment. Learn then the names of the Decalogue laid up in treasure here, and relate to the generation to follow thee this most holy account declared by my lips.

13. First, the crown of thorns is set out for veneration, still green and efflorescent, ever pure, for it shares in incorruptibility by touching the head of the Lord Christ, in reproach of the Jews who remain without the faith and do not venerate Christ's cross. It is not harsh to the sight, nor prickly and painful to the touch, but is like a flower to grasp and, if it be allowed to touch it, smooth and most pleasant. Its shoots are not like those which grow on the hedges of vineyards, attracting to themselves the edge and border of a cloak – as robbers their booty – and which sometimes inflict scratches in the instep of one who brushes against them, causing bloody wounds with their wild spikes – not by any means whatsoever! Rather, they are like the flowers of the frankincense-tree, which grow as the smallest shoots, sprouting after the manner of tiny leaves.⁵

The venerable nail, to this very day resistant to any rust on account of the unpolluted flesh of Christ, free of all evil, which with three other nails it pierced at the time of the Passion. This nail was forged with the fire of the Godhead; with the blood of the Lord was this nail hardened; this nail entered the entrails of the murderer and Archenemy and put to death the one who does not die by his nature in other, immaterial wise.⁶

The instrument of scourging, also of iron, a collar to be put round the neck, which opens when taken up in the hands, but folds together when kept untouched in its case: a ring bending the neck⁷ of haughty Satan, laying him down to be trampled not only by men but also by delicate maidens.

The burial shrouds of Christ. These are of linen, a cheap material, easy at hand. They smell still of myrrh and have escaped decay, for they were wound about the uncircumscribable bare corpse anointed after the Passion.

The garment, that prodigious cloth, as the common speech calls it, which is preserved even to the present day wet and soaked in the moisture wiped from the beautiful apostolic feet of those who preached the gospel of peace.⁸

Λόγχη ἢ τὴν κυριακὴν πλευρὰν ἐκκεντήσασα, εἶδος ἀμφικώπου φέρουσα σπάθης, εἰς σταυρικόν δε σχηματισθεῖσα σημεῖον. εἴ τις οὖν ὀξυδερκέστατος καὶ ὀξυωπέστατος, καὶ ὕφαιμον ὄλην ἐπόψεται, βεβαμμένην ἐκ τοῦ τῆς σωτηρίου πλευρᾶς αἱματός τε καὶ ὕδατος ὑπερφυῶς ἀποβλύσαντος.

Τὸ πορφυροῦν ἐκεῖνο ἱμάτιον, ὃ οἱ ἀσεβεῖς ἐκεῖνοι ὡς βασιλέα τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐμπαίζοντες τὸν τῆς δόξης ἐνέδυσαν κύριον, πορφυρέῳ θανάτῳ διὰ τῆς τούτου περιβολῆς τὸν ἀθάνατον ὑποβάλλοντες.

Ὁ ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ χειρὶ τῷ σωτῆρι Χριστῷ δοθεὶς κάλαμος, ὃ τὴν τοῦ ἀρχεκάκου σατὰν κεφαλὴν κατεάξας τοῦ ὑποδύντος τὸν ὄφιν καὶ εἰς μορφὴν ὄφεως ἑαυτὸν σχηματίσαντος, ὅτε τὴν Εὐὰν καὶ δι' αὐτῆς τὸν Ἀδὰμ ἀπατήσας τοῦ παραδείσου ἐξέβαλεν. ὃ δὲ κάλαμος οὐχ οἶος ὁ παρ' ἡμῖν λεπτὸς καὶ κεκυλινδρωμένος καὶ εὐθραυστος, γόνατα ὑποφαίνων πυκνά, ἀλλὰ παχύς, ἀλλ' εὐμήκης, ἀλλ' ἄκομπτος, ἀλλ' ἀγόνατος, παχύς ὅποῖος ἀνδρὸς τινος βριαρόχειρος βραχιῶν ἐστί· τοιοῦτῳ γὰρ ὄντι οἱ κατὰ Παλαιστίνην ἀρειμάνιοι ἄνδρες ἀντ' εἰλατίνων χρῶνται δοράτων πρὸς τὰς ἐν πολέμοις μετὰ τῶν ἐχθρῶν συμπλοκάς.

Ἰχνη τῶν κυριακῶν ἐκείνων ποδῶν – ταυτί δ' ἐπικέκληνται καὶ σανδάλιδες – δερμάτων ἐκκεκομμένα καὶ τοῖς ὠραίοις ἐκείνοις θείοις ποσὶν εὐφυῶς ἡρμοσμένα, τὸ δὲ τῶν ἰχνῶν ἐκεῖνο μῆκος καὶ πλάτος οὐκ ἐς σπιθαμὴν εὐμήκη ἀνδρὸς τινος εὐπαλάμνου ἀποτετινόμενον, ἀλλ' ἐς τὸ σύμμετρον ἀπονεῦον, ὅτι καὶ συμμετρίαν ἠγάπησε καὶ ἀμετρίαν ἐμίσησε. διὰ γοῦν τῶν τοιούτων ἀγίων ἰχνῶν δέδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ σωτὴρ ἐπάνω ὄφρων καὶ σκορπίων πατεῖν κάπτι τὸ τοῦ διαβόλου ἅπαν ἐνδύναμον.

Τῆς δεκαλόγου ταύτης τελειωτικὸς ἀριθμὸς λίθος ἐκκεκομμένος τοῦ μνήματος, λίθος τοὺς εἰδωλικούς κατεάξας βωμούς καὶ συντρίψας καὶ λεπτύνας εἰς χοῦν. λίθος οὗτος ἄλλος τοῦ Ἰακώβ, τῆς ἐκ νεκρῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ μαρτύριον ἀναστάσεως· λίθος οὗτος ἀκρογωνιαῖος τοῦ ἀκρογωνιαίου Χριστοῦ, τὰ τῆς θεογνωσίας διεστηκότα συνάψας ἔθνη καὶ εἰς μίαν ἐνώσας τὴν ἀρραγῆ πίστιν καὶ ἀδιάρρηκτον· λίθος εἰς μῆμα χρηματίσας τοῦ θεανθρώπου· πετροβολοῦμεν δὲ διὰ τούτου τὸν νοητὸν Γολιάθ καὶ θανατοῦμεν τὸν θάνατον δι' αὐτοῦ.

14. Ἔχεις, ὦ λαέ, τὴν δεκάλογον, παραστήσω δέ σοι κἀνταῦθα καὶ τὸν νομοδότην αὐτὸν ὡς ἐν πρωτοτύπῳ τετυπωμένον τῷ χειρομάκτρῳ καὶ τῇ εὐθρύπτῳ ἐγκεκολαμμένον κεράμῳ ὡς ἐν ἀχειροποιήτῳ τέχνῃ τινὶ γραφικῇ. καὶ τί δεῖ με τῷ λόγῳ μακρηγορεῖν τὰ πολλὰ; ναὸς οὗτος, τόπος οὗτος Σίναιον ἄλλο, Βηθλεέμ, Ἰορδάνης, Ἱεροσόλυμα, Ναζαρέτ, Βηθανία, Γαλιλαία, Τιβεριάς, νιπτῆρ, δεῖπνος, Θαβώριον ὄρος, Πιλάτου πραιτώριον καὶ τόπος Κρανίου μεθερμηνευόμενος Ἑβραϊστὶ Γολγοθᾶ ...

The lance that pierced the Lord's side, bearing the form of a double-edged sword, fashioned in the sign of a cross. Whoever is sharp of sight and observation will see that it is all suffused in blood, dipped in the blood and water that sprang from the side of the Savior.⁹

That purple cloak, which the impious mockingly put upon the Lord of glory as king of the Jews, submitting the immortal one to purple death¹⁰ through the putting on of this cloak.

The reed put in the right hand of Christ the Savior which shattered the head of the Archenemy Satan who, re-fashioning himself, had assumed the form of a serpent when he deceived Eve and, through her, Adam, and cast them out of paradise. This reed is not fine and rounded and fragile, with many knots, as in our lands, but rather, thick and broad, without knots, thick as a strong man's arm; for the frenzied men of Palestine use this instead of pine spears in struggles with the enemy in war.

The soles of the Lord's feet – these are also called sandals – cut from leather and fitted in shapely wise to those beautiful divine feet. The length and width of these soles reaches not even the span of a large man's hand, but inclines to the moderate, for He loved moderation and hated excess. Through these holy soles, then, has the Savior granted us to tread on serpents and scorpions and all the might of the devil.¹¹

The final item of this Decalogue is a stone cut out of the tomb: stone that shattered and broke and reduced to dust the altars of the idols. This is another stone of Jacob,¹² a witness to Christ's resurrection from the dead. This stone is the cornerstone of the cornerstone Christ¹³ who gathered together the nations separated from the knowledge of God and united them in one faith unbreakable and indivisible: stone become memorial of the God-Man; through it we stone the Goliath of the spirit, through it we put death to death.

14. Thus hast thou, oh people, the Decalogue, but I shall also present here the Law-giver himself, depicted as in prototype on the towel and on the fragile tile, as though by art and drawing not made by human hand.¹⁴ What need is there to prolong my speech? This church is another Sinai, Bethlehem, Jordan, Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethany, Galilee, Tiberias, font, supper, Mount Tabor, praetorium of Pilate and place of the skull, called in Hebrew Golgotha ...”

Commentary

1. Entering the palace at the building called the Skyla, Mesarites made his way through the hall of the Ioustinianos where he saw John the Fat sitting on the throne amidst great tumult and asked him, in vain, to send soldiers to guard the church of the Pharos; whereupon Mesarites hastened to the church.⁵
2. Uzzah touched the Ark of the Covenant and was stricken down by God; the hands of a Jewish priest who touched the bier of the Theotokos were severed by an angel.⁶
3. Cf. Jos. 18:1.
4. Cf. Rom. 11:17.
5. The crown of thorns, mentioned amongst the relics in the church of Mount Zion in Jerusalem in the fifth century, was apparently in the palace in Constantinople by 985. Perhaps suspended for display on a chain in the church of the Pharos, as were the *Mandyllion* and *Keramion* (the Commentary, n. 14), the crown was bought by Louis IX from his cousin Baldwin II, Latin emperor of Constantinople, and arrived in France in 1239. It was kept in the Sainte-Chapelle until the Revolution, and is now in the treasury of Notre-Dame de Paris.⁷
6. Nails from the cross, as well as the crown of thorns, the lance, the purple cloak, the reed and the sandals are also mentioned by Antony of Novgorod in 1200.⁸
7. Cf. Is. 58:5.
8. Cf. Rom. 10:15.
9. Klein maintains that the lance was brought to Constantinople in 629 (the same year as the relic of the True Cross, also kept later in the church of the Pharos).⁹
10. Cf. e.g. *Il.*, 5.83.
11. Cf. Lk. 10:19.
12. Cf. Gen. 28:11.
13. Cf. Eph. 2:20.
14. The *Mandyllion* and the *Keramion*, brought to Constantinople in 944 and 968, respectively, are described by Robert de Clari in 1204 as suspended on silver chains in the middle of the church of the Pharos.¹⁰

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5 Heisenberg 1907: 27.23–28.37. The exact location of these buildings on the lower terraces of the palace beside the Sea of Marmara is unknown; for a sketch plan see Berger 2013: 7.

6 Cf. 2Reg. 6:6–7; Symeon Metaphrastes, *Homily on Mary*, col. 559C.

7 Klein 2015: 204, 209.

8 See G. P. Majeska, I.5.3 in this volume; cf. Majeska 2003: 387–97.

9 Klein 2015: 204.

10 Klein 2015: 202 and n. 6; see also R. Ceulemans, I.6.7 in this volume.

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I.6.7 Constantine Stilbes [= Cyril of Kyzikos] (c.1150–after 1225)

Didaskalia on the Mandylion and the Keramos

REINHART CEULEMANS

Ed.: B. Flusin, “Didascalie de Constantin Stilbès sur le mandylion et la sainte tuile (*BHG* 796m),” *REB* 55 (1997), 53–79, esp. 66–79

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Other Translations: Excerpts in M. Guscini, *The Image of Edessa* (Leiden and Boston, Mass., 2009), 163, 208–09 and A. Nicolotti, *From the Mandylion of Edessa to the Shroud of Turin: The Metamorphosis and Manipulation of a Legend* (Leiden and Boston, Mass., 2014), 104² and 105 n. 45 (English). Full text in Flusin, as above, 66–79 (French).

Significance

This rhetorical speech treats two miraculous and holy objects that in their function as both relics and icons were of much significance to orthodox Byzantium: the Mandylion and the Keramos. Both objects are images of Christ’s face (on a piece of cloth and on a tile, respectively) that were not made by human hands and which went astray only a few years after the text’s redaction. The author inserts many comparisons and digressions, amongst others on the art of painting.

The Author

The career of Constantine Stilbes remains uncertain to some degree – especially with regard to the precise chronology of its successive phases – but what is known reveals beyond doubt that he taught at the patriarchal school of Constantinople in the second half of the twelfth century.³ Born around or shortly after 1150, he began to teach in 1182 or 1184 as *didaskalos* in the Church of St Paul of the *orphanotropheion* and from 1194/6 in the Chalkites Church. In 1196/8 he was promoted to the function of *didaskalos tou psalteriou* at St Sophia.⁴ Two years later he became *didaskalos tou apostolou*, in which capacity he

1 Not consulted.

2 An Italian version of this excerpt can be found in Nicolotti 2011: 112.

3 Browning “The Patriarchal School,” 29–32 is fundamental; more recent overviews of Stilbes’ career are referenced in Diethart and Hörandner 2005.

4 The two-year glitch of each date results from the uncertainty of the patriarch’s identity under whom Stilbes started his career. See p. 727 on the precise year when he was promoted from *didaskalos* at the Chalkites to *didaskalos tou psalteriou*.

taught for a period up to four years. Shortly before 1204 he was ordained as metropolitan of Kyzikos under his monastic name Cyril. From a treatise he wrote against the Latins it is clear that he had to leave his see soon after 1204.⁵ References to Stilbes in contemporary literature are rare,⁶ and his life is reconstructed almost entirely from basis of his own writings, in particular the inaugural speech he delivered as *didaskalos tou apostolou* in 1198/1200.

Most of Stilbes' oeuvre is available in critical editions:⁷ it includes letters and poems but mostly orations he delivered in his various functions as *didaskalos*. Two letters are known, the first written in 1198/9 and addressing political issues, and the second being a short consolation to his brother. Four poems have been preserved: two funeral laments (on a pupil of his and on patriarch Michael III), a *threnos* on a great fire that damaged Constantinople in 1197, and finally a celebration of portraits of emperor John III Vatatzes (r. 1222–54) and his family.⁸ The latter text appears to have been written after 1225 and to offer the *terminus post quem* of Stilbes' death.⁹ His rhetorical and other works include (next to those mentioned in the previous paragraph and the one translated below): an encomium and two *didaskaliai* (one of which only fragmentary) with a praise of patriarch George II Xiphilinos;¹⁰ an epitome of his *professio fidei*; a treatise on pseudo-Chrysostomic works; an excerpt on the Biblical Ode from Habbakoum; and a speech in honor of emperor Isaac II Angelos (r.1185–95 and 1203–04).¹¹ Several of his works are only preserved in either Escorial Y-II-10 (gr. 265) or Oxford, Bodleian Library Barocci 25, two manuscripts famous for their preservation of otherwise lost *didaskaliai* and other orations.

Text and Context

The central subject of the speech translated below (*BHG* 796m) is the Mandylion and Keramos, two holy images of Christ's face – on a piece of cloth and a tile, respectively – that were not made by human hands (so-called *acheiropoieta*). Several such images (compare: Veronica's veil, the Turin shroud, etc.) were known in Byzantium but the Mandylion or "Image of Edessa" stands out as the most illustrious.¹² It is both a relic and an icon. Both

5 On the treatise see Isnenghi 2008: 73–87.

6 A notable exception is a reference to him in a letter from Niketas Choniates (ep. 10 van Dieten), written between 1206 and 1208.

7 The standard overview of Stilbes' output is that offered by Browning, "The Patriarchal School," 26–28, updated by Diethart and Hörandner 2005: viii–ix; only literature that is not included in their list is mentioned in the following notes.

8 The first three poems are edited by Diethart and Hörandner 2005: 1–51 (see also de Stefani 2008: 48–52 and Layman 2015), the fourth by Kotzabassi 2009: 444; some other poems edited under Stilbes' name are not his: see Browning, "The Patriarchal School," 29 n. 2.

9 Kotzabassi 2009: 442.

10 The encomium is edited in *Discours annuels en l'honneur du patriarche Georges Xiphilin*, eds. M. Loukaki and C. Jouannou (Paris, 2005), 169–77, 205–06; both *didaskaliai* are discussed on p. 54–57 of that study.

11 The authenticity of the last work is debated; see Gentile Messina 1991: 115–45.

12 The most famous of other such Byzantine *acheiropoieta* is probably the image from the Cappadocian village of Kamoulia(i), which was transferred to Constantinople by Justin II (cf. *BHG* 790–92). On that image and others see the literature mentioned by Brubaker and Haldon 2011: 35–36, 54–55, and now also Rist 2016.

the Mandyllion and the Keramos were venerated as holy objects in Byzantium: each of them was celebrated with an annual procession through Constantinople.

Stilbes' speech exhibits a tripartite structure: the long central part on the origins of the Mandyllion and the Keramos is enclosed by a prolog and an epilog. The central section ties in with the earlier tradition on both sacred objects (the culmination point of which is the so-called *Treatise on the Image of Edessa*, introduced below), although Stilbes approaches it in a specific way. The opening and closing parts are fairly to completely independent from that tradition. The epilog reads as an exhortation to the implied listener (the patriarch, it seems) and appears inspired by contemporary political events.¹³ The prolog refers to the festive procession of the Mandyllion but only indirectly:¹⁴ the topic is approached through a comparison with biblical events. In fact, allusions to the Bible are frequent throughout the entire *didaskalia*.¹⁵

In view of its subject matter, it seems likely that Stilbes delivered the speech at the annual celebration of either the Keramos or the Mandyllion. The editor argued in favor of the second option, which would mean that the *didaskalia* was pronounced on August 16.¹⁶ The year in which this happened is more difficult to identify. The title of the text shows that it was delivered when Stilbes served as *didaskalos* in the Chalkites Church in Constantinople.¹⁷ Although the period during which he fulfilled this function cannot be dated precisely, it is generally believed to have started between 1194 and 1196 and ended between 1196 and 1198. If, as some scholars agree, it was George II Xiphilinos who as patriarch appointed Stilbes as *didaskalos tou psalteriou*, this must have already been done before Xiphilinos' death in July 1198. That would mean that the text was pronounced on an August 16 between 1194 and 1197.¹⁸

13 See the Commentary, n. 44, p. 748.

14 See the Commentary, n. 5, p. 742.

15 For what it is worth, one remarks that none of the many Septuagint verses to which Stilbes alludes figure among the Prophetologion readings that were read at the vigil of the yearly procession of the Mandyllion: see Engberg 1980: 147–51 (no. L73), with accompanying Engberg 1981: 297–300. On the meaning of those readings, see Engberg 2004: 131–32.

16 We can agree with Flusin 1997: 57 that the Mandyllion was the most famous of both the *acheiropoieta* Stilbes spoke on and that therefore the feast of that object is more likely to have provided the occasion for the *didaskalia*. Flusin's other argument, however, is questionable. From a passage in the inaugural speech Stilbes delivered when starting his function as *didaskalos tou apostolou* at St Sophia in 1198/1200 (ed. Cresci 1987: 48.118–49.25), Flusin deduced that Stilbes' appointment as *didaskalos* in the Chalkites Church (in which function he delivered the *didaskalia* translated here) started on the feast of the Transfiguration. If this interpretation is correct (it appears plausible, although Cresci 1987: 94–95 sees things differently), it does not mean that Stilbes became *didaskalos* at the Chalkites on August 15 (as Flusin believed and in which he saw an argument relevant to dating the *didaskalia* on the Mandyllion and the Keramos to August 16), but on August 6 (the correct date of the feast of the Transfiguration: see Engberg 2004: 135 n. 44).

17 Admittedly, the title was only created after Stilbes' death (see the Commentary, n. 3), but in his inaugural speech as *didaskalos tou apostolou* Stilbes himself implied that he "addressed the tile and the fabric" ("καὶ τὸν κέραμον καὶ τὸ ὕφος προσείπομεν") when he served as *didaskalos* at the Chalkites; see Cresci 1987: 48.122–49.5, here cited ll. 124–25.

18 See Flusin 1997: 56–57, who believed the *didaskalia* to be the inaugural one, delivered by Stilbes when starting his function as *didaskalos* at the Chalkites; this assumption, however, relies upon a confusion: see n. 16 above.

In those years, both the Mandylion and the Keramos were stored in the Pharos Church.¹⁹ During the annual celebration, the Mandylion was carried around in procession, but Stilbes does not give any details in this regard.²⁰ Neither does he give any information on the appearance of both *acheiropoieta*²¹ or their formal presentation.²² Those aspects were clearly not among Stilbes' focal points and neither was a detailed depiction of the objects' entrance into Constantinople, which he touches upon only briefly in the final part of his speech.²³ Stilbes avoids concrete information on those issues²⁴ and instead offers a highly rhetorical text with many comparisons, metaphors, and digressions.

The origins of the Mandylion and the Keramos are bound to the so-called Abgar legend (cf. *CANT* 88 and *BHG* 1704).²⁵ That story involves a letter sent to Jesus by king Abgar of Edessa who wished to be cured from a terrible disease, as well as the letter with which Jesus replied to Abgar. Certain versions of the legend, which concludes with Abgar's healing through Jesus' intervention and his conversion to Christianity, do not mention any image of Christ.²⁶ But in other instances the story does mention such an image, although not always as an *acheiropoieton*: according to some versions it is the messenger bringing Abgar's letter to Jesus who painted Christ's picture.²⁷ In texts from the sixth century onwards, including iconophile treatises authored during the iconoclast controversy, the role of the image grew more central to the Abgar legend, to the point where it was awarded the miraculous origins of an *acheiropoieton*.²⁸ It is such a version of the story that circulated as the standard one in post-850 orthodox Byzantium, and it is the same one upon which Stilbes relies.²⁹

According to the story, the miraculous image of Christ's face on a piece of cloth – for which tradition would reserve the exclusive term “Mandylion”³⁰ – was brought to Abgar,

19 On the relics in the Pharos Church in Constantinople see also J. Featherstone, I.6.6 in this volume.

20 See also the Commentary, n. 5, p. 742.

21 From an anecdote in the *Treatise on the Image of Edessa* (see p. 730) it has been concluded that already in 944 the image on the Mandylion had become dim: see Cameron 1983: 93, but compare with Flusin 2011: 269.

22 See the Commentary, n. 6, p. 743.

23 In contrast, precisely those subjects (the procession account, the formal presentation, and the Mandylion's arrival in Constantinople) play a key role in the so-called *Treatise on the Image of Edessa* (see the Commentary, nn. 5–6, p. 742–43, and 42, p. 748).

24 See Flusin 1997: 60.

25 The legend receives extensive attention in three studies on the Mandylion: Illert 2007, Guscini 2009, and Nicolotti 2014, who mention the standard literature (see also *BHG* 793–96); other recent treatments include Plamer 2016 and Ramelli 2016. A succinct presentation comparable to the one sketched here was offered by Cameron 1983.

26 E.g. Eusebius of Caesarea, *Church History*, I, 13; Prokopios of Caesarea, *Persian Wars*, II, 26–27.

27 This is the case, for example, of the version recorded in the Syriac *Doctrine of Addai* (*CANT* 89 = *BHO* 24), here §6; see now also Bruns 2016.

28 Examples include John of Damascus, *On the Orthodox Faith* IV, 16 = §89 (p. 208.51–56 Kotter); the fifth act of Nicaea II (ACO II, 3.2, p. 582.22–25); patriarch Nikephoros I of Constantinople, *Third Antirrhetic*, 42 (*PG* 100, col. 461A–B = Mondzain-Baudinet 1989: 246–47).

29 In a section of the *didaskalia* not retained in the selection transl here, Stilbes treats the exchange between Abgar and Jesus in a rather specific way (so also Guscini 2009: 162–63). In hinting that the correspondence took place shortly before the Crucifixion, Stilbes agrees with other versions of the story.

30 Throughout this contribution, I use the standard spelling “Mandylion” (which one also comes across in the title bestowed upon Stilbes' *didaskalia*: “μὲνδύλιον”), although I am aware that variation exists and that this spelling is probably not the original one. On the terminology see, e.g., Nicolotti 2014: 89–91.

whom it cured and who, having then converted to Christianity, kept it in Edessa. Under the reign of Romanos I Lekapenos (r.920–44), the image passed from the Muslim occupiers of Edessa into Byzantine hands as the result of a trade negotiated by general John Kourkouas. On August 15, 944, it arrived in Constantinople and was immediately brought to the Church of the Holy Virgin at Blachernai.³¹ The next day it was carried around in procession, and August 16 became the annual feast-day of the Mandylion. It was in all likelihood deposited in the Chapel of the Savior at the Chalke Gate, which had been built at the instigation of Romanos I (probably with the specific goal of housing the Mandylion) and which had been dedicated on August 16 as well.³² When soon after the arrival of the Mandylion Romanos I was deposed and Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos thereupon became the sole emperor (r.945–59), the latter used the Mandylion to highlight his legitimacy as a ruler approved by Christ.³³ This involved a transfer of the relic to the Pharos Church (where several other relics were already stored) and the redaction of a *Treatise on the Image of Edessa* (see below).

That *Treatise* mentions a second *acheiropoieton*, whose origins are inextricably bound to the Mandylion. The Keramos (or Keramion) is a miraculous copy of the Mandylion on a tile (“κέραμος” or “κεράμιον”). That tile was brought to Constantinople in 967, after having been retrieved in Syrian Hierapolis by Nikephoros II Phokas (r.963–69) on his campaigns.³⁴ On January 23 or 24 of that year, the tile arrived in the capital, where it was put up for display in Blachernai, as *BHG* 801n informs us. Later it was moved to the Church of All Saints and by the late eleventh century it could be found in the Pharos Church, together with the Mandylion.³⁵

In the last years of the twelfth century, when Stilbes delivered his speech shortly before the Fourth Crusade hit Constantinople in 1204, the Mandylion and the Keramos were still kept in the Pharos Church. Some more or less contemporary accounts inform us of the then situation of both objects.³⁶ As guardian of the Pharos Church, Nicholas Mesarites confirmed that both *acheiropoieta* were still stored there in 1200. In the same year, Antony, a pilgrim from Novgorod who visited Constantinople, reported having seen the

31 The *Treatise on the Image of Edessa* states repeatedly that Jesus' letter to Abgar was brought to Constantinople together with the Mandylion, but Byzantine historiographers claim that the letter only made that journey after George Maniakes had retrieved it in 1032. They also inform us that it disappeared from the radar in 1185; see Engberg 2004: 124, 135. More recent surveys of the entrance and position of the Mandylion (and the Keramos) in Byzantium, as outlined in my following paragraphs, are offered by Lutzka 2016: 448–453 and Lidov 2016: 469–472, 477–79.

32 See Engberg 2004: 133–39, who describes how the Mandylion served a propagandistic program of the emperor Romanos I; cf. also Flusin 2011: 274–75.

33 Building on Engberg 2004: 136–39, Flusin 2011: 275–77 argues how Constantine accorded a new ideological role to the Mandylion, radically changing Romanos' program.

34 This is reported by *BHG* 801n. but also by other sources, such as Skylitzes (see Engberg 2004: 126), Leo the Deacon (see Flusin 1997: 61), and Arab chronographers (see Halkin 1963: 253).

35 See Engberg 2004: 126. The transfer to the Pharos Church might have coincided with the loss of the letter Jesus had sent to Abgar; see n. 31, p. 746.

36 For precise references see Flusin 1997: 62–64; Engberg 2004: 124–26. Both scholars also report non-Greek sources from the eleventh century (up to 1085) that mention the location of the Mandylion as well as Jesus' letter and/or the Keramos.

Mandyllion and not one but two (!) *keramoi*. In 1203, the French knight Robert de Clari confirmed that the two golden receptacles in which the Mandyllion and the Keramos were secured, were still in the Pharos Church. Thereafter, both sacred objects disappeared.³⁷

Just as there are various versions of the Abgar legend, different stories exist concerning the origins of the Mandyllion and the Keramos. The development of that tradition found its conclusion in the *Treatise on the Image of Edessa*, which records two origins for each of both *acheiropoieta*.³⁸ The initial version of that *Treatise* was written or commissioned by Constantine VII himself in early 945. The Mandyllion's journey from Edessa to Constantinople, its entry into the city and its formal presentation were key subjects in that account. That original version is lost, but between late 945 and early 946, still under Constantine's authority, it was turned into a text that is today preserved in a few manuscripts of *BHG* 794.³⁹ A few decades later, the same text was reworked by Symeon Metaphrastes: that redaction is preserved in the other manuscripts of *BHG* 794 and was edited by Dobschütz 1899: 38**–85** ("Text B"). Another secondary version of the *Treatise* is preserved in the *Synaxarium of Constantinople*, which postdates the tenth century (*BHG* 793; ed. Dobschütz 1899: 38**–85** ["Text A"] and *Synaxarium CP*: 893–901).⁴⁰

The *BHG* 794 version of the *Treatise* mentions two *keramoi* with different origins. The first (and in general most famous one) is the tile from Hierapolis, which is the one Stilbes describes in his speech (without mentioning Hierapolis itself) and which was brought to Constantinople in 967 (see above).⁴¹ The second tile was created centuries later: when the survival of the Mandyllion was threatened by the return to paganism of Abgar's grandson, the bishop of Edessa hid it – together with a burning lamp – in a niche which he closed off with a tile. The Mandyllion was forgotten until in the sixth century the hiding place was rediscovered, with the lamp still burning and the image reproduced onto the tile.⁴² Although the stories of both tiles were mentioned in the *Synaxarium* version of the *Treatise*,⁴³ that of the younger, Edessene tile, was less known in Constantinople and is not mentioned by Stilbes.⁴⁴

37 It would appear possible that at least the Mandyllion was transported to Western Europe after 1204, together with other looted relics; see Nicolotti 2014: 188–202.

38 Other versions are covered in the literature mentioned in n. 25. On the *Treatise* as the culmination of the tradition see Cameron 1983: 81, 92–93; the presentation of the authorship and textual history of the *Treatise* that follows here relies on Flusin 2011: 253–69.

39 The author of this text was identified with that of the *Life of Basil I* (= book V of Theophanes Continuatus) in *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur Liber quo vita Basilii imperatoris amplectitur*, ed. I. Ševčenko (Berlin and Boston, Mass., 2011): 13*.

40 On the date of *BHG* 793 see Flusin 2011: 270 n. 84. The version in the *Synaxarium* was in turn adopted by George Kedrenos and summarized in an Athonite manuscript and the menaia: see Guscini 2009: 3–4, 112–15, 124–37, 156.

41 Dobschütz 1899: 51**–53** (text B, §§14–15); cf. Guscini 2009: 20–25.

42 Dobschütz 1899: 65** (text B, §32); cf. Guscini 2009: 36–37.

43 Dobschütz 1899: 64** (text A, §17) = *Synaxarium CP*: 898–99; cf. Guscini 2009: 104–05. The *Synaxarium* does not mention the Keramos from Hierapolis.

44 Antony of Novgorod's mention of two *keramoi* in Constantinople might be an echo of the parallel existence of both traditions: cf. Flusin 1997: 60.

The *Treatise* mentions only one Mandylyon, but the *BHG* 794 version records two different origins for it. The first is the one adopted by Stilbes and also the only one recorded in the *Synaxarium*. The alternative version offered by *BHG* 794 has the apostle Thomas and Thaddeus of Edessa play a role in the story, which they also do in the *Doctrine of Addai* (see n. 27, p. 746) and other versions. When praying in the garden of Gethsemane on the eve of the Crucifixion, Jesus wiped away the sweat dripping from his face with a piece of cloth. He gave the cloth, which now bore the imprint of his face, to Thomas, who in turn had Thaddeus bring it to Abgar.⁴⁵

At the time when Stilbes gave his speech in Constantinople, the *Treatise* was the standard source on the tradition of the Mandylyon and the Keramos (as can be assumed from its use in the liturgy, such as the liturgical menaia).⁴⁶ As Bernard Flusin suggested, one can “suppose that Stilbes’ account depends, as far as that aspect is concerned, directly or indirectly on the *Treatise*.”⁴⁷

45 Dobschütz 1899: 53**–55** (text B, §§17–18); cf. Guscini 2009: 24–27. This version of the Mandylyon’s origins can also be read in the sermon by Gregory the Referendary on the transfer of the Mandylyon (*BHG* 796g; ed. Dubarle 1997).

46 That does not mean that conflicting accounts can not be found, for example in the historiographers. Robert de Clari accords completely different origins to the Mandylyon, summarized by Nicolotti 2014: 109–12. On the liturgical versions see now Lutzka 2016: 453–65.

47 Flusin 1997: 59: “On peut donc supposer que le récit de Stilbès dépend, au moins pour ce point, directement ou indirectement de l’œuvre de Constantin Porphyrogénète.” In agreement with that observation, I further on compare Stilbes’ text only with the *Treatise* (both *BHG* 794 and the *Synaxarium*) and ignore other accounts on the Mandylyon and the Keramos. Like Flusin, I consider the editions by Dobschütz 1899 and Delehaye (*Synaxarium CP*) preferable over that by Guscini 2009, who consulted much additional manuscript evidence but without presenting any views on their value or their position in the textual history: see Flusin 2015: 36, n. 43. For the sake of accessibility, however, I do include references to Guscini’s English translation of both main versions of the *Treatise*.

Text

[p. 66]

Διδασκαλία

τοῦ μακαρίτου μοναχοῦ Κυρίλλου τοῦ χρηματίσαντος Κυζίκου,
ὅτε διάκονος ὢν διδάσκαλος ἦν εἰς τὸν Χαλκίτην
περὶ τῶν ἁγίων † τοῦ Μανδυλίου καὶ τοῦ Κεράμου

1. Τί τὸ ἱερόν τοῦτο φορτιζόμενον; τί τὸ ἐνδεῶς φερόμενον; ἡ γὰρ τοσαύτη δορυφορία δίδωσί τι σεμνότερον περὶ τοῦ πράγματος ἐννοεῖν. κιβωτὸς ἄρα τοῦτο τῆς χάριτος, ὅτι καὶ πνευματικὸς Ἰσραήλ ὁ πομπεύων, καὶ θησαυροφυλακεῖ τὴν θειοτέραν καὶ πλάκα περικλαγγάζει τὴν θεοτύπων καὶ στάμνον τὴν μαννοδόχον εἰς ἀσυλίαν τοῦ θαύματος. ὄρα τὴν κιβωτὸν μεταχειριζόμενον καὶ ἀμφιπνούμενον τὴν μεταφορὰν τὸν ἡμέτερον καὶ ὑψηλότερον Ἰαρώων, τὸν μέγαν θύτην καὶ ἱεράρχην, τὸν ἐπιπρεπῆ τοῖς τηλικούτοις σκευαγωγὸν καὶ τοῖς ἀδύτοις προπέμποντα, τὸν εὐστομοῦντα ἀντὶ τοῦ Φαραῶ μὲν, ὑπὲρ δὲ τοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς Ἰσραήλ, καὶ τοῖς κατηχητηρίοις καταβροντῶντα μὲν ἐκεῖνον ἀλλ' ἡμᾶς καταρτίζοντα· οὐ καὶ τὸ ἐνστέρνιον λογεῖον μυστικώτερον καὶ κρυφιδέστερον, τὴν γὰρ τοι καρδίαν γαζοφυλάκιον ἐσκεύασατο τῶν τε πνευματικῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλως θείων τε καὶ σοφῶν, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἡ δῆλσις τῶν ἀποκρύφων καὶ ἀμφιβόλων καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια· καὶ ἐξ ἐπισημοτέρας κατασεμνύεται τῆς κιδάρεως καὶ τοῦ πετάλου τοῦ ἐπὶ τῷ μετώπῳ χρυσίζοντος. συνάγονται γὰρ ἄμφω εἰς τὸν περὶ κορυφῆς πάμφωτον τοῦ ἀρχιποίμενος νοῦν, ὅτι καὶ διορατικώτατον καὶ μηδὲν κίβδηλον ἐν τοῖς νοήμασι μηδέ τι διακωδωνιζόμενον μηδ' ἀμαυρόν τε καὶ ἐννυχον. τὸ δ' ἡμέτερον, τί καὶ πάρεστι, καὶ τί ποτε τῇ πανηγύρει συνερανίζεται; ἐνθουσιᾶ πρὸς τῆς κιβωτοῦ καὶ ψυχικοῖς ἀνασκιρτᾶ τοῖς ἐξάλμασι, καὶ τῇ προόδῳ ταύτῃ ἢ ἐπανόδῳ ψαλτήριον ἐπικράσκομεν ...

[p. 68] 2. Ἄλλὰ φέρε ζητήσωμεν πόθεν ἡμῖν ἦκε τὸ τηλικούτον καλόν, τὸ πυξίον τὸ θεοτύπων, καὶ τίς ὁ τοῦτο χειρίσας τῷ εὐαγγελικῷ καὶ καθ' ἡμᾶς Ἰσραήλ· ταύτην τερπνὸν ἄσμα τῇ πανηγύρει ποιησώμεθα τὴν διήγησιν, οὐδὲν γὰρ τῶν τοῦ Σωτῆρος θαυμάτων ἐπιτερπέστερον καὶ μεγαλειότερον, ἐνταῦθα δὲ καὶ καινὰ καὶ οὐ πάγκοινα τὰ τῆς διηγῆσεως. οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐκ τῆς ἱστορικῆς τῶν τοῦ Δεσπότης βίβλου τῆς θείας καὶ εὐαγγελικῆς, ἐπεὶ μηδὲ ἐνεγράφη ταύτη καθ' ἕν τὰ τέρατα τοῦ Χριστοῦ· καὶ ἀληθῆς εἰς μαρτυρίαν ὁ Βροντόπαις τε καὶ Βροντόφωνος ... ἐκθετέον οὖν τὴν τῆς εἰκόνας καὶ τοῦ θαύματος ἀναστήλωσιν, οἷαν ἐξ ἱερῶν ἀπαγραπτῶν ἀπέλαβον κύρβειων.

...

Translation⁴⁸

[p. 66]

Didaskalia

on the holy objects of the Mandylion and the Keramos
by the blessed monk Cyril who bore the title of <bishop of> Kyzikos,
<delivered> when as a deacon he was *didaskalos* in the Chalkites³

1. What is this sacred object that is being carried around?⁴ What is this thing, which is carried with veneration? For such a big escort leads one to think that there is something quite noble about the object.⁵ But of course, this must be the ark of grace!⁶ Because it is the spiritual Israel that escorts it in procession and guards it – most holy – as its treasure, and which surrounds with cheers the tablet engraved by God and the urn that contains the manna, in order to protect the miracle.⁷ Behold him who holds in his hands the ark and who supervises its transportation: our most exalted Aaron, the great sacrificer and high priest.⁸ As the one who transports them, he is worthy of such great items, which he conducts to their sanctuary. And yes, he spoke eloquently before Pharaoh, but he did it for the benefit of Israel (of us, that is), and with his instructions he thundered down on him, but strengthened us.⁹ The breastplate he bears on his chest is most mystical and secret, for he has prepared his heart as a treasury of what is spiritual and even divine and wise in every other way, and in this treasure lies the disclosure of what is hidden and unclear, as well as the truth.¹⁰ He is adorned with his highly distinctive tiara and with the fillet on his forehead that shines with gold. Both ornaments are indeed united on his head to be close to the mind of our chief shepherd – a mind that is full of light, as it is clear-sighted and does not have any thought that is dishonest or brings about any sound that is faint or dim. But back to us now: why are we here? And why have we come together in this festive gathering? We are enthused by the sight of the ark and we leap up with joy in a spiritual dance, and on the occasion of this entry – or this return – we loudly sing psalms.¹¹ . . .

[p. 68] 2. But come on, let us investigate whence this hugely precious item, the box engraved by God, came to us, and who brought it to the evangelical Israel (that is, to us). Let us turn this account into a pleasant song for this festive gathering, for nothing is more delightful or splendid than the miracles of our Savior. And now we are moreover dealing with an account that is new and not already known by everyone. Because it is not taken from the divine and evangelical book that tells the story of our Lord – indeed, in that book not all of the miracles of Christ are recorded one by one; the true Son of Thunder and the Voice of Thunder testify to that.¹² . . . Let me therefore explain the way in which this image and this miracle were formed,¹³ as I reconstructed it from the holy irrefutable inscribed tablets.¹⁴

⁴⁸ Words between fish hooks are added to aid the readability of the translation; only once do they denote a supposed lacuna in the Greek text (see the Commentary, n. 38). The Greek historical present is as a rule translated with a past tense, while the present tense in general remarks and comparisons has been maintained in English.

[p. 72] 6. Ἐντεῦθεν ὁ δυνάστης ἐκκαίεται μᾶλλον καὶ τετυράνηται! εἰς τε τὴν πίστιν καὶ τὴν θέαν τοῦ ἐπιστεῖλαντος. ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ μάθοι τὰς τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐπιβουλὰς ἤδη τελευτᾶν τῷ Σωτῆρι πρὸς θάνατον, κολακεῦσαι μεθόδῳ τὴν ἔφεσιν σκέπτεται· καὶ ἡ ἔφεσις, εἰκόνα τυπώσασθαι τε καὶ σχεῖν τῆς θείας μορφῆς καὶ χαρακτῆρα τοῦ ὠραίου κάλλει παρὰ τοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων υἰούς. τοῖς γὰρ πόθῳ, καὶ ταῦτ' ἐνθέῳ, κάμνουσι, καὶ σκιά τοῦ ποθουμένου πανέντιμος καὶ ἐπέραστος. ἐκπέμπει τοίνυν ταχυδρόμον ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ὡς φθάσῃ τὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων φθόνον, ὀξύτατον· ἅμα δὲ καὶ τὴν ζωγράφον τέχνην ὁ πτηνόπους ἐξήσκητο. γίνεται πετροῦ θᾶττον, ὃ φασιν, ἐπὶ τὸν Χριστόν, καιρὸν εἰς ἐπίδειξιν τοῦτον ἡγούμενος καὶ ποδῶν καὶ χερῶν τῶν μὲν δρόμου τῶν δὲ τῆς καλλιγραφίας, ἐγχειρεῖ τὴν δεσποτικὴν ὄψιν ἰνδάλλειν, ὑποτίθησι τὸ ἐδάφιον ὅσα καὶ ὕλην εἵδους ἀτεχνῶς ὑποδέγμονα, παράγει τὰ χρώματα, τὴν γραφίδα μεταχειρίζεται, καὶ τὸ σοφὸν χρῆμα τὴν ζωγράφον χεῖρα κινεῖν ἐπιβάλλεται. ἐπεὶ δ' ἐχρῆν ταύτην ἐπὶ τὸ γραφόμενον χειραγωγεῖσθαι τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς – τυφλὴ γὰρ ἡ χεὶρ ἐν ἐρημίᾳ βλέμματος – τῷ ἀρχετύπῳ προσβάλλουσι καὶ ἀποματτομένοις ἐντὸς τὴν μορφήν καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἀποθέτου κύρβευς τοῦ φανταστικοῦ εἰδοποιούσιν ἢ σκιαγραφοῦσιν ἄυλον ὡς ἔνυλος ἐκεῖθεν μεταγραφῆ, ἀμηχανία τῷ τεχνίτῃ ἐνταῦθα, καὶ ἡ γραφικὴ σοφία ἐλέγχεται· ἀκατάληπτον γὰρ ὀφθαλμοῖς τὸ ἔνθεον μόρφωμα, κἂν συχνὰς ἐπ' αὐτὸ πέμπῃ τὰς τοῦ ὀπτικοῦ πνευματικῆς ἀκτῖνας ὡς χερῶν ἐπαφάς, κατὰ τὸν οὕτω φυσικευσάμενον ἄληπτόν τε καὶ ἄσχετον, καὶ ἡ ἀποστίλβουσα τοῦ προσώπου χάρις προσίσταται τῷ γραφεῖ. φράσω παράδειγμα λίαν συγγενές, οἶμαι, καὶ δέξασθε· ὡσπερ ἐπ' αὐτὸν τοῦ ἡλιακοῦ δίσκου τὸν κύκλον οὐκ ἂν τις ἀτενὲς ἔχοι καταπῆξαι τὰς κόρας καὶ πρὸς ἀκρίβειαν αὐτὸν εἰκονίσασθαι, οὕτως οὐδ' ἐπὶ τὴν θεανδρικήν μορφήν ὁ γραφεὺς οὐδὲ συλλέγειν τὸ εἶδος ἐκ τῆς λαμπρότητος. ἴθυνε τὴν δεξιὰν ἐπὶ γραμμὰς εὐθείας, περιηγμένας καὶ σχήματα τρίγωνα καὶ πολύγωνα – γεωμετρικὰ τὰ ὀνόματα –, ἀλλ' οὐκ εἶχε τὸ πᾶν συντελέσαι θεώρημα οὐδὲ κατὰ νοῦν οὔτε χαράξαι κατὰ τῆς κύρβευς.

7. Τέρας τοῦτο μείζονος τέρατος πρόδρομον καὶ προτέλειον τελετῆς· τὴν γὰρ ἀπορίαν εἰς εὐπορίαν καὶ ῥαδιότητα μετέστησεν ὁ παντοσθενής. μετακαλεῖται τὸν γραφέα, ὕδωρ αἰτεῖται καὶ [p. 74] ῥαντίζει τὸ πρόσωπον, ὁ σημειουργήσας πάλαι καὶ τῷ Γεδεῶν διὰ τοῦ ὕετοῦ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆ τοῦ Θεοσβίτου ζηλωτοῦ θυσίᾳ διὰ τοῦ ὕδατος, καὶ πέτραν πηγάσας καὶ χύσιν Ἐρυθραῖαν ὕλην παραλαβών, καὶ ἐν Κανὰ διὰ τοῦ ὕγρου καὶ ἐπὶ τῆ κολυμβήθρα τοῦ Σιλῳὰ ἐπὶ τῷ τυφλῷ, οἰκειοῦται κἂνταῦθα τὸ στοιχεῖον ὁ ποιητής, καὶ ὀθόνην λαβών ἀπομάξασθαι, αὐλῶς ταύτη τὴν μορφήν ἐνετύπωσεν, ὡ τοῦ θαύματος, ἀχειροῦργητον ἀπαρεγχείρητον ἀπαράλλακτον, ὅποιον καὶ ἀπὸ σφραγίδος εἰς κηρὸν τὸ ἐκσφράγισμα καὶ ὡσεὶ διαφανεῖ καὶ διειδεῖ σώματι τὴν μορφήν ἐναφῆκεν ἀμετάστατον καὶ ἀμετακίνητον. ὡ γραφεὺς πρόχειρος καὶ σοφώτατος, ὡ καλλιγράφος καὶ ἀληθείας ἀκριβῆς εἰκαστής, οὐ περιαιθήσεως ἢ ἐναθρήσεως δεηθεὶς οὐδὲ τῆς ἀποθεν στάσεως ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐν χρῶ μᾶλλον ἐπαφῆς, τὸ παράδοξον, ὡ καινῆς προσωποποιίας τελεσιουργήσις· ὅς ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος καὶ οὐσίας πάλαι παρήγαγε καὶ τὸ τῶν ποιοτήτων παντοδαπὸν, αὐτὸς κἂνταῦθα τὴν τῶν χρωμάτων ποιότητα, οὐ θᾶττον ἀπὸ σώματος παρασταίῃ σκιά οὐδ' ἐξ ἡλίου ἀπαύγασμα, ὡς ἐνταυθοῖ τοῦ πρωτοτύπου τὸ ἀπεικόνισμα.

...¹⁵

[p. 72] 6. The king <Abgar> got even more excited <by this message> and he was under the sway of his desire to have faith in and behold <Jesus> who had sent him the letter.¹⁶ And since he understood that the conspiracies of the Jews would lead the Savior to His death, he looked into a way to satisfy his desire.¹⁷ This desire was to have an image of <Christ's> divine form impressed and to own it: a portrait of the Beautiful One, who with His beauty supersedes the sons of men. To those who suffer from love, and above all the love for God, even the shadow of <Him> whom they long for is highly precious and desirable. So Abgar sent an express messenger to Jesus, one so very quick that he would outrun the malice of the Jews. At the same time this wing-footed messenger was skilled in the art of painting,¹⁸ Swifter than a bird, as the expression goes, he made for Christ, believing that this was the time to show off the talents of his feet and hands: the talents of running and drawing beautifully, respectively. He attempted to portray the face of the Lord: he set up the canvas as if it were a kind of material that is ready to receive the form, he prepared the colors, took his brush and started to move the skilled instrument that was his painting hand. But when it paints the hand needs to be guided by the eyes (for the hand indeed is blind in the absence of sight!), which cast themselves at the model, copy the form it carries within, and reproduce or draw its immaterial outline on the hidden tablet of imagination, so that from there it can be copied into a material form. But in this case the artist was seized by helplessness and his drawing skills failed him, because a divine form cannot be grasped by the eyes, even if the painter launches at it the spiritual rays of his sight in great numbers, like the touches of the hands. It is like the words of him who spoke on the nature of that form:¹⁹ it cannot be grasped and is without limit, and the grace that illuminates <the Lord's> face defies the painter. Let me mention an example that I find very similar; please, bear with me. Just as one cannot continuously fix one's eyes on the circle that is the disc of the sun and depict it in detail, in the same manner the painter could not fix his eyes on the form of the Divine Man and could not distinguish its shape from its splendor. He guided his right hand to draw straight and curved lines, triangular and polygonal shapes (these are geometrical terms), but did not manage to grasp the full form – not even in his mind – nor to record it on his canvas.²⁰

7. This wondrous fact was the forerunner of a greater miracle and the rite preliminary to the <full> mystery, because He who is almighty transformed impossibility into ease and facility. He summoned the painter, asked for water and [p. 74] sprinkled His face – He who once performed a miracle for Gideon by way of the rain²¹ and at the sacrifice of the blessed Thesbite through water,²² He who caused a rock to well up like a spring and dealt with the floods of the Red Sea as if they were dry material,²³ He who <performed miracles> through liquids at Cana and at the pool of Siloam for the blind man²⁴ –, the very same one now appropriated for Himself once again the element of which He is the creator.²⁵ He took some cloth to wipe <the water> off and in an immaterial way He imprinted His form on the cloth – oh, what a miracle! –, a perfect and invariable form not made by hand.²⁶ In a way similar to the impression of a seal on wax and as if on a transparent and limpid body He left His form, unchangeable and unmovable. How skilled and

8. Λαμβάνει τὸ δῶρον ὁ ταχυδρόμος ἄσμενος, ἀκάματον γὰρ τὸ ἐμπόρευμα· παλινδρομεῖν συντείνεται πρὸς τὸν στείλαντα, τὸ φυσικὸν τῶν ποδῶν τάχος ἐπιπτερώσας ἐκ τῆς χαρᾶς, ἐσπέρας περὶ τινὰ που καταλύει ἀγρόν – κεράμων ὁ ἀγρὸς σκευαστήριον –, καὶ ἐκέϊσε τὸ θεῖον χρῆμα θησαυροφυλακεῖ ὡς ἐν ὄστρακίνῳ σκευεὶ κεράμοις ἀμφιλαβῶν· καὶ θαῦμα πάλιν ἐπὶ τοῖς θαύμασιν, ἐπὶ τοῖς δυσὶ τρίτον, τελειότατος καὶ μυστικός ἀριθμός. ὦ ἀγρὸς οὗτος πολῦτιμος, κατ' ἐκείνον τὸν εὐαγγελικὸν τὸν θησαυροφύλακα, καὶ τίς οὐκ ἂν πάντων χρημάτων ὄλβου παντὸς ἀνεκτήσατο προθύμως αὐτὸν διὰ τὸν ὀλβιώτερον θησαυρόν; μέσης ἀσελήνου νυκτός, ἐπὶ τῆς σινδόνας στηρίζει πύρινος στύλος οὐράνιος, ἂν ὁ τοῦ παλαιοῦ θεοῦ Ἰσραήλ κἀνταῦθα τερατουργῆ, ὡς ἄστηρ ἐπὶ τῆς χριστοδέγμονος στέγης ποτέ, σελασφόρος ὤδε² πυρός, κὰκ τῆς εἰκόνας ἐφ' ἕνα τῶν κεράμων τῆς εἰκόνας μεταγραφῆ αὐτοσχέδιος ἀχειροποίητος ἄγραφος, ὡς πυρὸς ἐκ τοῦ συνίσχοντος σώματος εἰς ἕτερον ἀμειώτως καὶ ἀδαπάνως μετάβασις, ὡς ἐκ φωνῆς ὀργάνων ἐκτός ἀντιφώνησις – εἰ καὶ τοῖς φυσικοῖς ἀντιβάλλω τὸ ἀφυσίκευτον –, οὕτω καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς γραφῆς ἀχειρότευκτον τὸ ἀντίγραμμα, τύπου τύπος θαυμασίου θαμάσιος, ἢ μᾶλλον ταυτοτυπία· ἅγια σὺν τῷ πρωτοτύπῳ τρισά, ἄβατα λογισμοῖς, κἂν ἄλλως ἐνίζονται. βαβαὶ τῆς τοῦ ἀρχετύπου δυνάμεως, ἂν ἐξ ἐκείνου καὶ ὁ κέραμος χρώννυται. ὡς γὰρ ἐπὶ [p. 76] τῶν σωμάτων ἔχει τῶν εὐκινήτων τε καὶ μανῶν, εἴτε ἀέρος εἴτε οὐσίας ὑδατηράς, τὸ μὲν αἴτιον τὸ πρῶτως κινήσαν ἠρέμησεν, ἢ δ' ἐξ ἐκείνου ῥοπή διὰ τοῦ πρῶτως κινήθεντος μέρους τὸ προσεχές μετεκίνησε, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἐξῆς διαβέβηκε καὶ οὕτω συγκίνησις, καὶ ὡσπερ ἡ τῆς λίθου τῆς τεραστίας ὀλκῆ ἀλλήλων ἐξαρτᾷ καὶ ἑαυτῇ συναρτᾷ τὰ παρ' αὐτῆς ἐπισπώμενα σώματα κἂν ταύτης ἀπέσχισται – ἐκ τῶν γηίνων γὰρ καὶ συνήθων ὑμᾶς κατευθύνω πρὸς τὰ καινὰ καὶ οὐράνια –, καὶ νῦν ἐκ τῆς ἰσχύος τοῦ ἀρχικωτάτου αἰτίου καὶ ἡ γραφῆ καὶ τὰ μεταγράμματα.

9. Καὶ διπλοῦν ἀνθ' ἀπλοῦ τὸ δῶρον ὁ ὄξυδρόμος κομίζεται, καὶ δισσεύεται οἱ τὸ τῆς χάριτος τάλαντον ὡς ἀγαθῷ δούλῳ καὶ περὶ τὸ δῶρον εὐγνωμονήσαντι, ἢ βασιλικῆ δραχμῇ καὶ ἀκίβδηλον σῶζουσα τὸ ἐκτύπωμα, καὶ τῷ πιστῷ ταῦτα διακομίζεται βασιλεῖ· καὶ ὅς – ἀλλὰ γὰρ οὐκ ἔχω πῶς τὴν διπλόην ἐκφράσω τῶν ἐκείνου παθῶν – φρίττει ἐπὶ τῷ θαύματι, σκιρτᾷ ἐπὶ τῷ θεάματι, ὑπὸ τῆς φρίκης τὴν καρδίαν συνάγεται, ὑπὸ τῆς χαρᾶς διαστέλλεται, καὶ γίνεται τούτῳ τὸ περικάρδιον ἄνθραξ, ἔνθεν ἐκριπιζόμενος ἐκείθεν ἐπιχρῶννύμενος, ὅμως καὶ ἀμφοτέρωθεν τὸ ζέον τηρῶν καὶ τῆς πίστεως τὴν θερμότητα, ὡς ἀκτίνας ὑπερφώτου φωσφόρου καὶ ἀπαυγάσματα, τὰς εἰκόνας ὀρᾷ ἀφεθείσας πόρρωθεν ἐπ' αὐτόν, οἷα καὶ τῶν σωματικῶν στοιχείων τὸ εὐκράες καὶ ἑαρινὴν κατάστασιν σχεδιάζουσι. θεοπτίαν τὸ πρᾶγμα λογίζεται καὶ ὑπὸ πέτρα τῷ κεράμῳ θεοῦ πρόσωπον καταθρεῖ, εἴποι τις ἐμβαθύνων, ὀπίσθια, τὸ κατὰ γε τὴν ἐν ἐσχάτοις σάρκωσιν μὲν ὄμορφομα ἢ τὸ μετὰ τὴν ὑπόστασιν ὀπισθεν ἦκον καὶ ὑστεροχρονοῦν ἀπεικόνισμα· αὐτοπρόσωπον νομίζει παρ' αὐτῷ γενέσθαι τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ ὄλον διὰ τῶν συμβόλων κομίζεσθαι τὸν θεάνθρωπον, ἦπου καὶ τὸ διττὸν τῶν αὐτοῦ θαυματίζεσθαι φύσεων, διὰ τε τοῦ γηίνου κεράμου διὰ τε τοῦ τῆς ὀθόνης λεπτοῦφοῦς καὶ διαφανοῦς. Λαμβάνει τὸ ὄστρακον ἀποξέσειν τοὺς ἰχῶρας αὐτοῦ – τὸ ἱερογραφοῦμενον ἐπὶ τῷ ἴωβ – τοὺς ἐκ τῆς λέπρας καὶ τῆς ἀρθρίτιδος, ὄστρακον τὸ καινὸν τὸ θεῖον τὸ μαργαῶδες ἐξ ἐνθέου τῆς ἀστραπῆς, καὶ τούτῳ νόσον ἅπασαν ἀποτριβεται· δέχεται τὴν σινδόνα θαυματουργόν,

most wise the painter, how careful the portraitist and copyist of truthfulness, who does not need to look around or to study the model, who does not need to stand at a distance but who rather requires to feel it close to the skin – what a remarkable feat, oh what a perfect accomplishment of this unseen portrait! He who once brought forth beings and the diversity of the qualities from the non-existent,²⁷ He Himself now again produces the quality of the colors; and a shadow would not now come forth from a body nor would a radiant beam <come forth> from the sun any quicker than the image from the model.

8. Gladly the courier accepted the gift, because it was a gain that did not cost any effort. He set out on the return journey back to him who had sent him, and joy added wings to the natural speed of his feet. In the evening he rested in some field somewhere²⁸ (the field was a workshop where they made tiles) and there he covered the divine object with tiles, like a treasure hidden in a jar vessel. And then a wonder upon wonders produced itself: a third wonder after those two – three, the most perfect and mystical number.²⁹ Oh, how very precious is this field, like the one in the Gospel in which a treasure was hidden:³⁰ who would not have readily acquired it in exchange for all his possessions and all his fortune, because of the more fortunate treasure it keeps? In the middle of a moonless night, a heavenly pillar of fire set itself upon the cloth, as if now again the God of the Israel of ancient times performed a miracle.³¹ Just as a star above the roof once welcomed Christ,³² now a light-bearing torch <appeared>, and from the image a copy of the image <produced itself> onto one of the tiles, an offhand copy not made by any hand and not painted.³³ If you allow me to compare this object not made by nature with natural phenomena: like the flames that transfer from a body that is on fire to another body without being diminished and without any expense; like a sound that comes forth from the voice without any instrument; in the same way the copy not made by hands is born from the painting, one wonderful representation from the other wonderful representation, or rather, two identical representations. Together with the initial model, there are three holy objects, which our thoughts cannot access, even if in reality they are one. Hurray for the power of the model! – now that the tile is also painted because of it. One can compare <the wonder> with what happens to [p. 76] bodies that are agile and loosely formed (be it air or a watery substance): the element that first set them in motion came to rest, but the momentum they got from it made the proximate element move (through the element that was first set to motion) and then transferred to the following element again – in that way the entire body moves. And (for I am directing you from what is earthly and familiar to what is novel and heavenly) like the attraction of the prodigious brick attaches to each other and to itself the bodies that are drawn to it even if they are separated from it, also now both the painting and its copy are born from the power of the most original cause.

9. The courier brought with him a double instead of a single gift and the talent of grace was doubled for him (in the way that for a good servant who treats what is given to him with care, the king's drachm is doubled with its impress kept intact),³⁴ and he brought the gifts to the faithful king. The latter – I do not know how to describe the ambiguity of his feelings! – quivered over the miracle and jumped up at what he saw. His chest contracted with a shudder and swelled with joy. His breast became a piece of charcoal that was lit

ύγιαστικὴν ὑπὲρ ἐκεῖνο τὸ κράσπεδον ὁ πηγὰς αἱματηρὰς ἀπεμάξατο ἢ ἀπεξήρανε, καὶ ὡς τὴν σκιὰν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἤλπισεν εὖ μάλα καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα τούτου τερατουργεῖν, καὶ ἀδίστακτος ἢ πεποιθῆσις καὶ ἀκραιφνῆ τὴν τῆς ὑγιάσεως <...>. καὶ νῦν βασιλεῖς σύνετε, – προφήτης ἐπισκῆπτει καὶ βασιλεὺς –, καὶ ὄξυς ἀρπάζει τὴν ἐπίσκηψιν Αὐγαρος καὶ ἐπιγινώσκει τὸν Σωτῆρα [τε] καὶ συμβάλλεται. ὡς ἄρα γε οὐ μόνον Νότου βασίλισσα τῆς θεᾶς Σολομώντος ἐπεθύμησε καὶ ἀπήλαυσε, ἀλλὰ καὶ κράτωρ οὐτοσί μεγαλοπρεπῆς καὶ τοῦ θήλεος [p. 78] ἐμβριθέστερός τε καὶ ἀγχινούστερος τὴν τοῦ εἰρηναρχοῦ Χριστοῦ θέαν ἐδίψησεν, αἰσχυνέσθωσαν λοιπὸν Ἰουδαῖοι ψευδηγοροῦντες, ἐνδιαβάλλοντες, μηδένα λέγοντες ἐπιποθῆσαι τῶν ἀρχόντων ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ἐπεὶ τοι ζητεῖ τοῦτον ἐκ μὲν τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ Ἰωσήφ καὶ Νικόδημος, βαθύπλουτοι καὶ βαθύφρονες καὶ συνεδρίῳ τῶ σεμνῶ σύνθακοι, ἐκ δὲ τῶν ἔθνῶν – ὅπερ καὶ μεῖζον τεθαύμασται – ὁ χωράρχης οὗτος καὶ βασιλεὺς, κακὴ τῆς ἐξουσίας καὶ τοῦ ὄλβου καὶ τοῦ τρόπου περιδοξος. τούτου γὰρ βασιλέως καρδία ἐμφανῶς χειραγωγεῖται θεῶ καὶ τάττεται καὶ ῥυθμίζεται καὶ κινεῖται πρὸς θεοσέβειαν.

10. Ἐκεῖθεν ἡμῖν ἦκε τὸ τοσοῦτον καλόν, ἐξ Ἑδέσσης τῆς ἑωθινῆς πάμφωτοι συμμάδες ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἀπεστάλησαν, ἀρραγῆ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐρείσματα, ὅσα καὶ ἀτίνακτοι λίθοι καὶ θέμεθλοι, συνήγοροι τῆς τῶν εἰκόνων τιμῆς ἄφωνοί τε καὶ μεγαλόφθογοι ὡς ἐκ μέσων πετρῶν διδόντες κραυγὴν, μάρτυρες αὐτομάρτυρες ὅτι καὶ ὑπὲρ τῆς αὐτῶν προσκυνήσεως· καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὴν Βασιλίδαν ταύτην ἐξ ἐκείνου μεταγωγὴν τῶν εἰκόνων πανηγυρίζομεν σήμερον, κατ' ἔθιμον εὐσεβῆς πανήγυριν ἐνιαύσιον καὶ διττῶν φωστήρων ἐπάνοδον, τὴν τῆς τελετῆς· ἐπέπρεπε γὰρ ἢ πορφύρα καὶ λίθος ὁ πολυτίμητος τῆ κρατούση τῶν πόλεων, καὶ μᾶλλον τὰ εἰς εὐσέβειαν.

on one side and singed on the other and which yet on both sides preserved the ardor and fervor of its faith. Like the rays and beams of a supremely radiant light source, he³⁵ saw the images being brought to him from afar, and they restored the gentle and vernal disposition of his bodily elements. He believed the object<s> to be a vision of God, and under the “rock” – that is the Keramos – he perceived the face of God or rather (as one who would look into it might say) His hind parts; that is, the form He assumed when becoming incarnate at the end of times or the image that follows upon the hypostasis and which is posterior. <Abgar> believed that Jesus himself, no less, had come to him and that through the symbols the God–man in His entirety was brought to him, and surely also that through both the clay tile and the finely woven and transparent cloth he could admire His two natures. He took the ceramic in order to scrape off the pus (the same is said in the biblical story about Job)³⁶ from his leprosy and arthritis, and with the novel and godly earthenware that shone like a pearl and came from the God-sent lightning he cleansed himself from his entire affliction. He took the miracle-working cloth (which restores health even better than the cloak fringe that wiped off or dried hemorrhages)³⁷ and he had strong and good hopes that, just like the shadow of the Savior, His image would also perform miracles: indeed, his unwavering confidence <brought Abgar> to a pure <state> of health.³⁸ And now, O kings, be sensible, as he who was a prophet and a king enjoined you to do:³⁹ Abgar swiftly accepted the injunction, recognized the Savior and met Him. Indeed: not only the queen from the South wished to see Solomon and enjoyed their meeting,⁴⁰ but also this ruler <Abgar>, who was magnificent, [p. 78] more dignified and shrewder than such a woman, was thirsty for a glimpse of the Prince of Peace: Christ. In that light, by the way, the Jews, who lie and slander when they claim that no one among the sovereigns longs for Jesus, have to be ashamed. After all, among the Israelites the exceedingly rich and wise men and members of the solemn council, Joseph and Nicodemus, went looking for Him,⁴¹ and – the following amazes us even more – among the Gentiles this local ruler and king <Abgar>, who was illustrious because of his power, wealth and way of life, <did the same>. That king’s heart is clearly governed by God and it is positioned, harmonized and moved towards piety.

10. Such a great beauty has truly come to us from there; from Edessa in the East these trails of glorious light were sent to us, these unshakable supports of the Church, which are like immovable bricks and foundations.⁴² They are advocates of the esteem of images, who are silent, yet at the same time very loud, when, as from among the rocks, they utter a scream,⁴³ like witnesses that testify for themselves, because they testify to their own veneration. And from that moment <when they first arrived> until today, we celebrate the transfer of these images to our Queen of Cities, and in the form of a pious custom, namely a yearly festive gathering, we celebrate with the recurrence of the rite the return of both luminaries. For purple and the highly honored stone suit the city that reigns, even more so where piety is concerned.

11. Ἄλλὰ φέρε, μὴ στῶμεν ἐπὶ μόνῃς τῆς πανηγύρεως καὶ τῆς τῶν εἰκόνων θέας τε καὶ ἐξιστορήσεως, γενοίμεθα καὶ αὐτοὶ τοῦ Σωτῆρος εἰκάσματα, ὅσον χωρητὸν ἀπομιμούμενοι τὸν διδάσκαλον. κἄν τις ἡμᾶς ἐφ' αὐτὸν προσκαλῆται, κἄν προσβιάζηται, κἄν μέγας τυχὸν δυνάστης, κἄν ἀρχικός, πόρρω που τῆς ὑψηλῆς Ἱερουσαλήμ ἐν ἣ γεγεννήμεθα μὲν τὴν ἀρχήν, τὸ δ' ἐπιτίμιον τοῦ θανάτου ταύτης ἔξω καρτερεῖν κατεκρίθημεν ἐν λιθοστρώτῳ χώρῳ καὶ βίῳ τούτῳ τῷ τραχεινῷ, τῇ τοῦ κλαυθμῶνος κοιλάδι καὶ τοῦ χειμάρρου τῶν δακρύων τῇ σήραγγι, μὴ ὅλοι πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀποδράμωμεν, πρόφασιν παρακαλέσαι τυχὸν παθαινόμενον, ἂν συνορῶμεν τὴν ἄφιξιν διακοπὴν μείζονος ἔργου θεοφιλοῦς καὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ τῶν μελῶν καὶ τῆς τούτων νεκρώσεως, μηδὲ συναναχρανθῶμεν πολιτικῶν συρφετῶν, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ τὸ πλεῖον καὶ τὸ καίριον μένοντες καὶ τὸ οὐράνιον ἐκζητοῦντες πολίτευμα, γενώμεθα πρὸς αὐτὸν τύποις τοῦ ἡμῶν βίου καὶ εἰκονίσμασιν, ἔξοσιωθέντος τῷ πνεύματι, ἢ γράμμασι παρακλητικοῖς, χαρακτῆρσι τοῦ γράφοντος, καὶ τούτοις διττοῖς, ὑλικωτέροις μὲν τοῖς περὶ τοῦ σώματος, λεπτοτέροις δὲ τοῖς περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος· δεῖται γὰρ καὶ ἄμφω τῆς καλῆς παρακλήσεως, καὶ τῷ δυσπαθοῦντι κατὰ ταῦτα συνεπαρήξωμεν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν. αὐτῷ ἢ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀμήν.

11. Come on, let us not linger over just the festival, the sight, and the description of the images. Ourselves, we should also become representations of our Savior, while imitating our Teacher as much as we can.⁴⁴ And if someone would summon us or even compel us to come over, <let us not run to him>, even if he were a very powerful man or even a sovereign, somewhere far away from the sublime Jerusalem into which we were born in the beginning and outside of the city where we are condemned to endure the penalty of death in a place with stone pavements and in this rough life, in the valley of weeping and in the cavern of the torrent of tears. Let us not run to him – even if he pathetically makes excuses to summon us – if we see that our departure would interrupt a more important God-loving task and the crucifixion and death of our limbs.⁴⁵ Let us not mingle with the rabble of the cities, but let us await what is of more weight and more importance, while seeking to acquire the citizenship of heaven.⁴⁶ Let us proceed towards him with copies and images of our life, which is sanctified by the spirit, or with hortatory letters that have the features of their author and which are twofold: some that pertain to the body are more material and others that are related to the mind are more subtle; because both kinds are in need of the right exhortation, and with them let us succor him who suffers in Jesus Christ our Lord. Glory to him in all eternity, Amen.

Commentary⁴⁹

1. τετυρράνηται Flusin.
2. ὧδὲ Flusin.
3. The fact that the title refers to Stilbes' monastic name and to his function as metropolitan of Kyzikos can be explained by the fact that MS Oxford, Bodleian Library Barocci 25, the only manuscript witness of the *didaskalia*, contains a corpus of Stilbes' works compiled after his death.⁵⁰ Even if the later title plainly refers to the two holy objects Mandyllion and Keramos, Stilbes himself does not: throughout the entire speech, the term Mandyllion does not occur a single time.⁵¹
4. Stilbes' use of the singular form here (τοῦτο, translated as "this object") and further in the opening paragraph appears remarkable in view of the title, which holds out the prospect of a speech on *two* objects. At an early point in the *didaskalia*, Stilbes indeed includes the Keramos in his treatment and has both *acheiropoieta* follow the same course, which is a deliberate simplification on his part.⁵² In the opening paragraph, however, he retains the singular form, which can probably be explained by the historical circumstances: the speech is delivered at the feast of the Mandyllion (and not of the Keramos).
5. "Such a big escort" (ἡ ... τοσαύτη δορυφορία) refers to the procession in which the Mandyllion is carried around. Stilbes only describes it in the vaguest of manners and does not offer any concrete information (concerning the route, the assembly of the escort, etc.). Compare: John Skylitzes informs us that in 1036/7, the Mandyllion was carried from the Great Palace to Blachernai (see also the Commentary, n. 6).⁵³ A rather detailed procession account is offered in the *BHG* 794 version of the *Treatise on the Image of Edessa*, but the route that is described there cannot be projected upon the procession in Stilbes' time, because the starting point differs.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ Those biblical references are explained that are needed to understand a certain metaphor or image. Allusions that only affected Stilbes' wording are not signaled in the notes, but they can be tracked down through the apparatus in Flusin 1997. Old Testament references always pertain to the Septuagint (but diverging chapter and verse numbering has been indicated for the Psalms and Exodus).

⁵⁰ See Darrouzès 1960: 179–94, here p. 184, who doubts whether the reference to the Chalkites implies only that the speech was delivered when Stilbes was *didaskalos* there, or if it denotes that it was also pronounced in the said church. Flusin (1997: 57) favors the second option, because he believes the speech to be Stilbes' inaugural address (see n. 16, p. 744). Engberg 2004: 135 sees in the fact that the speech was delivered by the *didaskalos* of the Chalkites a confirmation that "the Mandilion had maintained some connection with this church," even long after it had been moved to the Pharos Church under Constantine VII (compare with the above presentation of the Mandyllion's arrival in Constantinople on p. 729).

⁵¹ The term "κέραμος," on the other hand, is used several times by Stilbes, but only once as a proper name. He also refers to the Keramos as an "ἄστρακον." The typical terms that denote the Mandyllion in the *didaskalia* are "σινδών" and "ἰθύνη"; similar terminology surfaces in several texts that treat the *Image of Edessa*.

⁵² Compare Flusin 1997: 60.

⁵³ See Engberg 2004: 124 for precise references.

⁵⁴ Dobschütz 1899: 81**–85** (text B, §§56–64); cf. Guscini 2009: 54–61. Accounts of the procession are also offered in other versions of the *Treatise* and in Byzantine historiographers, but that of *BHG* 794 is most reliable: see Engberg 2004: 132–33, 135 (with her n. 45).

6. Other sources inform us that at the end of the twelfth century the Mandylicon and the Keramos were each stored in a golden casket or vessel. They bore the emperor's seal and throughout the year they were hanging from silver chains in the Pharos Church. A miniature in the Madrid Skylitzes would indeed seem to confirm that during processions, the Mandylicon and the Keramos were carried around in small, golden boxes.⁵⁵ The *BHG* 794 version of the *Treatise on the Image of Edessa* indeed states that already when arriving in Constantinople on August 15, 944, the Mandylicon was stored in a receptacle,⁵⁶ for which it uses the term κιβωτός.⁵⁷ The same word denotes a "box" or "chest," and is used in the Septuagint to refer to the Ark of the Covenant: this invites Stilbes to compare in his prolog the Mandylicon (which is being carried around in a procession that recalls its arrival in Constantinople after it had been re-seized from Muslim hands) with the Ark of the Covenant, which was brought into Jerusalem by David with a festive procession after having been re-taken from the Philistines (2Reg. 6:1–5; cf. 1Chron. 13:5–8).⁵⁸
7. The Ark of the Covenant contained the Tablets of Stone (see Ex. 25:15[16] and Deut. 10:5) and a jar with manna (cf. Ex. 16:33–34).
8. The figure of the high priest Aaron, prompted by Stilbes' comparison with the Ark of the Covenant, refers to the patriarch of Constantinople, who guided the procession.⁵⁹ At the time of the *didaskalia*, the patriarch was George II Xiphilinos (see the Introduction, p. 727).
9. Stilbes refers to Aaron's role as the spokesman of Moses in the episode of the plagues of Egypt (see Ex. 7:1).
10. The Septuagint describes the breastplate of the Israelite high priest in its function as the oracle of judgment, which contains "disclosure" and "truth" as precious gems (the so-called Urim and Thummim: Ex. 28:26[30]). Further elements of the priestly outfit upon which Stilbes touches are described in Ex. 28 as well.
11. Stilbes' use of the term "return" (ἐπίστροφος) is inspired by the comparison with the Ark of the Old Testament (see the Commentary, n. 6) but also implies that, as the capital of Orthodoxy, Constantinople is the natural home to the precious icon and that it always belonged there. The mention of "psalms" (ψαλτήριον) ties in not just with the

55 On the illustrations in the Madrid Skylitzes see Engberg 2004: 124–27; Nicolotti 2014: 162–70; they are mentioned in most studies on the famous manuscript, including Tsamakda 2002 and Pilz 2005.

56 The *Treatise* claims that together with the Mandylicon, Jesus' letter to Abgar was contained in the same box, but this cannot be correct: see n. 31.

57 Dobschütz 1899: 81** (text B, §56.7); cf. Guscini 2009: 56–57. This term does not occur in the corresponding part of the *Synaxarium* version, but it is used by Gregory the Referendary in his sermon (see n. 58 below).

58 The very same comparison is made by Gregory the Referendary: see Dubarle 1997: 24–25 (§§18–19); cf. Guscini 2009: 80–81. The *Treatise* itself touches upon it almost by accident: Dobschütz 1899: 81** (text B, §58.26); cf. Guscini 2009: 56–57.

59 The same approach is found in the sermon of Gregory the Referendary: see Dubarle 1997: 24–25 (§19); cf. Guscini 2009: 80–81. In that text, however, the patriarch/Aaron figures less prominently than the emperor, who heads the procession and who is compared with David who dances in front of the procession that returns the Ark to Jerusalem. Stilbes instead only focuses on the figure of the patriarch/Aaron and leaves out any reference to the emperor/David.

biblical account of the Ark's festive return to Jerusalem⁶⁰ but also with the *BHG* 794 version of the *Treatise on the Image of Edessa*, which mentions that when the Mandyliion was brought out to be paraded around the city it was accompanied by “psalms and hymns” (μετὰ ψαλμῶν καὶ ὕμνων).⁶¹ In the passage that follows (but which is not included in this contribution) Stilbes explains that ill sounds are not allowed at the festive procession and that the psalms that he will produce himself amount to a rhetorical instead of a musical composition (i.e. the *didaskalia*).

12. The expressions “Son of Thunder” (Βροντόπαις) and “Voice of Thunder” (Βροντόφωνος) could be inspired by Mk. 3:17. Stilbes is not claiming that he will present an unknown version of the story, but simply confirms, in a somewhat roundabout way, that the stories concerning the Mandyliion and the Keramos (and the Abgar legend), cannot be found in the New Testament. In the passage that immediately follows (but is left out here), Stilbes indeed argues – in defense of the Gospels – that it is impossible to describe all of Christ's miracles, because they are countless and infinite like the stars (cf. also Jn. 21:25).
13. Stilbes here uses the word ἀναστήλωσις (the “setting up of a monument,” LSJ, s.v.), a term that can denote the act of creating and/or hanging a painting (in this sense also in the title of his poem on the portraits of John III Vatatzes and his family).⁶²
14. The mention of “inscribed tablets” (κύρβεις) in what is in fact a topical reference to reliance upon earlier sources is one in a series of word choices with which Stilbes varies on the concept of a “tablet.” This approach, which is also inspired by the earlier mention of the Tablets of Stone (πλάξ), could be taken as a way of subtly introducing the Keramos.
15. In the section left out here, Stilbes gives his personal account of the Abgar legend, in which the standard elements are treated: Abgar's afflictions, his desire to see Christ, and the exchange of letters between Abgar and Jesus.
16. The passage left out ends with the message that Jesus sends to Abgar, stating that he cannot leave Jerusalem but that he will send one of the apostles to cure the Edessene ruler.
17. Jesus' letter, the contents of which Stilbes describes in the passage omitted here,⁶³ implies that his capture and crucifixion are immanent (see also n. 29).
18. This courier is present in several versions of the Abgar legend, according to which his name was Ananias (or Hannan in Syriac).⁶⁴ Stilbes does not mention any name, in accordance with his tendency to keep the story simple and to skip realia.⁶⁵ Ananias' skills as a painter are mentioned in several accounts, including the *Synaxarium* ver-

60 See the term “songs” (ᾠδαί) in 2Reg. 6:5; the parallel account in 1Chron 13:8 uses the term ψαλτωδοί, “singers of psalms.”

61 Dobschütz 1899: 81** (text B, §57.18); cf. Guscini 2009: 56–57.

62 Kotzabassi 2009: 444.

63 English transl. in Guscini 2009: 163.

64 For more information see the literature mentioned in n. 25.

65 Cf. Flusin 1997: 60.

sion of the *Treatise on the Image of Edessa*,⁶⁶ which (just like Stilbes does) describes how the task is laid upon him of drawing a picture of Christ. The winding description of the process of painting a model cannot be found there and is characteristic of Stilbes' version.

19. "He who spoke on the nature of the divine form" might be Gregory of Nazianzos.⁶⁷
20. The account of Stilbes agrees with the *Synaxarium* version of the *Treatise on the Image of Edessa* in the sense that also the latter text states that Abgar's courier was unable to paint Jesus' portrait.⁶⁸ The reason the *Synaxarium* gives, however, is different: "Ananias went to Jerusalem and gave the letter to the Lord. He was staring at him but could not get near him due to the crowd that had gathered, and so he climbed up onto a little rock that stood out from the ground and sat down. Ananias kept his eyes on Jesus and the papyrus in his hand, trying to paint his likeness, but he could not take down his form at all as it appeared now with one face and then with another and with an aspect that was changing."⁶⁹ In that version, it is Christ's polymorphy that prevents it from being depicted. The explanation that Stilbes offers for Ananias' failure is somewhat different and even more remarkable: it implies that it is a priori impossible to make an image of Christ. This interpretation (a similar one can be found in a variant version of the *Synaxarium* story) comes remarkably close to what is the complete opposite of the iconophile dimensions that once were projected upon the story of the Mandylion (see the Introduction, p. 728). The fact that Stilbes does not shun it would appear to confirm that at the end of the twelfth century "the theological dimensions of the Image of Edessa were out of sight."⁷⁰
21. This is the first in a series of references to biblical episodes that all involve in one way or the other a miracle worked by the Lord or Christ and in which water is a central factor. Here Stilbes refers to the "sign of the fleece" in Jud. 6:36–40. What Stilbes calls "rain" (ὑετός) is "dew" (δρόσος) in the biblical account.
22. This phrase recalls the episode of 3Reg. 17:1–9, where the prophet Elijah (often called the Thesbite or Tishbite after his provenance from the town of Tishbe in Gilead) predicts a drought but can himself drink from a wadi pointed out by the Lord.
23. Stilbes recalls famous episodes of Ex. 17:1–7 (cf. Num. 20:1–13) and 14:1–29.
24. These well-known passages from Jn. (2:1–11 and 9:1–12) are the only New Testament episodes to which Stilbes refers here.
25. The concept of Christ as creator is developed further at the end of the paragraph.
26. As mentioned in the Introduction (p. 731), both versions of the *Treatise on the Image of Edessa* transmit this story, according to which the Mandylion was made when Jesus wiped off the water with which he had sprinkled his face. In the *Synaxarium* it is the

66 Dobschütz 1899: 42** (text A, §2) = *Synaxarium CP*: 895; cf. Guscini 2009: 91–92.

67 This was observed by Flusin 1997: 73 n. 42.

68 Dobschütz 1899: 46** (text A, §4) = *Synaxarium CP*: 896; cf. Guscini 2009: 92–93.

69 Translation copied from Guscini 2009: 93, but modified in accordance with Flusin 2011: 270 n. 85.

70 See Flusin 2011: 270–71 (citation on p. 271: "les enjeux théologiques de l'image d'Édesse étaient perdus de vue").

- only account that is given,⁷¹ while in the *BHG* 794 version it is one of two.⁷² Neither text contains the digression that Stilbes inserts here.
27. This statement is perceived by Dubarle (1997: 10) as a reference to 2Macc. 7:28 and a parallel with §11 of the sermon of Gregory the Referendary.
 28. This field is situated in Hierapolis, according to the *BHG* 794 version of the *Treatise on the Image of Edessa*⁷³ and other sources (e.g. *BHG* 801n., mentioned in the Introduction, p. 729). Stilbes gives the impression of keeping the reference deliberately vague: “some field somewhere” (τινά πους . . . ἀγρόν).⁷⁴
 29. Stilbes’ account is misread by Dubarle (1997: 10), who interprets the number three as referring to a third tile which Ananias would have used as a cover for the cloth and hid between two other tiles. In fact, the number characterizes the miraculous copy of the Mandylion onto the Keramos as the third miracle, while the first two miracles are the impossibility of capturing Jesus in a painting and Jesus’ wonderful confection of the Mandylion. The number three indeed recurs a few lines further below to denote Jesus (the original model), the Mandylion (the first copy) and the Keramos (the second copy).
 30. This comparison and the question that follows refer to a parable occurring in Jesus’ parabolic discourse (Mt. 13:44): “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”⁷⁵
 31. A God-sent pillar of fire guides the Israelites at night as they march out of Egypt in Ex. 13:21–22.⁷⁶
 32. Stilbes refers to the star that points the Magi to where Jesus is born (Mt. 2:9).
 33. The account preserved in the *BHG* 794 version of the *Treatise on the Image of Edessa* (see n. 41, p. 748) is more extensive than that in Stilbes’ text. It says that a great fire was seen at night by the inhabitants of Hierapolis at the location of the pile of tiles. They hastened themselves to it, and captured Ananias under the suspicion that he had set the heap on fire. It was only after he had explained that he was carrying the Mandylion that they found out that there was no real fire burning, but that it was the image that produced light. Stilbes omits any reference to this episode and instead introduces several comparisons.
 34. This is an allusion to the Parable of the Talents (Mt. 25:14–30; cf. Lk. 19:11–27). The mention of the king’s image on the coin might refer to Mt. 22:19–20.

71 Dobschütz 1899: 46**–48** (text A, §5) = *Synaxarium CP*: 896; cf. Guscini 2009: 94–95.

72 Dobschütz 1899: 49**–51** (text B, §13); cf. Guscini 2009: 20–21. The alternative account (Dobschütz 1899: 53**–55** [text B, §§17–18]; cf. Guscini 2009: 24–27) is set in the garden of Gethsemane (see the Introduction, p. 731).

73 Dobschütz 1899: 51** (text B, §14); cf. Guscini 2009: 20–23.

74 Compare Flusin 1997: 60.

75 Translation cited from the NRSV.

76 The same episode is alluded to by Gregory the Referendary: see Dubarle 1997: 22–23 [§16]; cf. Guscini 2009: 80–81.

35. The passage that follows this pronoun (up to “... he could admire His two natures”) has been translated into English by Guscini 2009: 208–09 and by Nicolotti 2014: 105 n. 45. Guscini (p. 209) interpreted it as indicating “that ... a full-body image is brought into the story when talking about the depiction on the cloth.” This interpretation was rightfully exposed as incorrect by Nicolotti, who argued instead that Stilbes “does not mention any ‘full-body image’ whatsoever.” Instead, always according to Nicolotti (p. 105 n. 45), the passage deals with “the two imprints of the face of Jesus on the Mandylicon and the Keramos.” The “hind parts” do not refer to the back of the man depicted on the *acheiropoietia* but oppose “Christ’s ‘front’ and ‘back,’ that is, the different aspects that result from his being at the same time man and God, according to a lexical and metaphorical tradition present in Origen, Gregory [of Nazianzos], Gregory [of Nyssa], and Theodoret of Cyrhus” (*ibid.*, with reference to Lampe, s.v. ὀπίσθιον). Stilbes’ particular choice to refer to the tile as a “rock” (πέτρα) recalls Ex. 33:22–23, according to which God allows Moses to see his “hind parts” (τὰ ὀπίσω μου, variant reading “τὰ ὀπίσθιά μου”) from out the hole of “a rock” (τῆς πέτρας).
36. Cf. Job 2:8.
37. Stilbes alludes to Jesus’ healing of a woman who touched his cloak (Mt. 9:20; cf. Mk. 5:27 and Lk. 8:44).
38. A lacuna is suspected at this point; this invited the editor to propose the minor additions adopted here. The *Synaxarium* version of the *Treatise on the Image of Edessa* reports the return of the Mandylicon and healing of Abgar much more succinctly.⁷⁷ The *BHG* 794 version reports that the Mandylicon which was handed over to Ananias by Christ was brought to Abgar, but without any further details.⁷⁸ On the other hand, in the alternative version on the Mandylicon’s origins (see n. 45), *BHG* 794 does mention Abgar’s healing to some detail.⁷⁹ Both in that passage and in that of the *Synaxarium*, Abgar’s healing is not entirely complete: a small spot of leprosy remained on his forehead – no trace of this detail can be found in Stilbes’ account. More than in any other version, Stilbes stresses that Ananias brought back concurrently both the Mandylicon and the Keramos and that both cured Abgar: this is a strategic point in his narrative and inspired by the function of his *didaskalia*.⁸⁰
39. The “prophet who was also a king” is David, the supposed author of most of the Psalms. The beginning of this sentence is a citation of Ps. 2:10 (which explains the address of the plural “kings”).
40. Stilbes alludes to the episode of 3Reg. 10:1–13 (cf. 2Chron. 9:1–12), which recounts the visit that the Queen of Saba (or: Sheba) paid to Solomon and which involved the exchange of gifts.

77 Dobschütz 1899: 52** (text A, §8) = *Synaxarium* CP: 897; cf. Guscini 2009: 98–99. According to this version, the Keramos comes into being in Edessa not before a few centuries later: see the Introduction, p. 730.

78 Dobschütz 1899: 53** (text B, §15); cf. Guscini 2009: 24–25.

79 Dobschütz 1899: 55**–57** (text B, §§20–21); cf. Guscini 2009: 28–29.

80 Cf. the Commentary, n. 42, p. 748.

41. The Gospel of John reports how Nicodemus, a Pharisee and Jewish leader, conversed with Jesus, stood up for him, and took care of his body after the Crucifixion (3:1–21; compare 7:50–52 and 19:39). When bestowing those funeral rituals upon Jesus' body, he was helped by Joseph of Arimathea (Jn. 19:38), who in the synoptical Gospels is described as a wealthy man and a respected member of the Jewish council (Mt. 27:57; Mk. 15:43; Lk. 23:50).
42. In the *BHG* 794 version of the *Treatise*, the Mandylion's route to and entrance into Constantinople are described in length,⁸¹ but Stilbes (who wrongly but deliberately implies that the Mandylion and the Keramion arrived together)⁸² does not offer any details.
43. This is an allusion to Ps. 103(104):12.
44. The passage that follows and which concludes the *didaskalia*, appears to allude to contemporary political upheaval. Stilbes urges the implied listener (probably patriarch George II Xiphilinos) to fight the temptation of heeding a foreign ruler's call to leave Constantinople. It suffices, according to Stilbes, to respond in writing. Flusin proposes to interpret this as a reference to the rebellion of a certain pseudo-Alexios in 1195–97, which caused Alexios III Angelos (r.1195–1203) to leave Constantinople temporarily.⁸³
45. This at first sight enigmatic turn of phrase is an allusion to Col. 3:5, which urges to “put to death whichever limb of you is earthly” (i.e. all earthly practices, such as fornication, impurity, etc.).
46. Stilbes alludes to adPhil. 3:20.

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81 Dobschütz 1899: 77**–79** (text B, §§50–55); cf. Guscini 2009: 48–55.

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I.6.8

Epigrams on Relics and Reliquaries

BRAD HOSTETLER

Significance

Relics and reliquaries were integral to all aspects of Byzantine society, from religious services and imperial ceremonial to private devotion. While the majority of Byzantine texts that mention or make reference to sacred matter offer few details concerning the appearance, use, and handling of reliquaries, epigrams, in contrast, provide a wealth of information. They describe the forms, materials, and contents of reliquaries, the viewers' perceptions of these objects, and the functions – both real and symbolic – that relics served in medieval society. The present dossier of epigrams is a representative sample; they reveal some of the diverse ways in which sacred matter was used and perceived in the Byzantine Empire.

Introduction

Relics are the sacred remains of holy figures.¹ They include body parts (bones, hair, and blood, etc.) as well as items that have been sanctified through contact (instruments of Christ's Passion, garments of the Virgin, and stones from sacred sites). Constantinople was home to one of the largest, most diverse, and elite relic collections in all of Christendom due in large part to emperors and empresses translating relics from the Holy Land, and making Constantinople a "New Jerusalem."² Much of our knowledge as to the contents of this relic hoard and the sanctuaries that housed them come from pilgrim and Crusader accounts of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries.³ The relic chapel *par excellence* was that of the Theotokos of the Pharos.⁴ It claimed a near-complete set of Passion relics, including the Crown of Thorns, the Holy Nail, the Burial Shroud of Christ, the Towel used to wash the Apostles' feet, the Holy Lance, Christ's Purple Robe, and a stone from the tomb of Christ.⁵ After the sack of Constantinople by the Latin armies of the Fourth

Special thanks to Ivan Drpić, Lynn Jones, Nicholas Matheou, Andreas Rhoby, Roman Shlyakhtin, Foteini Spingou, and Nikos Zagklas for offering much valued advice on this contribution.

1 For an introduction to relics and reliquaries see Bagnoli 2010; Hahn and Klein 2015.

2 For discussions of the sources see Ebersolt 1921; Flusin 2000: 51–70; James 2001: 119–31; and many of the essays collected in Wortley 2009.

3 Haskins 1910: 293–95; Ehrhard 1932; Ciggaar 1973; Ciggaar 1976 (for the latter see E. Rizos, I.5.1 in this volume); Ciggaar 1995; for secondary literature see Ciggaar 1996; Majeska 2003: 387–97.

4 Bacci 2003: 234–46; Magdalino 2004: 15–30; Wortley and Zuckerman 2004: 67–74; Lidov 2012: 63–103.

5 See J. Featherstone, I.6.6, in this volume.

Crusade in 1204, the city was stripped of its many treasures, which were taken to new sanctuaries in the West – most notably the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris and San Marco in Venice.⁶ However, Constantinople was not entirely depleted. Pilgrim accounts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries indicate that the city's relic collection was replenished and continued to attract visitors.⁷

Reliquaries are the containers that enshrine and protect this sacred matter. Those that contain wood of the True Cross (*staurothekai*), the blood of Christ, bones and heads of saints, and the blood and holy oil (myron) of St. Demetrius are preserved in museums and church treasuries, and many more are known through various textual sources.⁸ They are made of lavish materials – gold, silver, gems, and pearls – which conferred honor upon, and testified to the spiritual value of, the contents. Reliquaries of Byzantium differed from those in the West in that they had a limited number of shapes; most were rectangular, cylindrical, or cruciform.⁹ They ranged in size, from large imperial *staurothekai*, such as that at Limburg-an-der-Lahn (48 x 35 x 6 cm), to small *enkolpia*, like the reliquary of St. Demetrius at Dumbarton Oaks (4.4 x 2.8 x 0.6 cm).¹⁰ Byzantine reliquaries were fitted with lids and doors, and the relics themselves were often adorned with gold and gems nailed directly to them, leaving parts of the relic exposed so that it could be seen, touched, and kissed.¹¹

Byzantine sources describe the various ways in which relics and reliquaries were used. Some were sealed beneath altars for the consecration of churches; others were stored in skeuophylakia (sacristies) and exhibited on specific feast days.¹² Relics, and in particular those of the True Cross, were central to Byzantine imperial identity and authority.¹³ They were part of imperial regalia and used in court ceremonial.¹⁴ They were taken into battle, gifted to foreign rulers, and used in the swearing of oaths.¹⁵ Reliquaries were kept as objects of personal devotion and protection, and were donated to religious foundations.¹⁶

6 Many Crusader accounts are collected in Riant 1877–78; Mély 1904; Andrea 2008. For the relics of Sainte-Chapelle see Durand and Laffitte 2001; for the relics of San Marco see Hahnloser 1965 and 1971.

7 Majeska 1984; Majeska 1973: 71–87; Majeska 2002: 93–108; Majeska 2004: 183–90.

8 Some richly illustrated catalogues with Byzantine reliquaries include Hahnloser 1965 and 1971; Meller *et al.* 2008; Bagnoli 2010; Sterligova 2013. Byzantine descriptions of reliquaries can be found in *The Rule of Michael Attaleiates for his Almshouse in Rhaidestos and for the Monastery of Christ Panoiktirmon in Constantinople*, transl. Talbot, *BMFD* 19, p. 369; *Typikon of Gregory Pakourianos for the Monastery of the Mother of God Petritzonitissa in Backovo*, transl. Jordan, *BMFD* 23, p. 552; *Kecharitomene Typikon*, transl. Jordan, *BMFD* 27, p. 714, 716; *Inventory of the Monastery of the Mother of God Eleousa in Stroumitza*, transl. Bandy and Ševčenko, *BMFD* 61, 1671.

9 Many of the Western reliquary types have been enumerated in the seminal work of Braun 1940, and see Hahn 2012; for Byzantine reliquaries see Grabar 1950, 1954; Rückert 1957; Frolow 1961, 1965; Klein 2004a.

10 *BEIÜ* 2: Me8–9, Me112.

11 Rückert 1957: 18–20.

12 The practice of consecrating churches with relics was made official at *the Second Council of Nicaea in 787*, ed. Mansi, cols. 363–414, transl. Percival, 560–61; on the use of *skeuophylakia* see Majeska 1998: 212–15.

13 Frolow 1961: 73–94; Mergiali-Sahas 2001; Eastmond 2003: 205–15; Klein 2004b: 283–314; Jones 2014: 105–24.

14 Kalavrezou 1996: 53–80; Klein 2006.

15 Mergiali-Sahas 2001.

16 Pitarakis 2006; *Typikon of the Kecharitomene*, *BMFD* 27, p. 714.

Epigrams inscribed on reliquaries also provide valuable information on the use and importance of these objects in Byzantine society.¹⁷ The following texts offer just a glimpse into the various functions of reliquaries, and of the interests and concerns of their patrons. Many epigrams name the individuals who commissioned the objects, most of whom were emperors, members of their family, and court and church officials. Women, and in particular those of the Doukai and Komnenoi families, were instrumental in the patronage of reliquaries (see, Text A). Epigrams convey the ideological significance of relics of the True Cross for imperial victory (see, Text B). They provide an ekphrastic lens through which the viewer beheld and interpreted these objects (see, Texts C and E). They are important for understanding how reliquaries were worn and handled, and the ways in which relics were accessed (see, Text D).

Text A | Nicholas Kallikles (active late eleventh century through the first half of twelfth century)

Epigram on Empress Eirene Doukaina's Reliquary of the True Cross

Ed.: R. Romano, *Nicola Callicle: Carmi*, Byzantina et Neo-Hellenica Neapolitana 8 (Naples, 1980) no. 6

MS.:¹⁸ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 498 (= coll. 432) (s. XIV), f. 380v

Other Translations: B. Hostetler, *The Function of Text: Byzantine Reliquaries with Epigrams, 843–1204* (unpublished PhD dissertation, Florida State University, 2016), 108–09, 197 (English); S. Lerou, “L’usage des reliques du Christ par les empereurs aux XIe et XIIe siècles: le saint Bois et les saintes pierres,” in *Byzance et les Reliques du Christ*, eds. J. Durand and B. Flusin, Centre de Recherche d’Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance Monographies 17 (Paris, 2004), 162 (vv. 1–6, only); A. Frolow, *La relique de la vraie Croix*, AOC 7 (Paris, 1961), no. 241 (French); R. Romano, *Nicola Callicle: Carmi*, Byzantina et Neo-Hellenica Neapolitana 8 (Naples, 1980), 135 (Italian); C. Du Cange, “Annae Comnenae Caesarissae Alexiadem Notae Historicae et Philologicae,” in *Annae Comnenae Alexiadis Libri XV*, vol. 2, ed. L. Schopenus, CSHB (Bonn, 1878), 702; J. Grester, *De cruce Christi*, vol. 3 (Ingolstadt, 1605), 347 (Latin); A. Belcheva, *Τα επιγράμματα σε έργα τέχνης της εποχής των Κομνηνών* (unpublished MA thesis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2013), 136 (Modern Greek)

Significance

This is an example of a dedicatory epigram, whose rich ekphrastic character describes the appearance of an object, now lost, while also providing evidence for the ways in which Byzantine viewers interpreted its form and decoration.

¹⁷ Hostetler 2016.

¹⁸ Consulted.

The Author

Nicholas Kallikles was a court poet and physician active during the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118).¹⁹ He composed numerous epigrams for the Komnenian family; this is one of three for reliquaries of the True Cross.²⁰ Four other anonymous epigrams for *staurothekai* have been attributed to him.²¹

Text and Context

This *staurotheke* was commissioned by the Empress Eirene Doukaina (1066–February 19, 1123), wife of Alexios I.²² It is one of five *staurothekai* attributed to her patronage, more than that attributed to any other patron in the Middle Byzantine period.²³ The reliquary does not survive, but the ekphrastic character of the epigram provides some clues as to the object's appearance, and the ways in which Byzantine viewers interpreted its visual elements. The epigram begins with the word ταῦτα (these things); all parts of the object are henceforth described. The reliquary was made of gold (v. 3), and adorned with precious stones (v. 3) and pearls (v. 4), all of which are standard materials for *staurothekai*.²⁴

Kallikles provides an interpretation of the reliquary by first stating what it is not (vv. 1–2) and then identifying what it is (vv. 3–7). He makes use of allusions to and metaphors from the Old and New Testaments. The operative phrases in this contrast are κρανίου τόπος (place of the skull) and χρυσοῦς τόπος (place of gold), in parallel positions at the ends of vv. 1 and 3, respectively. The former is Golgotha, the site of Christ's crucifixion; the latter alludes to the biblical description of the Heavenly Jerusalem.²⁵ The ξύλον ζωφόρον (life-bringing wood, v. 5) inside the reliquary corresponds to the Tree of Life in the celestial city. The use of the verb φυτεύει (plants, v. 5) continues the paradisiacal imagery of the epigram, and highlights Eirene's role as patron by describing her act of inserting the relic into the reliquary.²⁶

19 A. Kazhdan in *ODB*, s.v. "Kallikles, Nicholas." On Nicholas Kallikles see also L. Andriollo, I.6.5 in this volume.

20 Ed. Romano 1980, nos. 7 and 27.

21 Romano 1980: 29–31; ed. *BEIÜ* 2: Me3, Me15, Me82, Me90.

22 The date of her death is a matter of debate; for a summary see *BEIÜ* 2: 270–71.

23 In addition to her reliquary of the True Cross in the Treasury of San Marco, Venice (Santuario 57; ed. *BEIÜ* 2: Me90), three are listed first in the *typikon* inventory for Eirene's convent in Constantinople dedicated to the Theotokos Kecharitomene; *Kecharitomene Typikon*, ed. Gautier, 152; transl. Jordan, 714.

24 Frolov 1965: 187–204.

25 Similar descriptions for the Heavenly Jerusalem and Paradise are found in Middle Byzantine apocalyptic texts; for a survey of these sources see Daniélou 1953: 433–72; Maguire 2012: 37–48; Cupane 2014: 53–68.

26 For literature on Western medieval reliquaries designed as images of the Heavenly Jerusalem see Toussaint 2008: 213–23; see also Hahn 2012: 195–98.

Text

Εἰς τὸν Τίμιον Σταυρὸν

Οὐ ταῦτα δρυμὸς οὐδὲ κρανίου τόπος,
 ἐν οἷς ἐπάγη τοῦτο τὸ ξύλον πάλαι,
 ἀλλ' ἔστι λιθόστρωτος ἢ χρυσοῦς τόπος,
 ἀνθεῖ δὲ λευκὸν ἄνθος ἐκ τῶν μαργάρων.
 5 τούτοις φυτεύει σέ, ξύλον ζωηφόρον,
 Δουκῶν ὁ λαμπτήρ, ἡ βασιλὶς Εἰρήνη,
 καρπὸν γλυκὺν τρυγῶσα τὴν σωτηρίαν.

Translation

On the Precious Cross¹

These things are not a thicket², nor the place of the skull,³
 in which this wood was fixed long ago,
 but rather it is paved with stones and a place of gold,⁴
 yet it blooms white blossoms made of pearls.⁵
 5 Into these (she) plants you, <O> life-bringing wood,⁶
 the beacon of the Doukai, the Empress Eirene,⁷
 harvesting the sweet fruit,⁸ salvation.

Commentary

1. In a sixteenth-century edition, a more lengthy and detailed title was added: εἰς τὸ καλὸν ξύλον τὸ κοσμηθὲν ὑπὸ τῆς δεσποίνης (on the beautiful wood that has been adorned by the Empress).²⁷ Leo Sternbach chose the longer title when he edited Kallikles' poems.²⁸ Romano does not include a title in his edition, but uses the longer one for his translation.²⁹
2. δρυμὸς (thicket): Cf. Cant 2:3 (see n. 8).
3. κρανίου τόπος (place of the skull): Golgotha (Mt. 27:33, Mk. 15:22, Lk. 23:33, Jn. 19:17).³⁰
4. λιθόστρωτος (paved with stones) and χρυσοῦς τόπος (place of gold): Cf. Rev. 21:18–21. Λιθόστρωτος has other meanings and associations. It can refer to a mosaic (LSJ, s.v. “λιθόστρωτος”); however no surviving Middle Byzantine reliquaries feature (micro-) mosaic. It also alludes to Pilate's judgment seat where Christ stood trial before his Crucifixion: the Lithostroton, or Gabatha as it was known in Aramaic (Jn. 19:13).³¹ Due to the homonymity of Golgotha and Gabatha, Byzantine authors often conflated, or confused, these biblical sites.³²

²⁷ Guntius 1536: quatern. ξ, ff. 3v–4.

²⁸ Sternbach 1903 no. II, p. 319.

²⁹ Romano 1980: 81 (Latin: “In cruce ab Irena Ducaena exornatam”) and 135 (Italian: “Per la croce adornata da Irene Duca”).

³⁰ Romano 1980: 81.

³¹ Romano 1980: 81.

³² Frolov 1965: 192. Examples include an oration on the entombment of Christ attributed to the eighth-century

5. Cf. Num. 17:8; and Homer, *The Iliad*, 17.56.
 6. ξύλον ζωηφόρον (life-bringing wood): Cf. Gen. 2:9, Prov. 11:30, Rev. 2:7, Rev. 22:2.³³ The reference to the “life-bringing wood” may indicate that Eirene’s reliquary featured the iconography the Tree of Life.³⁴
 7. The betrothal of Eirene to Alexios in 1077 allied two prominent imperial families.³⁵ This double imperial lineage is made explicit in vv. 4–5 of the epigram on the Emperor Manuel Komnenos’ reliquary of the True Cross.³⁶
 8. καρπὸν γλυκύν (sweet fruit): Cf. Cant. 2:3,³⁷ and Hermogenes, *Progymnasmata* 3.30, ed. Rabe, transl. G. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 77 with other examples on 98, 140–42.
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Patriarch Germanos, *On the Bodily Burial of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Oration 2)*, PG 98: 256C, 98: 257A–B; a twelfth-century epigram for a cross set upon the tomb of Sophia Komnene, ed. Hörandner 1987: 243; a description of the Holy Land by an anonymous Greek pilgrim in the mid thirteenth century, Greek Anonymous Pilgrim I, *A Partial Account of the Holy Places of Jerusalem*, 5; ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, transl. Pringle 2012: 192; and two epigrams written by Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Par. nos. 45 and 188, Miller 2, 85–86, 202, and ed. *BEIÜ* 2: ME18.

33 Romano 1980: 81.

34 For this iconography see Rice 1950: 68–81; Frolow 1965: 178–86; Klein 2004a: 115–17.

35 Polemis, *Doukai* no. 26, pp. 70–74.

36 See Text B.

37 Romano 1980: 81.

Text B | Author Unknown (1176)**Epigram on the Emperor Manuel Komnenos' Reliquary of the True Cross**

Ed.: Spingou, *Anthologia Marciana* no. B149

MS.:³⁸ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 524 (= 318) (s. XIII), f. 37v

Other Translations: B. Hostetler, *The Function of Text: Byzantine Reliquaries with Epigrams, 843–1204* (unpublished PhD dissertation, Florida State University, 2016), 200; E. Chrysos, “1176–A Byzantine Crusade?,” in *Byzantine War Ideology between Roman Imperial Concept and Christian Religion: Akten des Internationalen Symposiums (Wien, 19.–21. Mai 2011)*, eds. J. Koder and I. Stouraitis (Vienna, 2012), 85 (vv. 21–24 only); F. Spingou, *Text and Image at the Court of Manuel Komnenos: Epigrams on Works of Art in Marc. gr. 524 followed by a Description of the Manuscript* (unpublished MPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2010), 81; Magdalino, *Manuel*, 96 (vv. 7–11 only) (English); S. Lerou, “L’usage des reliques du Christ par les empereurs aux XIe et XIIe siècles: le saint Bois et les saintes pierres,” in *Byzance et les Reliques du Christ*, eds. J. Durand and B. Flusin, Centre de Recherche d’Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance Monographies 17 (Paris, 2004), 170 (vv. 14–24, only); A. Frolov, *La relique de la Vraie Croix*, AOC 7 (Paris, 1961), 343; and *idem*, “Une inscription bulgare inédite,” *RES* 21 (1944), 106 (vv. 14–24 only) (French); W. Hörandner, “Das byzantinische Epigramm und das heilige Kreuz: einige Beobachtungen zu Motiven und Typen,” in *La Croce: Iconografia e interpretazione (secoli I – inizio XVI). Atti del convegno internazionale di studi (Napoli, 6-11 dicembre 1999)*, eds. B. Ulianich and U. Parente, vol. 3 (Rome, 2007), 114 (vv. 7–8, 21–22, 24 only) (German); A. Belcheva, *Τα επιγράμματα σε έργα τέχνης της εποχής των Κομνηνών* (unpublished MA thesis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2013), 147–48 (Modern Greek)

Significance

This epigram is exceptional for its length and the precise historical information that it provides. It is traditional in the ways in which it invokes the power of relics for the Emperor’s triumphs.

The Author

The author of this epigram is not known. The text is recorded only in one of the three anonymous collections in the *Anthologia Marciana*, a thirteenth-century poetic anthology.³⁹

³⁸ Consulted.

³⁹ Lambros, “Ο Μαρκανός κώδιξ 524,” no. 92; Spingou, *Words and Artworks*; see F. Spingou, I.3.3 in this volume.

Text and Context

This epigram was inscribed on a now-lost *staurotheke* belonging to the Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80). It is an exceptional text for its length – at twenty-four verses, it is the longest reliquary epigram of the Middle Byzantine period – and for the fact that it describes the specific event for which the object was made and used.⁴⁰ The first part (vv. 1–13) documents the historical information. Manuel organized a campaign in the thirty-fourth year of his reign (1176) against Kiliç Arslan II, the Seljuk Sultan of Rum (r.1155–92).⁴¹ He wanted to reclaim former Byzantine territory in Anatolia, liberating “the children of the free-born woman” (i.e. descendants of Abraham and Sarah) from the rule of the “slave Hagar” (i.e. Ishmaelites; in this context, the Seljuks). This so-called crusade resulted in Manuel’s disastrous defeat at Myriokephalon, a mountain pass west of the Seljuk capital of Ikonion.⁴²

The second part of the epigram (vv. 14–24) focuses on the reliquary. It was gold, perhaps cruciform (vv. 14, 17), and it contained relics of the True Cross, Christ’s Passion, and other unnamed saints.⁴³ It was made to accompany Manuel in battle, a customary practice of many Byzantine emperors before him.⁴⁴ This *staurotheke* could be that which, according to contemporary sources, the Seljuks captured at Myriokephalon and Manuel ransomed for a large sum of money.⁴⁵

The second part of the epigram also presents some of the ways in which relics were invoked by the Emperor for his victory. Manuel is presented as an imitator of Constantine the Great. According to Eusebius of Caesarea, Constantine received a vision of a cross inscribed with the words “conquer with this” (ἐν τούτῳ νίκα), created a copy of it from gold and gems, and carried it into battle against Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge.⁴⁶ According to the epigram, Manuel imitates the actions of the first Christian emperor by creating a cross just like that of Constantine, filling it with relics, and inscribing it with this epigram of victory.

In vv. 21–22, the relics are invoked as weapons that aid the Emperor.⁴⁷ The armies of Christ, embodied by the relics of the unnamed saints, are commanded to “rout the Persian tribes.” The Cross is called a “rod” that strikes the enemies. This is likely a typological comparison between the Cross and the Rod of Moses – a symbol of command, and itself

40 On the length of reliquary epigrams see Hostetler 2017: 187 n. 38.

41 The most detailed account of the battle in Byzantine sources is Choniates, *History*, 175–191, transl. Maggoulias, 99–108; see also Magdalino, *Manuel*, 95–98; Shlyakhtin 2008: 137–50.

42 On the issue of Myriokephalon as “crusade” see Chrysos 2012 with references to earlier literature; on the suggested location of the battle see Hendy 1985: 146–54.

43 Frolov 1961: 342.

44 Mergiali-Sahas 2001: 49–51; Nelson 2011–12: 181; Sullivan 2012: 395–410.

45 Robert of Torigni, *Chronicle*, 527 (1178), ed. Bethmann; Hermann of Altach, *Annals*, 384 (1176), ed. Jaffé; Romuald of Salerno, *Annals*, 442 (1175), ed. Arndt; Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle*, 372, ed. and transl. Chabot. For secondary literature see Hendy 1985: 152; Shlyakhtin 2007: 48.

46 Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, 1.28–32, transl. Cameron and Hall 1999: 80–82; cf. Sozomenos, *Ecclesiastical History*, 1.3.2–3, eds. Bidez and Hansen, transl. Hartranft, 241–42; Sokrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, 1.2.4, eds. Maraval and Périchon, transl. Zenos, 2.

47 Cf. Hostetler 2012: 7–13.

a relic kept with the military insignia in the Great Palace in Constantinople.⁴⁸ The last two verses express Manuel's hope for victory – a standard component of epigrams on imperial *staurothekai*.⁴⁹ Whereas those of the tenth and eleventh centuries celebrate the victorious emperors over all “barbarian” enemies, this epigram asks for Manuel's triumph over a named adversary in a specific battle.

48 Dagron 2003: 84; Pertusi 1976: 515–21.

49 Grabar 1936: 32–39; Frolow 1944; Hörandner 2007: 107–12; Nelson 2011–12: 178–87.

Text

Ἐπὶ τῷ γεγονότι παρὰ τοῦ ἁγίου ἡμῶν βασιλέως τιμίῳ καὶ ζωοποιῷ σταυρῷ ἐν τῷ κατὰ τοῦ Ἰκονίου ταξιδίῳ

Ζήλω καμίνου καρδίαν μέσην ζέσας
 καὶ σπλάγχχνα φρυγείς θυμικῶν ἐξ ἀνθράκων
 ὑπὲρ μερίδος χριστεπωνύμου γένους,
 ὄρηπξι, Μανουήλ, διπλοφυοῦς πορφύρας
 5 κομνηνοδοικῶν, ἐξ ἀνάκτων αὐτάναξι,
 ἐξήρη τοὺς σπινθήρας εἰς πυρσὸν μέγαν·
 οὐ γὰρ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐλευθέρας βλέπειν
 ἔσπεξε τέκνα δοῦλα τῆς δούλης ἸΑγαρ.
 οὐκοῦν ἄθροίσας κρατερὰν ὁμαιχιμίαν
 10 ἐκ μυριάκις μυρίων στρατευμάτων,
 πρὸς τὴν κατ' ἐχθρῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ σπεύδει μάχην
 ἐν τριακοστῷ καὶ τετάρτῳ τῷ χρόνῳ
 τῆς αὐτοκρατοῦς Αὐσόνων σκηπτουχίας.
 εἰδὼς δὲ τύπῳ σταυρικοῦ θείου ξύλου
 15 νίκην λαβόντα τὸν μέγαν Κωνσταντῖνον,
 οὗ στέμμα πίστιν ὀρθοδοξίαν φέρει,
 τὸν αὐτὸν αὐτὸς χρυσίῳ κοσμεῖ τύπον,
 Χριστοῦ παθῶν σήμαντρα τιθεὶς ἐν μέσῳ
 καὶ λειψάνων τμήματα σεπτῶν ἁγίων,
 20 θαρρεῖν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ἢ στρατοῦ πλήθει κρίνων.
 ναί, Σταυρὲ ῥάβδε, πλήττε τοὺς ἐναντίους!
 ναί, στρατὲ Χριστοῦ, Περσικὰ φύλα τρέπε·
 παρεμβάλων δὲ τῷ βασιλεῖ κυκλόθεν
 νίκης στεφάνῳ στέψον αὐτοῦ τὸ στέφος.

Translation

On the Precious and Life-giving Cross That Has Been Made by our Holy Emperor During the Expedition against Ikonion

Boiling in the midst of his heart with the zeal of a furnace¹
 and his seat of emotions being roasted from irascible coals²
 on behalf of the portion of the nation called by Christ's name,
 Manuel,³ twice purple-born scion
 5 of the Komnenoi-Doukai, emperor born of emperors,⁴
 aroused the sparks into a great torch.
 For he could not bear to see the children of the free-born woman
 be slave children of the slave Hagar.⁵
 Therefore having gathered a mighty alliance
 10 from ten thousand times ten thousand battalions,⁶
 he hastens to war against the enemies of God
 in the thirty-fourth year⁷
 of his autocratic reign over the Ausonians.⁸
 Knowing that by the form of the cruciform divine wood,
 15 victory was seized by Constantine the Great,⁹
 whose crown bears the orthodox faith,¹⁰
 he (Manuel) himself adorns this same form with gold,
 placing inside the signs of Christ's Passion¹¹
 and parts of relics of venerable saints,
 20 determining to trust in these rather than in the multitude of his army.¹²
 Yes, Cross, rod,¹³ strike¹⁴ the opponents!
 Yes, army of Christ,¹⁵ rout the Persian tribes!¹⁶
 And falling in line all around the emperor,
 crown his crown with the crown of victory.¹⁷

Commentary

1. Cf. Prov. 17:3.⁵⁰
2. Cf. Job 41:11–13, and Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 54.97–99.⁵¹
3. Manuel Komnenos was the son of John II (r. 1118–43), and grandson of Alexios I (r. 1081–1118) and Eirene Doukaina, whose *staurotheke* is discussed in Text A. A portrait of him and his wife, Maria of Antioch is preserved in Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 1176, f. IIr.⁵² Manuel's imagery was also the subject of many epigrams and *ekphraseis*.⁵³
4. πορφύρας (purple) refers to the imperial line, in general, and, specifically, the Porphyra chamber in the Great Palace where children of the emperor were born; Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, 7.2.4 (transl. Sewter and Frankopan, 188).⁵⁴ Manuel is διπλοφυοῦς (twice-born) in the purple because he descends from two imperial lines, the Doukai and the Komnenoi, expressed by the compound family name κομνηνοδοουκῶν, and the alliterative phrase ἐξ ἀνάκτων αὐτάναξ (emperor born of emperors).⁵⁵ The word αὐτάναξ was coined in the twelfth century.⁵⁶
5. Cf. Gen. 16:1–16,⁵⁷ Gal. 4:22–26, Choniates, *History*, 117 (transl. Magoulias, 66). The Byzantines referred to Muslim peoples, in general, as children of Hagar.⁵⁸
6. ὁμαιχμία is a classicizing word.⁵⁹ It is part of the poet's wordplay in vv. 9–10: ὁμαιχμίαν ἐκ μυριάκις μυρίων (alliance from ten thousand times ten thousand). Choniates, *History*, 178 (transl. Magoulias, 100) claims that Manuel gathered “troops in the tens of thousands” from within, and outside of, the empire.⁶⁰
7. Manuel began his expedition in September 1176.⁶¹
8. Αὐσόνων (Ausones): a classicizing term that originally referred to the ancient peoples of Italy.⁶²
9. References to the vision of Constantine are found in other epigrams for reliquaries of the True Cross.⁶³ Constantine the Great was a model for Byzantine emperors, and was celebrated as a saint with his mother Helena.⁶⁴
10. The statement about Constantine, “whose crown bears the orthodox (ὀρθοδοξίαν) faith,” promotes Manuel as the true successor to the first Christian Emperor, and thus the heir to the title “Emperor of the Romans,” which was being challenged by his

⁵⁰ Spingou 2010: 82.

⁵¹ Spingou 2010: 82.

⁵² For an image see Spatharakis 1976, fig. 155.

⁵³ Magdalino and Nelson, “Emperor”; Jones and Maguire 2002: 104–48.

⁵⁴ ODB, s.v. “Porphyrogenetos” (M. McCormick).

⁵⁵ LBG, s.v. “Κομνηνοδοῦκας;” see also Spingou 2010: 82–83.

⁵⁶ LBG, s.v. “αὐτάναξ.”

⁵⁷ Spingou 2010: 85 n. 297.

⁵⁸ Reinsch and Kambylis 2001: 2:3 (s.v. “Ἀγαρηνοί”).

⁵⁹ Spingou, *Words and Artworks*, 218 n. 245.

⁶⁰ For typical army sizes at this time see Haldon 1999: 104.

⁶¹ Magdalino, *Manuel*, 96.

⁶² Kaldellis 2008: 63; Matheou (forthcoming).

⁶³ Hörandner 2007: 112–14; Nelson 2011–12: 183–85.

⁶⁴ Magdalino 1994; Markopoulos 2012: 55.

contemporaries in the West, namely the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa (r.1155–90).⁶⁵ The Crown of Constantine was also a relic, which by 1200, hung over the main altar in Hagia Sophia.⁶⁶

11. Many of the relics associated with Christ's Passion were housed in the Church of the Theotokos of the Pharos, located within the Great Palace in Constantinople.⁶⁷ The Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos (r.945–959) also took Passion relics on his military expeditions.⁶⁸
12. Manuel's trust in the strength of God's army, rather than his own, is a literary motif that derives from Ps. 43(44):3 and 32(33):16.⁶⁹ Choniates, *History*, 178 (transl. Magoulias, 100) states that before the battle at Myriokephalon, Manuel went to Hagia Sophia and "invoked the Divinity to be his helpmate and to grant him victory."
13. When Byzantine writers discuss the cross (σταυρός) as a rod (ῥάβδος) it is most often in the context of identifying the Rod of Moses as a prefiguration of the Cross of Christ.⁷⁰ Moses served as a model for Byzantine emperors; Eusebius paralleled Constantine's use of the cross in his triumph over Maxentius with Moses' use of the Rod in his defeat of Pharaoh.⁷¹ The Cross of Constantine and the Rod of Moses were kept in the Great Palace and processed together in court ceremonial.⁷²
14. The poet created wordplay with πλήθει (v. 20, multitude) and πλήττε (v. 21, strike).
15. στρατὲ Χριστοῦ (army of Christ): the unnamed saints whose relics were contained within Manuel's *staurotheke*.⁷³
16. The Byzantines used the classicizing word "Persians" to refer to the Seljuks.⁷⁴
17. The poet employed polyptoton – a rhetorical device in which words derived from the same root are repeated for emphasis – with the words στεφάνω, στέψον, and στέφος.

65 Magdalino and Nelson, "Emperor," 172–75; Magdalino, *Manuel*, 83–95.

66 Erhard 1932: 52.

67 See Introduction.

68 Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos, *Three Treatises on Imperial Military Expeditions*, C.486–87, ed. and transl. Haldon; and Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos, *De contionibus militaribus*, ed. Vári, transl. McGreer 2003: 133; see also the Limburg Staurotheke; *BEIÜ* 2: Me8–9; Ševčenko 1994: 289–95.

69 Spingou 2010: 84.

70 E.g. John Chrysostom, *On the Adoration of the Holy Cross*, PG 62: 754; see also the discussion in Reijners 1965: 107–18.

71 Cameron and Hall 1999: 34–39; Rapp 2010: 175–97; Markopoulos 2012: 54–56; see also the epigram that describes a now lost image of Manuel shown alongside Moses and Joshua; ed. and transl. Spingou 2010: 45–52.

72 *The Book of Ceremonies*, 1:10, 2:640, transl. Moffatt and Tall, 1:10, 2:640. By 1200 the Rod and the Cross were reportedly housed together in the chapel of Saint Michael in the Great Palace; Ehrhard 1932: 57; see also Klein 2006: 92–93.

73 Cf. the epigram for an enkolpion reliquary that belonged to the Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (1042–55); Lambros, "Ο Μαρκεσιανός κῶδιξ 524," 112.

74 Papageorgiou 2011: 149–161; Spingou, *Words and Artworks*, 218.

Text C | Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos (c.1256–c.1335)**Epigrams for a Reliquary of the True Cross**

Ed.: A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, “Νικηφόρος Κάλλιστος Ξανθόπουλος,” *BZ* 11 (1902) nos. 3–4; the second epigram in this series is found in another epigram by the same author: Vassis 2007, no. 17, p. 341

MS.:⁷⁵ Jerusalem, Hagiou Saba 150 (1354), ff. 403r–405v

Other Translations: A. Frolov, *La relique de la Vraie Croix*, AOC 7 (Paris, 1961), 491 (French)

Significance

These epigrams reveal ways in which Byzantine poets gave agency to the materiality of relics and reliquaries in order to animate the objects for the viewers.

The Author

Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos was a cleric at Hagia Sophia, and a teacher of rhetoric.⁷⁶ His literary circle included Theodore Metochites (1270–1332) and Manuel Philes.⁷⁷ His major work is the 18-volume *Ecclesiastical History*, dedicated to the Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos.⁷⁸ Among his many other writings are epigrams on works of art, of which these are the only two for a reliquary.⁷⁹

Text and Context

This reliquary of the True Cross does not survive, and the patron is not known, but the text provides some information regarding the object’s original appearance. The two epigrams are recorded sequentially in the manuscript and their titles indicate that they were for the same *staurotheke*; either the anonymous patron chose one to be inscribed, or both were inscribed but on different parts of the object.⁸⁰ Assuming the latter, it can be suggested that the reliquary was either in the shape of a cross with one epigram on the front and the other on the back, or that the reliquary consisted of two pieces – a cross inside a box or triptych – with one epigram inscribed on each piece.⁸¹ Whatever the form, vv. 5 and 6 of epigram B indicate that the reliquary was adorned with gold and that the

75 This folio range and date comes from Pinakes, <http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/notices/cote/id/34407>. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1902 does not indicate the folios on which these two epigrams are written.

76 A.-M. Talbot, *ODB* s.v. “Xanthopoulos, Nikephoros Kallistos”; and *PLP* 8 no. 20826. For his *Progymnasmata* see Glettner 1933: 1–12, 255–70, and more recently Hock and O’Neil 2002: 348–59; see also A. Alexakis, I.8.2 in this volume.

77 Featherstone 1998: 20–31; Manuel Philes, *Poems*, par. 8, 12, 216, ed. Miller, 2: 16–17, 27, 228.

78 PG 145: 559 – PG 147:448. A new edition is being prepared for *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*, Series Vindobonensis; see Gastgeber and Panteghini 2015. Albrecht Berger is preparing a new edition of volumes I–VI.

79 In addition to the sources cited above see also Talbot 2002: 605–15; Stefec 2012: 145–61.

80 On the issue of epigrams and patron choice see Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 42–43; Hostetler 2020: 283–85.

81 Frolov states that the two predominant forms specific to *staurothekai* in Byzantium are the cross and the tableau (cross inside a box): Frolov 1965: 93–151; see also Klein 2004a: 104–73.

gold was “frozen” (κρυσταλλωθεῖς), which Frolow interprets as encased behind crystal.⁸² If Frolow is correct, then this is an unusual feature for a Byzantine *staurotheke*.⁸³ Prior to this period, wood of the Cross was typically bare so that it could be touched and kissed.⁸⁴ Rock crystal covering relics of the True Cross is a feature more common in the West, particularly in the twelfth century and later.⁸⁵

Crystal was a wondrous material in terms of both its origins and its visual impact. Pliny believed that it was formed high in the Alps where water and snow were subjected to intense freezing over a long period of time.⁸⁶ This led medieval writers to view crystal as a metaphor for Christ’s passion; just as water and snow were subjected to extreme conditions to become a pure and precious stone, so too was Christ’s tortured body perfected at his Resurrection.⁸⁷ In medieval and Byzantine art, rock crystal was therefore associated with images of the Crucifixion and Baptism.⁸⁸

Xanthopoulos’ epigrams are important for understanding the ways in which poets described such materials in order to animate works of art for the viewers.⁸⁹ Gold and crystal become fire and water, respectively. The Wood is combined with them, yet all elements remain intact. In Epigram B the speaker inquires how fire, water, and wood do not simply consume each other. This paradox is explained by Christ’s presence in the reliquary, and by the power of the crystal to seemingly “freeze” the fire/gold. Through this metaphorical language, Xanthopoulos highlights the wonder (θαῦμα) of this object.⁹⁰

82 Frolow 1961: 491.

83 Frolow 1965: 31 n. 1.

84 Rückert 1957: 20–24; Klein 2008: 167–90, esp. 177–78.

85 Toussaint 2011: 102–16; on the question of possible artistic influence between Byzantium and the West see Klein 2004a; Durand 2004: 333–54.

86 Kornbluth 1995: 17; see also Baldwin 1995: 398

87 Kornbluth 1995: 18; Gerevini 2014: 92–99.

88 Kornbluth 1995: 17–18; see also the ninth- to eleventh-century Byzantine rock crystal intaglio at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (86.11.38).

89 For literature on the living, or animated, icon see Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 261–96; Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon*; Chatterjee 2014; on the role of epigrams and *ekphraseis* in animating imagery see James and Webb, “To Understand Ultimate Things,” 1–17; Maguire, *Image and Imagination*.

90 Some of the same conceits on the wondrous relationship between fire and water in Epigram B, esp., are also found in Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, *Verses*, no. 5, which is copied in Manuel Philes, *Poems*, ed. Miller 2, p. 420, App. 58. Cf. also Manuel Philes, *Poems*, ed. Miller, 1, p. 50, Scor. 107, and Miller 2, p. 420, App. 59; 1Reg. 18:30–39.

Text

A. Εἰς σταυρὸν τίμιον καὶ ἅγιον ξύλον κεκοσμημένον χρυσῶ

Τὸ ξύλον ἰδοῦ καὶ τὸ πῦρ μόνα βλέπω·

τὸ γοῦν θαῦμα ποῦ, συμφυῆς κἄν μὴ βλέπῃς;

Τιμῶ τὸ λοιπὸν ἡγιασμένον ξύλον

καὶ τὴν ἄθυτον προσκυνῶ μου θυσίαν.

B. Εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν ἅγιον καὶ τίμιον σταυρὸν

Ἦ φλόξ ἐν ὑγρῶ καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἐν τῷ ξύλῳ

καὶ θαῦμα πῶς ἄλληλα μὴ κατεσθίει

ἢ Χριστὸς αὐτὸς ἐν δυσὶν ἐναντίοις,

ἢ κρυσταλλωθεὶς καὶ χρυσὸς Χριστοῦ δέει.

5 αὐτόν τε τηρεῖ καὶ δροσίζει τὸ ξύλον.

Translation

A. On a cross of the precious and holy wood adorned with gold

Behold,¹ I see only wood² and fire.³

So where then is the wonder⁴ if you cannot see it embedded <in this reliquary>?

I⁵ honor the relics of the sacred wood

and I venerate my sacrificeless sacrifice.⁶

B. On the same holy and precious cross

The flame in liquid,⁷ and the fire⁸ in the wood,

yet it is a wonder how one does not consume the other:⁹

either¹⁰ Christ himself¹¹ is contained in (these) two oppositions,¹²

or gold, being frozen,¹³ even hinders from¹⁴ Christ.¹⁵

5 The wood both protects and refreshes him (the owner of the reliquary).¹⁶

Commentary

1. ξύλον ἰδοῦ (behold the wood): cf. George the Monk, *Concise Chronicle*, ed. Migne, PG 110, 325.37, and George Kedrenos, *A Synopsis of Histories*, ed. Bekker 1, 208.18. Both sources are paraphrases of Esther 7:9.
2. ξύλον (wood): relic of the True Cross.
3. πῦρ (fire): refers to the gold that adorned the reliquary. Aristotle likens gold to fire in *Metaphysica*, ed. and transl. Ross, 1054b.13, transl. Tredennick, 19.
4. θαῦμα (wonder, miracle): In the previous verse, the anonymous speaker states that he sees matter only (wood and fire). He cannot see the wonder – the miraculous component that makes this seemingly ordinary piece of wood a relic from *the* Wood upon which Christ was crucified.
5. The anonymous speaker is most likely the owner/patron of the reliquary.
6. Xanthopoulos employed rhyme and wordplay at the caesurae and ends of verses in Epigram A: ἰδοῦ (v.1) and ποῦ (v. 2); βλέπω (v.1) and βλέπῃς (v.2); λοιπὸν (v.3) and ἄθυτον (v.4); ξύλον (v.3) and θυσίαν (v.4); and ἄθυτον and θυσίαν (v.4).

ἄθυτον θυσίαν (sacrificeless sacrifice): In pre-Christian and pagan contexts, this phrase referred to any gift offered to a deity that did not follow custom (i.e. was not accompanied by the requisite animal sacrifice).⁹¹ In Christian theology, it was used to describe Abraham's son Isaac⁹² and Christ's Crucifixion,⁹³ and referred to the celebration of the Eucharist.⁹⁴ In the context of this epigram, this phrase could refer to the wood of the True Cross as well as to the reliquary – the donor's bloodless offering to God.

7. ὑγρῶν (liquid): refers to the crystal that adorned the reliquary (see n. 13).
8. φλόξ (flame) and πῦρ (fire): refer to the gold of the reliquary (see n. 3).
9. Vv. 1–2: cf. Ez. 20:47, quoted by Christ in Lk. 23:31.
10. In two other epigrams, Xanthopoulos uses a similar “either/or” hypothesis for explaining the life-likeness of the Archangel Michael and Christ in two paintings by the artist Eulalios.⁹⁵
11. Χριστός αὐτός (Christ himself): relics of the True Cross. Relics were believed to be the physical embodiment of the holy person with whom they are associated.⁹⁶
12. ἐν δυσὶν ἐναντίοις (in two oppositions, or contraries): refers to those described in v. 1: flame in liquid, and fire in the wood.⁹⁷ Fire is associated with Christ's divine nature; see Lampe s.v. “πῦρ.” The first opposition thus references Christ's Baptism, and the second, his Crucifixion.⁹⁸
13. κρυσταλλωθεῖς (frozen): or crystallized, which may indicate that the golden reliquary was encased in crystal.⁹⁹
14. δέει: appears once in v. 4 but is used in conjunction with two different subjects – Χριστός (v. 3) and χρυσός (v. 4). For each subject, it takes on different meanings due to the respective grammatical constructions; LSJ, s.v. δέω. In the latter instance, the gold/fire (see n. 8) hinders from (i.e. does not harm) Christ/wood (see n. 11) because it is frozen/crystallized (see n. 13).
15. Xanthopoulos creates alliteration between κρυσταλλωθεῖς (frozen), χρυσός (gold), Χριστοῦ (Christ).
16. αὐτόν (him): the anonymous owner of the reliquary. Just as he is indicated in the latter part of Epigram A, so is he again in the last verse of Epigram B. The call for protection (τηρεῖ) suggests that the reliquary may have been an enkolpion, as such objects were worn for the safeguarding of the owners' lives.¹⁰⁰

91 See Hase *et al.* 1831, col. 874 (s.v. “ἄθυτος”).

92 Cf. John Chrysostom, *On the Ascension*, ed. Migne, PG 52: 802.52.

93 Cf. Germanos, *On the Bodily Burial of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Oration 2)*, ed. Migne, PG 98: 280A. Taft 1992: 70.

94 See I. Drpić, I.2.1 in this volume.

95 See also Hostetler 2020: 280–83. Cf. BEIŪ Me6 and Me91.

97 Cf. Aristotle, *De Anima*, 422b.26–27, transl. Hett, 129.

98 Cf. Christopher Mytilene, *Poems* no. 3.

99 Cf. Frolow 1961: 491; Frolow 1965: 31 n. 1.

100 Hostetler 2020: 276–80; Kartsonis 1994: 73–102.

Text D | Author Unknown (eleventh century to early thirteenth century)**Epigram on the Reliquary of Saint Marina**

Ed.: A. Rhoby, *BEIŮ* 2, Me81

Monument/Artefact: Reliquary of Saint Marina, eleventh to early thirteenth centuries.

Silver gilt, 10.5cm x 6cm x 3cm. Museo Correr, Venice (Cl. X n. 0086). See figs. I.6.8, a–f

Other Translations: Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 302 (vv. 4–5 only); B. Hostetler, *The Function of Text: Byzantine Reliquaries with Epigrams, 843–1204* (unpublished PhD dissertation, Florida State University, 2016), 94, 178–79; A. Rhoby, “On the Interaction of Word and Image in Byzantium: The Case of the Epigrams on the Florence Reliquary,” in *Towards Rewriting? New Approaches to Byzantine Archaeology and Art. Proceedings of the Symposium on Byzantine Art and Archaeology, Cracow, September 8–10, 2008*, eds. P. E. Grotowski and S. Skrzyniarz (Warsaw, 2010), 103 (vv. 1–3 only), repr. in *idem*, “Epigrams, Epigraphy and Sigillography,” in *Epeironde: Proceedings of the 10th International Symposium of Byzantine Sigillography (Ioannina, 1–3. October 2009)*, eds. C. Stavrakos and B. Papadopoulou (Wiesbaden, 2011), 72 (vv. 1–2 only), and in *idem*, “Interactive Inscriptions: Byzantine Works of Art and



Fig. I.6.8a Reliquary of St. Marina, interior. Museo Correr, Venice (Cl. X n. 0086). 2017 © Archivio Fotografico – Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia



Fig. I.6.8b Reliquary of St. Marina, back. Museo Correr, Venice (Cl. X n. 0086). 2017 © Archivio Fotografico – Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia



Fig. I.6.8c Reliquary of St. Marina, upper side. Museo Correr, Venice (Cl. X n. 0086). 2017 © Archivio Fotografico – Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia



Fig. I.6.8d Reliquary of St. Marina, left side. Museo Correr, Venice (Cl. X n. 0086). 2017 © Archivio Fotografico – Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia



Fig. I.6.8e Reliquary of St. Marina, lower side. Museo Correr, Venice (Cl. X n. 0086). 2017 © Archivio Fotografico – Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia



Fig. I.6.8f Reliquary of St. Marina, right side. Museo Correr, Venice (Cl. X n. 0086). 2017 © Archivio Fotografico – Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia

their Beholders,” in *Spatial Icons: Performativity in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, ed. A. Lidov (Moscow, 2011), 321 (v. 1 only); I. Ševčenko, “Observations Concerning Inscriptions on Objects Described in the Catalogue ‘The Glory of Byzantium,’” *Palaeoslavica* 6 (1998), 251–52; M. C. Ross and G. Downey, “A Reliquary of St. Marina,” *BSI* 23 (1962), 42, repr. in J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, “Un thème iconographique peu connu: Marina assommant Belzébuth,” *Byzantion* 32 (1962), 256 n. 1 (vv. 1–3), in J. Folda, “Reliquary of Saint Marina,” in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, eds. H. C. Evans and W. D. Wixom (New York, 1997), 496, and in H. Klein, “Reliquary of St. Marina,” in *Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics, and Devotion in Medieval Europe*, eds. M. Bagnoli et al. (New Haven, Conn., 2010), 91 (English); A. Guillou, “Inscriptions byzantines importées en Italie,” in *Epigrafia medievale greca e latina: Ideologia e funzione, Atti del Seminario di Erice (12–18 settembre 1991)*, eds. G. Cavallo, and C. Mango (Spoleto, 1995), 136–37, repr. in A. Guillou, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques médiévales d’Italie* (Rome, 1996), 83, in W. Hörandner, “Besprechungen,” *JÖB* 48 (1998), 311 (v. 1 only), and in D. Feissel, *Chroniques d’épigraphie byzantine: 1987–2004* (Paris, 2006) no. 1005 (v. 1 only); L. Clugnet, *Vie et office de Sainte Marine: textes latins, grecs, coptes, arabes, syriaques, éthiopien, haut-allemand, bas-allemand et français*, Bibliothèque hagiographique orientale 8 (Paris, 1905), xix–xx (French); A. Rhoby, *BEIÜ* 2, 254; W. Hörandner, “Besprechungen,” *JÖB* 48 (1998), 311 (v. 1 only) (German); F. D’Aiuto, “Dodecasillabi su un encolpio con cammeo d’ametista del monastero di Vatopedi,” *Nέα Πώμη* 4 (2007), 439 (Italian); T. D’Amadenti, *Biologia S. Marinae monachum indutae virginis* (Venice, 1676), 65–68, repr. in F. Cornaro, “De Ecclesia Parochiali Sanctae Marinae Virginis,” in *Ecclesiae venetae antiquis monumentis nunc etiam primum editis illustratae ac in decades distributae* (Venice, 1749), 3, 254 (Latin).

Significance

The reliquary of Saint Marina is important for understanding the ways in which relics were made accessible in Byzantium. The form and function of the object were coordinated with the content and placement of the epigram in order to visually present the relic to the viewer.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

This anonymous twelve-verse epigram is inscribed on a small silver-gilt reliquary that once contained the left hand of Saint Marina, a third-century martyr from Antioch of Pisidia. The asymmetrical open container is rounded and deeper at the upper end, narrow in the middle, and wider and shallower at the lower end (fig. I.6.8a). The scalloped rim is outlined with two bands of twisted wire and ten small rings that once mounted a string of pearls.¹⁰¹

101 On threaded pearls see Hetherington 2000: 59–69.

The interior features a medallion portrait of the saint (Η ΑΓΙΑ ΜΑΡΙΝΑ) in repoussé, the negative of which is visible on the back (fig. I.6.8b). The small size of the reliquary and the presence of a suspension loop indicate that it was suspended from a chain. While some of the epigram's words are misspelled, the arrangement of the verses makes the text legible for the reader.¹⁰² Vv. 1–6 are written in two lines on the sides, three verses each (fig. I.6.8c–f). The epigram begins with the upper line and to the right of the suspension loop. A dot separates each verse, and crosses mark the beginnings of vv. 1 and 4. The back is inscribed with vv. 7–12 in seventeen lines and, here too, a dot separates each verse.

The date of the reliquary is not known, but its epigraphic and iconographic features suggest that it was produced sometime between the eleventh and early thirteenth centuries.¹⁰³ The epigram states that an unnamed patron – a woman, according to the female participial form of ζητοῦσα (searching, v. 5) – had this reliquary made for the hand of Saint Marina. The significance of her hand, according to her vita and v. 3, is that she used it to smash the heads of a dragon with a hammer.¹⁰⁴ The epigram does not specify whether the reliquary contained the left or the right hand, in whole or in part, but a seventeenth-century witness states that it contained a left hand minus the thumb.¹⁰⁵ The reliquary's unusual form was certainly determined by the specific dimensions of this relic.¹⁰⁶

The reliquary of Saint Marina is important for understanding the ways in which relics were made accessible in Byzantium.¹⁰⁷ The direct address of the first two verses indicates that the addressee, the viewer (θεατῶν), could see the hand inside the reliquary.¹⁰⁸ The form of the object facilitated the relic's visibility. The finished scalloped rim is evidence that the reliquary was left uncovered.¹⁰⁹ The string of pearls, now lost, originally framed and highlighted the relic. The orientation of the portrait medallion toward the interior, rather than the exterior, also suggests an internally directed focus on the contents of the object.¹¹⁰ In addition, this depiction of Marina deviates from standard representations of female martyrs. Her right hand, holding a cross, is left of center, and not in front of her chest, which is the conventional position. In contrast, her left hand is at the center of her

102 For spelling see D'Aiuto 2007: 436–38.

103 The reliquary was taken by a certain Giovanni di Bora from an unnamed monastery outside of Constantinople in the thirteenth century, and given to the church of San Liberale in Venice, which was subsequently renamed Santa Marina; *BEIŪ* 2: 253, n. 602; Riant 1878: 263, 264, 266, 296, 298. The reliquary was moved to Santa Maria Formosa in 1818; Clugnet 1905: xviii, 289–90. The date when the relic was removed and the reliquary was given to the Museo Correr has not been published.

104 *Acta S. Marinae*, ed. Usener, 29.13–30.19; *Imperial Menologion*, ed. Latysev, 2:182.24–29; for this iconography see Lafontaine-Dosogne 1962.

105 D'Amadeni 1676: 65–68, quoted in Clugnet 1905: xix–xx.

106 For another Byzantine reliquary in which the form follows the shape of its contents see the reliquary of St. Sergios at Dumbarton Oaks (BZ.1953.19); Bagnoli 2010 no. 28.

107 On the accessibility of relics in Byzantium see n. 12; Toussaint 2012: 655–78; for an alternative interpretation see Pentcheva 2012: 55–71.

108 D'Aiuto 2007: 437; Rhoby 2010: 103; Rhoby 2011a: 72; Rhoby 2011b: 320–21.

109 Ross and Downey 1962: 44 suggest that it had a crystal lid, but there is no evidence to support this. D'Amadeni's description and watercolor drawings indicate that the reliquary did not have a lid in the seventeenth century.

110 For further discussion on its form see Hostetler 2016: 92–100.

body, and she appears to extend it out toward the viewer. Her portrait thus emphasizes the same hand that the seventeenth-century witness claims the reliquary contained.

The epigram's content and placement also contribute to the viewing of the relic; they also suggest that the reliquary could have potentially been worn as an enkolpion, most likely by the patron. The first half (vv. 1–6) focuses on the hand of the saint and the gold reliquary that adorned it. Placed on the sides, this portion of the inscribed text is visually part of the gold and pearl setting – the “adornment for the adorned” (v. 6) – that framed the relic. If the reliquary was worn as an enkolpion, vv. 1–6 would have been oriented toward the wearer, and the relic oriented toward the viewer. As the wearer read the text aloud, the viewer simultaneously listened to the question addressed to him in v. 1 while looking at the relic.

The second half of the epigram (vv. 7–12) differs in content and audience. The speaker, now addressing Marina, modestly states that her gift of gold is small in comparison to her infinite love (πόθος, v. 8) for Marina.¹¹¹ Placed on the back of the reliquary, this portion of the inscribed text physically surrounds the reverse image of the martyr. The choice of repoussé thus allowed the patron to make use of Marina's image on both the front and back. If the reliquary was worn, the inscribed prayer to Marina and her image would have been pressed against the patron's heart.

111 On the role of πόθος in dedicatory epigrams see Spingou, *Words and Artworks*, 219–21; Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 296–331.

Text**Diplomatic Transcription¹**

Inscription on the side:² +³ ζητεῖς⁴ θεατὰ τίνος⁵ ἡ χεῖρ τυγχάνει .⁶ μάρτυρος ἦδε μάρινης τῆς ἁγίας · ἦσ τὸ κράτος ἔθλασε δράκοντο κάρασ / +⁷ αὐτὴν με πρὸς ζήτησιν ὥτρυνε σχέσις · ζητοῦσα γοῦν ἔτυχον αὐτῆς ἐκ πόθου · πρὸς κοσμί οὖν ἔσπευσα τὸν τῆς κοσμίας⁸

Inscription on the back:⁹ μικρὸς μὲν / οὗτος τῆ¹⁰ μεγάλη / τυγχάνει ·¹¹ ὅμως δ' ἄ / πειρος σὺν προαιρέ / σει πόθος · τοῖνυν ἄ / μαράντινον ἄνθος / μαρτύρων · ζάλης ῥύου με τῶν νο / ητῶν πνευμά / των · νίκην / κατ' αὐ / τῶν / (καί) κρά / τοσ τε / παρέχοις ·¹² / ἀνάλογον νεμουσα τη¹³ / σχέσει Δόσιν ·¹⁴

Edition

Ζητεῖς, θεατά, τίνος ἡ χεῖρ τυγχάνει;
 μάρτυρος ἦδε Μαρίνης τῆς ἁγίας
 ἦς τὸ κράτος ἔθλασε δράκοντος κάρας·
 αὐτὴν με πρὸς ζήτησιν ὥτρυνε σχέσις·
 5 ζητοῦσα γοῦν ἔτυχον αὐτῆς ἐκ πόθου·
 πρὸς κόσμον οὖν ἔσπευσα τὸν τῆς κοσμίας·
 μικρὸς μὲν οὗτος τῆ μεγάλης τυγχάνει,
 ὅμως δ' ἄπειρος σὺν προαιρέσει πόθος·
 τοῖνυν, ἀμαράντινον ἄνθος μαρτύρων,
 10 ζάλης ῥύου με τῶν νοητῶν πνευμάτων·
 νίκην κατ' αὐτῶν καὶ κράτος τε παρέχοις
 ἀνάλογον νέμουσα τῆ σχέσει δόσιν.

Translation

You ask, viewer,¹⁵ whose hand is it?
 This is of the holy martyr Marina;¹⁶
 its¹⁷ power smashed the heads of the dragon.¹⁸
 (My) affection urged me towards a search for it.
 5 Thus searching¹⁹ (for the hand) I obtained it by (my) love;
 so I hastened²⁰ toward adornment for the Adorned.²¹
 This (adornment)²² for the Great One is²³ small,²⁴
 but nonetheless my love together with intention is infinite.
 Therefore, unfading flower of the martyrs,²⁵
 10 Save me from the storm of the intelligible spirits!²⁶
 May you grant (me) both victory and power over them,
 dispensing a gift proportionate to (my) affection.²⁷

Commentary

1. An unusual feature of this inscription is that it is written in accented minuscule script, rather than majuscule, but one majuscule letter can be detected (see n. 14). The following diplomatic transcription is based on that published in D' Aiuto 2007: 435, with some corrections.
2. This portion of the inscription, vv. 1–6, are inscribed in two lines on the perimeter of the reliquary.
3. A cross placed to the right of the suspension loop marks the beginning of the inscription. While the incipit cross is difficult to detect in published photographs, it is documented by Guillou 1995: 136; Guillou 1996: 83; and D' Aiuto 2007: 435. V. 3 ends to the left of the suspension loop.
4. The zeta – as in ζητεῖς (v. 1), ζήτησιν (v. 4), ζητοῦσα (v. 5), and ζάλης (v. 10) – resembles an xsi. An eleventh-century stone inscription at Hosios Loukas features xsis which look like zetas.¹¹²
5. In some cases, such as this one, the regular minuscule sigma (σ) is used at the end of the word instead of the regular terminal, lunette-shaped sigma (ς). The present transcription preserves each of these instances.
6. The end of each verse is marked by a single dot placed at mid-height of the letters. Such markers are standard for Byzantine inscriptions. The dots at the ends of v. 10 (πνευμάτων) and v. 11 (παρέχοις) are placed at the base of the letters, appearing as periods. These should not be interpreted as full-stop punctuation marks, but as normal verse divisions like the other dots. The ends of vv. 3 and 6 do not have such dots. The end of v. 3 is indicated by the suspension loop and by the cross that marks the beginning of v. 1 (see n. 3). The end of v. 6 is indicated by the cross that marks the beginning of v. 4 (see n. 7).
7. This cross is positioned below and to the right of the suspension loop, between the end of v. 6 and the beginning of v. 4. In the editions by Ross and Downey 1962: 41; Guillou 1995: 136; Guillou 1996: 83; and D' Aiuto 2007: 435 this cross is placed at the end of v. 6. I have chosen to place it at the beginning of v. 4 in order to highlight its function to guide the reader from the end of v. 3 in the upper line down to the beginning of the lower-line inscription.
8. The engraver did not include an acute accent over the iota, but mistakenly placed a grave accent over the second sigma.
9. The six verses on the back are inscribed in 17 lines.
10. The line above the eta looks like a grave accent, but it is actually curved and appears to be half of a circumflex.
11. A dot marks the end of each dodecasyllable verse (with the exception of vv. 3 and 6, see n. 3 and n. 7)
12. It appears that only one dot of the diaeresis over the iota was inscribed.

¹¹² BEIÜ 3: Gr112, with comment on p. 79.

13. The alpha and eta in νέμουσα and τῆ, respectively, are inscribed directly above the letters that precede them.
14. The delta is the only letter in the epigram that is majuscule. It is not clear why the engraver did this. One reason may be that he wanted to clearly mark δόσιν so that it could be easily read as a new word. We might also suggest that this word was particularly important: it is the “gift” that the patron requests from Marina in return for her act of adorning the relic (see below).
15. θεατά (viewer) is masculine. This may suggest that the female speaker (see n. 19) addresses a male viewer, but masculine is also the default form when a speaker addresses any potential audience.¹¹³ The feminine form would be θεάτρια.
16. Saint Marina is known as Margaret in the Latin tradition. Her feast day is July 17.¹¹⁴
17. The relative pronoun ἧς could also refer to Marina, but the focus throughout vv. 1–6 is on the saint’s hand.¹¹⁵
18. This is the most well-known episode from the life of Marina.¹¹⁶ Ihor Ševčenko argues that the use of the plural κάρας (heads) rather than the singular form κάραν was an error made by the engraver; the life of the saint refers only to a single-headed dragon.¹¹⁷ D’Aiuto does not dismiss the possibility that the plural usage was intentional as there is a literary tradition of describing Satan as a multi-headed dragon.¹¹⁸
19. ζητοῦσα (searching): cf. Mt. 7:7. The feminine participial form indicates a female patron.¹¹⁹ Guillou also suggests that the patron’s name may have been Marina (cf. n. 25).¹²⁰
20. ἔσπευσα (hastened): cf. *Imperial Menologion*, 2: 182.33.¹²¹
21. Wordplay on κόσμον (adornment) and κοσμίως (adorned) (cf. n. 25).¹²²
22. Francesco D’Aiuto and Andreas Rhoby argue that the demonstrative οὗτος (this) refers to κόσμον (adornment, v. 6) and not πόθος (love, v. 8), as argued by Ihor Ševčenko.¹²³
23. τυγχάνει (is), positioned at the ends of vv. 1 and 7, marks the epigram’s two halves, placed on the two parts of the reliquary (vv. 1–6 on the sides; vv. 7–12 on the back). This division of the text is also established by the μέν–δέ construction in vv. 7 and 8.
24. μικρός and μεγάλη: cf. *Acta S. Marinae*, 29.18–20. Dedicatory epigrams typically include a statement of humility by the patron.¹²⁴

113 Smyth 1956 no. 1015.

114 A. Kazhdan and N. P. Ševčenko in s.v. “Marina,” *ODB*.

115 For a discussion of the pronouns and their antecedents see *BEIŪ* 2: 255–56.

116 *Acta S. Marinae*, 29.13–30.19; *Imperial Menologion*, 2:182.24–29.

117 Ševčenko 1998: 251.

118 D’Aiuto 2007: 437–38.

119 Guillou 1995: 137; Guillou 1996: 84; Ševčenko 1998: 252.

120 Guillou 1995: 138; Guillou 1996: 84; this is supported by D’Aiuto 2007: 438; *BEIŪ* 2: 254.

121 *BEIŪ* 2: 253.

122 Guillou 1995: 137; Guillou 1996: 84.

123 D’Aiuto 2007: 438; *BEIŪ* 2: 256; Ševčenko 1998: 252.

124 Frolov 1965: 194.

25. The phrase ἀμαράντινον ἄνθος μαρτύρων (flower of the martyrs) is found in other hagiographical texts,¹²⁵ cf. 1Pt. 5:4.¹²⁶ The words ἀμαράντινον and μαρτύρων also play on Marina's name (cf. nn. 19 and 21).¹²⁷
26. The patron's request for protection against the evil spirits is found in other epigrams.¹²⁸
27. σχέσει (affection): i.e. the affection that urged her to find the hand (v. 4). This word also translates as "possession," which in this context, could also refer to her reliquary.¹²⁹
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125 *BEIÜ* 2:255.

126 Ross and Downey 1962: 42.

127 *BEIÜ* 2: 255.

128 *BEIÜ* 2: 253.

129 LSJ, and Lampe s.v. "σχέσις."

Text E | Manuel Philes (c.1270–c.1340)**Epigrams on Demetrios Palaiologos' Reliquary of Saint Demetrius**

Ed.: Manuel Philes, *Poems, Escorial 270*, ed. Miller, p. 134

MS.:¹³⁰ Escorial, Real Biblioteca, X.IV.20 (s. XVI), f. 83v

Other Translations: E. Russell, *St. Demetrius of Thessalonica: Cult and Devotion in the Middle Ages*, *Byzantine and Neohellenic Studies* 6 (Oxford, 2010), 20; C. Walter, "St. Demetrius: The Myroblytos of Thessalonika," *Eastern Church Review* 5 (1973), 164 (vv. 1–2 only), and repr. in *idem, The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition* (Aldershot, 2003), 82 n. 59 (vv. 1–2 only) (English); A. Frolov, "Un nouveau reliquaire byzantin (Manuel Philes, *Poems*, I, pp. 133–37)," *REG* 66 (1953), 105 (vv. 1–2 only) (French).

Significance

Reliquaries of St. Demetrius were designed as representations of the saint's tomb and ciborium in Thessaloniki through form and iconography. This epigram is an example of the ways in which Byzantine poets used such texts to reinforce this symbolic meaning of the object.

The Author

Manuel Philes had a prolific career as a court poet under the Emperors Andronikos II (r.1282–1328) and III (r.1328–41) Palaiologos.¹³¹ His large corpus of poetry includes epigrams on works of art, both monumental and portable, some of which are extant.¹³²

Text and Context

This epigram is one of several that were inscribed on one reliquary, or set of reliquaries, now lost, of St. Demetrius.¹³³ The patron was Demetrios Angelos Doukas Palaiologos (c.1295–c.1343), the youngest son of Andronikos II.¹³⁴ In 1306 he was made *despotes* (a title created in the twelfth century that ranked just below emperor and co-emperor) and began governing Thessaloniki in 1322 or 1327. Demetrios was also the patron of a lavishly illustrated Menologion, now at the Bodleian Library, Oxford (gr. th. f. 1).¹³⁵

¹³⁰ Not consulted.

¹³¹ A.-M. Talbot and A. Cutler, *ODB* s.v. "Manuel Philes"; Stickler 1992: 10–95; *PLP* 12 no. 29817; see also A. Rhooby with additions by M. Bazzani, I.4.2 in this volume.

¹³² See most recently, Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*; for a list of those objects extant see Paul 2007: 257–61. Reliquaries of the True Cross are catalogued in Frolov 1961 nos. 573–74; other reliquary epigrams of Manuel Philes are discussed by Ebersolt 1921: 102 n. 2, 109 n. 4, 110, 130, 131, 133, 134, 137, 140 n. 2.

¹³³ For a list of these epigrams and the argument that they were inscribed on one reliquary of St. Demetrius see Frolov 1953; see also Xyngopoulos 1970, 47–49, 58–60; Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, no. 96.

¹³⁴ *PLP* 9, no. 21456

¹³⁵ Hutter 1977–97: 2:1–33, figs. 1–105. The digital facsimile is available online: <https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/adoaf7cf-a9bc-41d3-bcf5-9360d65a3311> (accessed December 2020).

St. Demetrius was an early fourth-century martyr from Thessaloniki.¹³⁶ By the fifth century, a church was built at the site of his execution and burial; however the primary sources indicate that his relics were either hidden or inaccessible.¹³⁷ The locus of veneration was, instead, on the ciborium located in the north aisle of the basilica.¹³⁸ It housed an effigy of St. Demetrius, and was regarded as the saint's tomb.¹³⁹ The cult of St. Demetrius remained in Thessaloniki, rather than being translated to Constantinople, and was integral to the city's identity, protection, and political power;¹⁴⁰ he became the patron saint of the Palaiologan dynasty.¹⁴¹ It is thus understandable that Demetrios Palaiologos possessed a particular affinity for the saint of his city and family. Philes emphasizes this relationship by drawing attention to the fact that they share a name (v. 4).

By the eleventh century, *myron* (holy oil) appeared in the crypt of the church.¹⁴² It was thought that this *myron* was produced by the body of St. Demetrius, who became known as the *myroblytes* (*myron*-gushing) saint. The general population collected the *myron* in inexpensive lead flasks, and wealthier individuals owned gold, silver, and enamel reliquaries.¹⁴³ André Grabar analyzed surviving examples of the latter group, demonstrating that they were designed as schematic copies of the saint's ciborium and tomb in Thessaloniki.¹⁴⁴

According to Philes' epigram, this reliquary also imitated the saint's shrine. The form of the reliquary is not known, other than the fact that it was gold and an enkolpion.¹⁴⁵ Philes calls it the "tomb" because, like that at the church of St. Demetrius, it contained the saint, in the form of *myron*. The chest of the *despotes* is called "Thessaloniki" because here is where the reliquary/tomb is located when it is worn as an enkolpion. While it is customary for scholars to refer to reliquaries of St. Demetrius as "copies" or "reproductions" of the saint's shrine, it should be pointed out that Philes never uses such terminology.¹⁴⁶ He declares that the golden reliquary enkolpion of Demetrios Palaiologos *is* the tomb of the saint, not a copy of it.

136 Skedros 1999.

137 For the construction of this and other churches dedicated to St. Demetrius in the first centuries of his cult see Bogdanović 2011; on the issue of bodily relics, or the lack thereof see Walter 2003: 73–76.

138 Pallas 1979: 44–58.

139 Cormack 1985: 50–94; Cormack 1989: 547–54; Veneskey 2019: 16–39. This effigy was transferred to Constantinople in 1149 by the order of Manuel I Komnenos; Kotzabassi 2013: 175–89.

140 Macrides 1990: 198–201.

141 Russell 2010: 20.

142 The *myron* may have appeared as early as the ninth or tenth century, but the earliest textual evidence dates to 1040; Bakirtzis 2002: 180.

143 Loverdou-Tsigarida 2003: 242–45; Bakirtzis 1990: 140–49.

144 Grabar 1950: 8; Grabar 1954: 312–13; see also Xyngopoulos 1936: 101–36; Bauer 2013: 351–52.

145 Frolow 1953 suggests it may resemble the twelfth-century reliquary at the Vatopedi Monastery, Mount Athos; *BEIÜ* 2: Me37–42.

146 See, e.g., Grabar 1950: 8; Walter 1973: 162; Bakirtzis 2002: 184; Bogdanović 2011: 289.

Text

Εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ

Τῷ δεσπότῃ τὰ στέρνα, Θετταλῶν πόλις·
 Δημήτριον γὰρ εἰς χρυσοῦν φέρει τάφον
 Ζωηφόρον βλύζοντα μυρίπνουν χύσιν.
 Ὀμώνυμος δ' οὖν ἔστι Παλαιολόγος.

Translation

On the same¹

The chest² on the *despotes*,³ (is) the city of the Thessalians;⁴
 for it carries⁵ Demetrius⁶ in a golden tomb,⁷
 who gushes forth a life-bringing and sweet-scenting flood.⁸
 So then, (this *despotes*) Palaiologos bears the same name (as the saint).⁹

Commentary

1. The title refers to the preceding epigram in the manuscript: Εἰς ἐγκόλπιον ἐν ᾧ ἦν ὁ μέγας Δημήτριος, τοῦ δεσπότης κυροῦ Δημητρίου (On an enkolpion of the *despotes* Lord Demetrius, in which was the Great Demetrius).¹⁴⁷
2. στέρνα (chest) describes the reliquary's function as an enkolpion (see n. 5 below). This word can also be used metaphorically in reference to one's heart, the seat of passions.¹⁴⁸ Through this reading, the *heart/love* of the *despotes* is his city of Thessaloniki.
3. δεσπότης (*despotes*): a title created in the twelfth century, it ranked second only to that of emperor. It was most often granted to emperors' sons.¹⁴⁹
4. Θετταλῶν (Thessalians): Philes uses the Attic spelling for this region south of Thessaloniki.¹⁵⁰ After the twelfth century, Thessaloniki was frequently called "Thessaly" and its citizens "Thessalians."¹⁵¹
5. φέρει (bear/carry): describes the reliquary's function as an enkolpion (see n. 2 above).
6. St. Demetrius of Thessaloniki. His feast day is October 26.¹⁵²
7. τάφον (tomb): Other reliquaries of St. Demetrius are also called tombs.¹⁵³ The gold describes the reliquary's materials; a comparable object is the reliquary enkolpion of St. Demetrius at Dumbarton Oaks.¹⁵⁴ The interior of this medallion is entirely gold, and it features an image of St. Demetrius reclining in his tomb.

147 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, ed. Miller, 1, p. 133, Scor. 269. In his "Corrigenda et Addenda," Miller 1857: 428 provides the titles given to these reliquaries in other manuscripts of Philes.

148 LSJ, s.v. "στέρνον."

149 A. Kazhdan, *ODB* s.v. "Despotes."

150 LSJ, s.v. "Θεσσαλός."

151 T. Gregory, *ODB* s.v. "Thessaly."

152 A. Kazhdan and N. P. Ševčenko, *ODB* s.v. "Demetrius of Thessaloniki"; *Miracula sancti Demetrii*, ed. and transl. Lemerle (Paris, 1979–81): *BHG NovAuct* 499–523.

153 *BEIŪ* 2: Me5; Lambros, "Ο Μαρκεσιανὸς κῶδιξ 524," no. 79 = *Anthologia Marciana*, B136.

154 Acc. no. BZ.1953.20. *BEIŪ* 2: Me112; Hostetler 2020: 276–80.

8. μυρίπνουυ χύσιυ (sweet-scenting flood): the myron of St. Demetrius is described in the primary sources as having a sweet fragrance and an endless supply.¹⁵⁵ Μυρίπνουυ is also phonetically similar to the word *myron*. Χύσιυ is a pun on the word χρυσοῦν (golden) in verse 2.¹⁵⁶
9. The literal translation is: “So then, the homonymous one is Palaiologos.” The homonymous relationship between Demetrius Palaiologos and St. Demetrius is also made explicit in Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Scor. 269, ed. Miller 1, 133–34, as well as in the dedicatory poem of his *Menologion*.¹⁵⁷

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I.7 Memory and Art

Introduction

FOTEINI SPINGOU

This chapter emphasizes the centrality of the concept of memory in Byzantine culture.¹ Both the visual arts and the written word could convey memories. The concept of memory in Byzantium included both remembrance and recollection and it was related to psychology, the storage of data, and the remembrance of the deceased. The texts in this chapter are mostly concerned with how memory works, the means of remembering past deeds, and responses to memories from the past. The reader may refer to II.7 in this volume for strategies regarding the commemoration of the departed.²

The first text is a letter from the second quarter of the thirteenth century written by the metropolitan of Naupaktos, John Apokaukos (translated by Foteini Spingou, I.7.1). Apokaukos addresses the local ruler Theodore Komnenos Doukas over the issue of an olive grove and a forgotten promise by Komnenos Doukas. These provide the impetus for the medieval author to discuss theories about remembering and forgetting. Following ancient philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, memory for Apokaukos is constructed by mental images painted in color on the soul. The metropolitan warns that since mental images are paintings, they can decay, in the way that images on wooden panels do. He also emphasizes the distinction between “those [things] that can be seen” (*theata*) and “those that can be learnt” (*matheta*) as objects of memory. This distinction challenges the central notion that images are the “book of the illiterate,” as it suggests that the construction of memory from visual objects differs from that based on written texts or oral lessons.³

The next contribution is an excerpt from the Byzantine version of the story of the Seven Wise Men, the so-called *Book of Syntipas* – a Greek translation of a Syriac translation of a Persian story about a young prince, who was about to be taught the “wisdom of the entire world” by a wise man called Syntipas. In the passage discussed by Martin Hinterberger, the young learner was placed in a room painted with all the lessons he was to absorb (I.7.2 in this volume). Here, memorization – understood as the beginning of education – would be achieved using visual images.

1 For an introduction of the subject of memory in Byzantine Studies see Papalexandrou 2010 with further bibliography; for a Byzantine perspective on memory see Messis 2006: 107–11 and for the only rhetorical treatise on Memory, penned by Michael Psellos see Papaioannou 2017. See also the recent work of Aglae Pizzone (2017). Nicole Paxton Sullo also prepares an extensive discussion of Byzantine attitudes towards memory. About memory in the western medieval culture see Carruthers 2008, 2010.

2 See also Grünbart 2012. Another topic that I do not touch upon in this chapter is the relation between Byzantine history writing and memory; for a short introduction on the subject with further bibliography see Papaioannou 2014.

3 Regarding the centrality of this notion in the Byzantine culture see Papalexandrou 2010: 111–12.



Fig. I.7 Folio depicting St. Luke. Originally from a lectionary gospel book. c.1200–25, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, inv. no. 19.118
© Museum of Fine Arts Boston

An oration written by the twelfth-century court author Euthymios Malakes on the occasion of the visit of the Sultan to Constantinople in 1161 and presented here by Florin Leonte (I.7.3 in this volume) is remarkable for the multiple references to the purpose of works of literature (collectively called *λόγοι/logoi*) and works of visual art. Malakes' main concern is how to raise monuments (*μνημεία*) with both words and tangible materials, in order to maintain the memory of imperial noble deeds (*ἀριστεῖα*). A monumental cross raised in Hungary after an imperial victory in 1166 reveals a similar intent to that of Malakes' oration. This is clearly stated by an epigram that was meant to be inscribed on or to accompany the erection of the cross (translated by Foteini Spingou, I.7.4 in this volume). The text demonstrates that the responsibility for maintaining the memory of an imperial deed (and thus perpetuating imperial propaganda) was assumed by the emperor's entourage. In both examples, the deeds of the emperor recall those of his imperial predecessors, Constantine the Great as well as mythical and New Testament rulers. The excerpt from George Pachymeres' *History*, discussed by Alice-Mary Talbot (I.7.5 in this volume), also seeks to secure the memory of a good ruler. This excerpt offers a rare

account of a statue in later Byzantium. The statue was of Michael VIII, who led the return of the Byzantines to Constantinople in 1261 and, according to Pachymeres, was then shown standing on a column and presenting the city to God.

The following two texts concern artistic subject matters inspired by ancient/pagan mythology and show how the memory of specific stories was adapted to serve a Christian audience. In a sense, the two texts reveal a process of textual spoliation similar to that of buildings.⁴ The integration of stories from a profane past gave new aesthetic possibilities to patrons and viewers, who did not shy away from the pictorial images and engaged actively in viewing.⁵ They sometimes recorded the experience on paper and on other occasions used a text – in the form of an inscription – as an aid. The text discussed by Elizabeth Jeffreys (I.7.6 in this volume) comes from Theodore Prodromos' romance *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*. It is a short *ekphrasis* of a cup decorated with Dionysus, Satyrs, and Maenads, and offers possible responses to the visual representation of these mythical figures. Andreas Rhoby translates a set of texts that consist of three epigrams written by the twelfth-century author Theodore Balsamon for a cup that depicted the Judgment of Paris. At least one of these verses was meant to be inscribed on the cup (I.7.7 in this volume). This is confirmed by Balsamon's letter to the commissioner of the epigrams, which is also included in Rhoby's contribution.

In the last text of this chapter John Lansdowne discusses an excerpt from a sermon written by Giordano da Pisa in 1306 (I.7.8 in this volume). Here, Giordano asserts that Byzantine icons are historical witnesses for the lives of the saints and so they preserve reliable memories.

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I.7.1 John Apokaukos (c.1155–1233)

What is Memory?: A Letter to Kamateros

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: N. A. Bees, “Unedierte Schriftstücke aus der Kanzlei des Johannes Apokaukos des Metropoliten von Naupaktos (in Aetolien),” *BNJ* 21 (1971–74) no. 72, 132, for the critical apparatus see p. 216;¹ repr. in I. Delimaris, *Πατέρες τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικοὶ συγγραφεῖς τῆς δυτικῆς Ἑλλάδος 1: Ἄπαντα Ἰωάννου Ἀποκαύκου* (Nafpaktos, 2000), 254–55

MSS.:² St. Petersburg, RNB, Φ no. 906, graecus 250 (= Granst. 454) (s. XIII), f. 52v
Jerusalem, Orthodox Patriarchate, Graecus 276, f. 78r

Other Translations: None

Significance

The following letter describes the process of constructing mental images for one’s memory. Memory is seen as a painted board that is subject to the same process of physical corruption as portable icons. Apokaukos elaborates on ancient theories of memory and develops his original theory of the deterioration of mental images on this board. The process for restoring “mental images” he describes finds parallels in the actual practices related to the restoration of portable icons in Byzantium.

The Author

See F. Spingou in Tsampouras and Spingou, I.2.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

The simile that compares memory with a wax tablet was a well-known *topos* in theoretical discussions about memory since Plato.³ According to the text of *Theatetus*, images are depicted on “wax tablets” (κέρινα ἐκμαγεῖα or δέλτοι)⁴ like the impressions made by signet rings. These visual imprints, or better “mental images,” became a prevalent concept in the

I owe a big thanks to Ivan Drpić and to Nicole Paxton Sullon for their most helpful comments.

1 = Lampropoulos, *Απόμνημος*, no. 90, p. 229–30.

2 I have consulted only the manuscript in St. Petersburg.

3 For an introduction to pre-modern, esp. ancient and medieval, theories on memory the fundamental work is Carruthers 2008: 18–37.

4 *Theatetus*, 191d–197a.

pre-modern epistemology of memory. In Plato's *Philebus*, memory is seen to be united with the senses and to depict mental images on one's soul. Although the recording of mental images was defined as the work of a secretary in the Platonic dialog, later in the same text this becomes the work of a painter who paints on the soul anything that was perceived by sight or the other senses.⁵ Aristotle combines the two Platonic approaches and allows mental images to also register colors and dimensions.⁶

John Apokaukos, the Metropolitan of Nafpaktos, elaborates on the simile of comparing memory to a picture. For Apokaukos, it is not memory that paints, as in Plato's *Philebus*. Instead, in accordance with the Aristotelian metaphor, memory, rather than the soul, is the recipient of the painting. Still, Apokaukos avoids key concepts from the Stagirite philosopher, such as that of *phantasia*⁷ and does not use Aristotelian terms, such as "phantasms" or "icons" for mental images.

The letter below is addressed by the metropolitan of Nafpaktos to the secretary of the ruler of the Despotate of Epirus, Theodore Komnenos Doukas (r.1215–30). It concerns the disputed ownership of an olive grove. Apokaukos politely asks the secretary to help him reconsider the subject and details for his addressee how memory works.

For Apokaukos memory is a board, which will have the appearance of a portable icon after mental images are depicted on it. The passing of time causes the surface of this board to become rough. As happens with portable icons, the depicted figures either become dimmed and so new depictions may replace the older ones, or the surface of the board may crack, and parts of the depiction may be lost. Therefore, the intellect, which is responsible for thinking, will be unable to refer to accurate depictions and so thoughts will not be sharp. Using the danger of lost memories as an excuse, Apokaukos invites the royal secretary to restore his [Apokaukos'] memory by repainting mental images relevant to the issue of the grove. This would allow the metropolitan's intellect to see and trust the images stored in memory and to address the property issue fairly.

Although Apokaukos carefully follows the ancient theory of recollection (according to which the intellect – νοῦς – looks at the board of memory), he elaborates his own theory of the reception of mental images. In the Aristotelian work, the objects of memory (τὰ μνημονευτά), which are depicted on the board (πινάκιον), consist of pictures (ζῶα) and likenesses (εἰκόνες).⁸ As soon as these "objects of memory" are registered on the "board of memory," they become "phantasms" (φαντάσματα). In contrast to the Aristotelian theory, Apokaukos pioneers the terms *ta theata* (τὰ θεατά) and *ta matheta* (τὰ μαθητά), meaning, "things that can be seen" [i.e. the sights] and "things that can be learnt" [i.e. the lessons], which together indicate "objects of memory"; but he did not give a specific name

5 *Philebus* 39a–b; see Krell 1990: 46–47.

6 *On Memory*, 450b 20–25; on the relation between the Platonic discussions on memory in *Theaetetus* and *Philebus* and the Aristotelian *On Memory* see Lang 1980; see also Krell 1990: 16–19.

7 *On the Soul*, III.3.

8 *On Memory*, 450b20–451a1.

to the depictions on “the board of memory.”⁹ The very distinction between sights and lessons is remarkable in itself for it challenges the general Byzantine notion that images are the books for the illiterate.¹⁰

This long introductory paragraph aims to extend an invitation to the secretary to respond to the metropolitan. The anticipated letter would refresh the metropolitan’s memory about the events concerning the confiscation of the olive grove. Initially granted to Apokaukos, the grove was later, and without warning, granted as a *pronoia* to a soldier from Corinth. Apokaukos asks for the intervention of the secretary to resolve this specific property issue.¹¹

The reference to the dispute over the olive grove led Kosmas Lampropoulos to date the letter to the year 1223, while Helene Bee-Seferli, in her additions to the edition of the letters by Nikos Bees, dated the letter to after the reprisal of Thessaloniki by Theodore Doukas Komnenos in late 1224.¹² Mark C. Bartusis has placed the letter to c.1226 and has paired it to a second letter that this time is addressed to Theodora Doukas regarding the same issue of the olive trees.¹³

9 Plato in his discussion on recollection (*Philebus* 34c) speaks about mental images that are acquired by perception (αἴσθησις) or learning (μάθημα). The terms suggested by Apokaukos are particularly close, but not identical with the terms used by Plato.

10 See Lange 1969.

11 Bartusis 2013: 232–33 discusses the passage in detail.

12 Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, p. 230 and Bee-Seferli 1971–74: 216, respectively.

13 Bartusis 2013: 232–33.

Text

Πρὸς βασιλικὸν γραμματικὸν τὸν Καματηρόν.

Τὰ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα ἐμά, λογιώτατε καὶ φίλη μοι κεφαλῇ, ἐκ νοῶς γεννῶνται τῷ γήρᾳ σαθροῦ· καὶ τὸ τῆς μνήμης πινάκιον, ὡς τῶν γερόντων αἰ παρεῖαι τῷ χρόνῳ ρυτιδωθέν, οὐ παρέχει καθαρὰν τῷ νοῖ τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ ἐγγραφήν τῶν θεατῶν καὶ τῶν μαθητῶν· ἐντεῦθεν οὐδ' ὁ νοῦς, ὁ βλέπων εἰς τοιοῦτον πινάκιον, ἔχει τι γενναῖον εἰπεῖν. οἱ γὰρ τύποι τῶν μαθητῶν πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς συμπεσόντες οὐκ ἐναργῆ παρέχουσι τῷ λογιστικῷ τὴν τῶν μνημονευτῶν θεωρίαν, ὡς οὐδὲ γραφῆ παλαιωθεῖσα εἰκονίζει¹ τὸ ἀπ' αὐτῆς ἀκριβές καὶ τὸν ἐκ τῆς τέχνης σχηματισμόν. σὺ γοῦν τῇ ἐνούση σοὶ ἐκ σοφιστείας χρωματοουργία ἐπέντριβε τοῖς ἐμοῖς πρὸς εἰκονουργίαν ἀκριβεστέραν τὰ τῆς ἐπιδιορθώσεως χρώματα καὶ τὸ κεχηγνὸς ἀναπλήρου καὶ τὸ καταπίπτον ὑπέρειδε· καὶ χαριεῖς μοι ταύτην χάριν οὐχὶ μικράν, τοῦ ἐκ τῶν λογικῶν παριστορημάτων ἀπαλλάτων με τωθασμοῦ. ἐλαίας ὀλίγας, ἐλαία δὲ καὶ ὁ καρπὸς καὶ τὸ δένδρον, ἐδωρήσατό μοι ὁ κραταῖος βασιλεὺς ἕως μέτρου ζωῆς· νῦν δ', οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως, ἢ θέλων ἢ λαθόμενος δέδωκε ταύτας ἐργοδότῃ Κορινθίῳ στρατευομένῳ. εἰ γοῦν ἐπανέλθωσί μοι τὰ δένδρα καὶ κάμης ἐν τούτῳ περὶ ἐμὲ τὸ φιλικὸν καθήκον τηρῶν, ὄντως κληθήσῃ Καματηρός, ἐνώσας εἰς ἐν τὸν κάματον τοῦτον καὶ τὴν τῆς ἀγαπήσεως τήρησιν. ἅμα δὲ καὶ προκεντήσεις μοι κέντρον ἀγαπητικῆς ἀσχολίας, ὡς καὶ κύκλον ἐλπίζειν διαγραφῆναί μοι παρά σου, ἐπικερδεστέρων ἐτέρων πραγματικῶν ἀντιλήψεων. χαρίζου μοι πολυχρόνιος.

Translation

To the royal secretary Kamateros.²

O my most erudite and dear friend,³ my affairs concerning the emperor derive from an intellect⁴ corrupted by age. And the board⁵ of memory, which seems wrinkled by passing time, like the cheeks of old men, does not provide intellect with a clear record of the sights (*theata*) seen and the lessons (*matheta*) learnt.⁶ Hence, the intellect that beholds⁷ such a board cannot make steady statements. For the depiction of lessons overlap with each other and they do not offer a truthful vision⁸ of the objects of memory⁹ to the logical [part of the soul],¹⁰ just as an image that has aged does not depict accurately its subject and the forms that come from art.¹¹ So, with the pigments of your own wisdom prepare the colors for restoration in order to make my mental images more precise and complete any missing parts and support anything that has fallen.¹² And grant me this rather considerable favor: set me free from the deceit of the false paintings¹³ in my intellect.¹⁴

A few olives – that is, both the tree and the fruit – the mighty ruler granted me as a means of subsistence. But now, I do not know for what reason, either by purpose or by mistake, he gave them to a *pronoiar* from Corinth, who was previously a soldier.¹⁵ So if the trees will be returned to me and you do this for me while fulfilling the duties of your friendship with me, then you will be truly called a “Kamateros,” for you will have united into one both this toil (*kamatos*) and the maintenance (*teresis*) of your affection.¹⁶ And you will also set the central point of an affectionate deed: I hope you will then draw a circle for me, even more beneficial, factual, and helpful than others.¹⁷ May you [i.e. your friendship] be granted to me for many years.

Commentary

1. εἰκῶν in both manuscripts.¹⁴
2. The exact identity of this royal secretary is unclear.¹⁵ The Kamateroi were one of the most prominent bureaucratic families in later Byzantium.¹⁶
3. A literate translation of the Greek text would read: “my most erudite and beloved head.” That is a customary greeting form to a friend in medieval Greek epistolography and indicates the friendly relationship between the addressee and the recipient.¹⁷ In this particular context, the metaphor introduces the discussion about memory and the intellect and compliments the royal secretary who is presented as superior. The head was considered to rule the entire body and so Apokaukos, by calling Kamateros “his head” hints at a higher position for the secretary. The address λογιώτατε καὶ φίλη μοι κεφαλῇ shows a close relation with a responsive correspondent from the secular sphere.¹⁸
4. Νοῦς can be translated either as “the intellect” or as “reason”. The connection between *nous* and *mneme* remains vague in Apokaukos’ work. In a letter to an unspecified recipient and from an unspecified date, the metropolitan of Nafpaktos complains that his mental qualities cannot function properly given his weak physical condition.¹⁹ The medieval author initially presents intellect as inclusive of memory, while later in the same text he considers intellect and memory equal. Specifically, he says that his thoughts (τὸ λογιζόμενον) can only be malformed as his imagination/phantasia (φαντασία), intellect (νοῦς), and the board of memory (τὸ τῆς μνήμης πινάκιον) are suffering by the bodily illness.²⁰ In a different letter, he repeats that the intellect looks at the board of memory when it wants to form a logos (i.e. a rational suggestions or a speech):

ταῦτα δὴ λαβῶν ἔχω καὶ διχόθεν ὠλβίσθη, δηλαδὴ καὶ γλώσση σῆ καὶ χειρί, ὅθ’ ἢ μὲν γράμματα μοι τυποῖ, ἢ δ’ ἀναφέρει τὰ πρὸς Θεόν. εἰ δ’ ἐξονυχίσει πρέπει τὴν ἔννοιαν, ἢ γλώσσα πλεονάζει τὴν χεῖρα ὀμιλοῦσα Θεῷ, φωνοῦσα τὸ ἀντιλάλημα· καὶ χεῖρ μὲν τυποῖ καλὰ μὲν τὰ παρὰ γλώσσης λαλούμενα, γλώσσα δὲ διαρθροῖ τὰ παρὰ τοῦ νοῦς ἐκπεμπόμενα· νοῦς δέ, ἡνίκα δεῖ εἰπεῖν λόγον, ἐνορᾷ τῷ πινάκιω τῆς μνήμης, ἐν ᾧ τὰ ἐκ μαθημάτων, τὰ ἐξ ἀκουσμάτων, ἀσυγχύτων γεγράφαται, καὶ λαβῶν ἐκεῖθεν λόγον γεννᾷ καὶ συντίθησι.²¹

14 See Bee-Seferli 1971–74: 216.

15 See Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, p. 77.

16 See Simpson, *Choniates*, 26, for further references.

17 On the greeting in esp. the Middle Byzantine epistolographical tradition see Grünbart 2005b: 308–09.

18 See Grünbart 2005a: 118–19, 195.

19 Ed. Bees no. 110, 158–59 = Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, no. 143, p. 255.

20 ἀμβλίσκειν ἄρτι τὸ λογιζόμενον καὶ ὡσανεὶ γεννᾷ ἀμβλωθρίδια, ὡς καὶ δοκεῖν λίθον βαρὺν ἐγκεῖσθαι τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ παίειν ὥσπερ καὶ φαντασίαν καὶ νοῦν καὶ τῆς μνήμης πινάκιον = “Conception is currently abortive and it seems to give birth to malformed thoughts, so that one would think that the head is pressed hard by a heavy stone and it damages imagination, intellect and the board of memory.”

21 Ed. Papadopoulou-Kerameus, p. 239 = Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, no. 60, p. 208–09.

Indeed, I have received that and I have been happy in two ways, thanks to your tongue and your hand; for the one writes me letters and the other pronounces prayers [for me] to God. If it is necessary to polish conceptions [of the intellect], tongue exceeds hand when it [the tongue] speaks to God and asking for a response. On the one side, the hand depicts¹ with a pen those spoken by the language; on the other, tongue articulates those dispatched from the intellect. But the intellect, when it ought to say a *logos*, looks at the tablet of memory, on which those from the lessons and those from the hearings have separately recorded, and starting from there it creates and composes a *logos*.

5. The metaphor of a board (πίναξ) for memory was firstly suggested by Aristotle.²² The comparison of *mneme* with a “wax tablet” or a “block of wax” (κέρινον ἐκμαγεῖον) was most common in Byzantine sources.²³ The particular image that Apokaukos is trying to convey cannot find any direct parallel.

The simile is repeated in two further letters. In one of them, Apokaukos addresses the protovestiaris of the Despot of Epirus. Apparently, the protovestiaris bestowed a monastery to a young monk, although Apokaukos had earlier granted the same monastery to a nun. Apokaukos says that it was enough to see the monk once, for his figure to be painted on the board of memory.²⁴ A second instance of the same simile occurs in a letter addressed to Germanos II, the Patriarch of Constantinople in exile. In the year 1225 the relations of the two men were tested, because the metropolitan supported the political decisions of the Despot of Epirus. Apokaukos invites Germanos to leave their differences aside, and to write back to him soon for the sake of their long friendship. Apokaukos justifies his plea to Germanos for a quick response referring to their past common experiences, because these may be in the danger of flaking given the “wrinkles” on the board of memory.²⁵

6. On *theata*/θεατά and *matheta*/μαθητά see Text and Context.
7. According to Plato and Aristotle memory becomes unable to receive or hold onto mental images, when it is either too “hard” or too “liquid,” just like wax that is not properly prepared.²⁶ The comparison of a feeble memory to an unsound board of memory appears exclusively in Apokaukos.
8. *Enargeia* is a key concept in Byzantine aesthetics. It is usually understood as vividness and refers to the lifelike quality of images – this quality is acquired thanks to the amount of detail.²⁷

²² *On Memory*, 45ob18–29.

²³ See Pizzone 2013: 79–83.

²⁴ Ed. Bees no. 34, p. 92–94, ll. 38–44 = Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, no. 21, p. 184; Lampropoulos has dated that letter to the year 1218. On the *protovestiaris* see Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, p. 77.

²⁵ Ed. Vasilievskij, no. 27, 293–95, esp. 295, l. 5–10 = Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, no. 114, p. 242–53.

²⁶ Plato, *Republic*, 6: 486c–487a, and Aristotle, *On Memory*, 45ob, 1–11.

²⁷ For the meaning and importance of *enargeia* see Papaioannou, “Enargeia,” 48–60; Tsakiridou 2013: 7–9, 49–71, where previous bibliography can be found.

The use of the verb βλέπω, instead of ὀρώ or θεωρῶ emphasizes further the relation of trust that should govern intellect and mental images.

9. Reference to the Platonic tripartite division of the soul to the logical (λογιστικόν), spirited (θυμοειδές), and appetitive (ἐπιθυμητικόν); see Plato, *Republic*, IV.439d.
10. τῶν μνημονευτῶν θεωρία: the objects of memory.²⁸
11. The meaning of the phrase ὁ ἐκ τῆς τέχνης σχηματισμός is ambiguous. It can be translated either as “the form made with technical skill” or “the form made with artistry.”
12. The techniques for the restoration of paintings in Byzantium are well known from both literary sources and actual artefacts. A number of epigrams are dedicated to icons that were renovated under the patronage of private donors especially in the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. Two restoration processes are relevant to medieval icons. The first is repainting: it includes either the refreshing of the depicted figures with new colors or their updating by painting over older images to match current tastes.²⁹ A second restoration process includes the transfer of a depiction into a new wooden board with the help of a cotton cloth.³⁰
13. The word παριστόρημα is a *hapax legomenon*. It is understood in *LBG* as “falsche Erzählung”; however the word ἱστορία (from which the second part of the word derives) means depiction or image. Thus, the compound signifies a “false depiction”; such a meaning provides a better understanding of the overall passage.
14. See Text and Context.
15. This means that the soldier had received a “pronoia,” a land-grant.³¹ The significance of the reference to pronoia in this letter is discussed in Bartusis 2013: 232–33.
16. This is an ironic comment. Apokaukos complains that the grove he received in the past was already a very small return for his services.
17. The metaphor comes from the realm of geometry. Apokaukos imagines Kamateros to hold a compass, which was to draw a circle encompassing all the benefactions granted to the metropolitan. Κέντρον is where the needle point of the geometrical tool would be placed. Kamateros as good geometer would have pre-set (προκεντάω) that point from which he was to draw the circle.

28 Cf. Aristotle, *On the Soul* II 4.415a20; *On Memory*, 449b 9–23.

29 A famous example of a repainted icon is the ninth-century double-sided icon of the Crucifixion, which was repainted in the thirteenth century. The thirteenth-century painter followed the previous depictions but he also added elements in a contemporary fashion (Acheimastou-Potamianou 2002: 154). Another famous (but later) example of a repainted icon is that of the panel icon of St. Peter in the British Museum, dated to the first decades of the fourteenth century. A seventeenth-century painter had painted the image of Christ above the portrait of St. Peter. The fourteenth-century icon came to light only in 1983, when the icon was sent for restoration (Cormack 2007: 42–45).

30 See Chatzidakis 1986: 228. The technique is still in use see Acheimastou-Potamianou 2002: 152.

31 On Byzantine Pronoia see, e.g., Bartusis 2013.

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I.7.2 Michael Andreopolos (second half of the eleventh century/first half of the twelfth century)

The Book of Syntipas: The Wisdom of the World in Pictures

MARTIN HINTERBERGER

Ed.: V. Jernstedt, *Michaelis Andreopuli liber Syntipae*, Mémoires de l'Académie impériale des Sciences de St.-Petersbourg. VIIIe série, XI/1, St. Petersburg 1912, 6,6–7,1

MSS.:¹ At least five manuscripts preserve the entire text or parts of it, Vienna, ÖNB, phil. 173 being the most important one.² Jernstedt's edition is based on only three MSS not including the Vienna, ÖNB, phil. 173. There is no critical edition which takes all extant manuscript into consideration.

Other Translations: F. Conca, *Novelle bizantine. Il Libro di Syntipas* (Milan, 2004), 35–181; E. V. Maltese, *Il libro di Sindbad: Novelle persiane medievali dalla versione bizantina di Michele Andreopoulos* (Turin, 1993) (Italian)

Significance

In this passage, paintings are presented as a tool for education. The wall-paintings crafted by Syntipas contained all the knowledge the young prince ought to acquire for becoming a wise man. Since this literary work has oriental origins and was translated from Syriac, it may not correspond to exclusively Byzantine practices. That said, illuminated manuscripts and wall-paintings in churches aimed also at conveying information or, even, at narrating a story. The backbone of Byzantine traditional learning were written texts which, curiously enough, are not even mentioned here. Towards the end of the story (ed. Jernstedt 119, 13–14), when the prince was asked by his father how his teacher had managed to teach him such great wisdom, the prince answers by repeating nearly word for word lines from the passage below, but he adds at the very end: “*he painted everything he was going to teach me on the walls of the room and marked all the different topics with letters (γράμμασιν διεστίχαστό τε) and put it in exact order.*” In this passage (which might be a later addition?), letters play at least a subsidiary role for conveying knowledge.

The Author

In the dedicatory poem the author declares his name (Michael Andreopolos, Μιχαήλ Ἀνδρεόπουλος) and profession (teacher, γραμματικός). Andreopolos probably lived in the city of Melitene, which is situated to the north of Samosata, on the right bank of the

¹ Not consulted.

² Beck 1971: 47–48.

Euphrates. The commander of Melitene, doux Gabriel, who is a relatively well-known historical figure, is the commissioner of the translation.³

Text and Context⁴

The plot of the so-called *Syntipas-novel* or the *Book of Syntipas* is situated at the court of the Persian king Cyrus and combines a frame-narrative with more than twenty embedded short stories. The story of a young prince, Kyros' son, and his wise teacher Syntipas constitutes the frame. This prince – who had just returned to Kyros' court after he was thoroughly educated by Syntipas in the record time of six months – was falsely accused by one of his father's seven wives of having attempted to rape her (although she herself had unsuccessfully attempted to seduce the young man). Though innocent, the prince is unable to defend himself because following Syntipas' instructions, he has to keep silent for seven days or otherwise, as his master had warned him, ill fortune would strike him. Thus, he was sentenced to death. The king's wise councillors, however, stall the punishment by relating stories about wrong judgment and false accusation (*inter alia* by wicked women) to which the king's wife answers telling in turn stories about unreliable councillors and the wickedness of men. After the prince's innocence has been proved, more stories are told. All these embedded stories, many of which are dominated by an erotic and misogynous tone, are loosely connected through the topic of accusation and defence. At the end of the text, there is a sort of *speculum principis* (i.e. advice concerning good rule). Interestingly, manuscript tradition shows that the Byzantines viewed the *Book of the Philosopher Syntipas* primarily as a piece of didactic literature.

Obviously, the Syntipas-novel has eastern origins. Today it is believed that it goes back to a Persian story which may have been influenced by Indian traditions and incorporated also older material of Greek origin (e.g. the *Silent philosopher Secundus*).⁵ As the dedicatory poem declares, the text was translated into Greek from Syriac at the request of Gabriel, doux of Melitene, around the year 1100.

There are two versions of the Byzantine text which are very similar. They differ primarily in their linguistic make-up, whereas the content is largely the same.⁶ They are known as simply *Syntipas* and the *Retractatio*. The first is slightly more learned, whereas the second could be characterized as “demoticizing” and more accessible to a wider public.⁷ Traditionally, *Syntipas tout court* has been considered the original Greek text, and the *Retractatio* a somewhat later reworking (from perhaps the twelfth or the thirteenth centuries), a kind of *metaphrasis* like the *metaphrasis* of Anna Komnene's *Alexiad* or that

3 On Gabriel see Jeffreys PBW (Gabriel 4001) and generally Conca 2004: 5.

4 See generally on the text Beck 1971: 45–48, as well as the introductions to Maltese 1993 and Conca 2004. Toth 2014, 2016 focuses on the literary merits of the text, but provides also useful general information.

5 See generally Krönung 2016; Romano has demonstrated parallels between Syntipas' frame-story and Firdausi's *Book of Kings* (Shah-name) (Romano 2008).

6 Beck 1971: 48.

7 Cf. Maltese 2006.

of Niketas Choniates' *History*. Indeed, there are some linguistic features common to all these texts, particularly when we see morphological categories and vocabulary marking high style in the original historiographical works and *Syntipas*, replaced in the simplified text by morphological categories and vocabulary characterizing low style.⁸ As far as the passage we are interested in is concerned, it presents only minor disagreements between the two versions. In the following we present *Syntipas* (according to Jernstedt's edition).

The first adaptations of the text into the vernacular were made during the fifteenth century. In the following centuries, the story of *Syntipas* was developed into a popular *Volksbuch* (the first printed *phyllada* dates to the seventeenth century) not only in the Greek-speaking world, but in southeastern Europe as well.⁹

In the passage cited below, the king and Syntipas have agreed that the latter would fully educate the young man within exactly six months. The young prince has been handed over to his teacher, the wise Syntipas, who leads him to his home where he is going to educate him. In order to facilitate the learning process, Syntipas builds a separate room on the walls of which he paints the contents of his teaching.

8 Cf. Maltese 2006.

9 Kechagioglou 2001: 107.

Text

[Βίβλος λεγομένη Συντίπα τοῦ φιλοσόφου]¹

Ἐπὶ τούτοις τοιγαροῦν ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱὸν εἰς χεῖρας τοῦ φιλοσόφου παρακατέθετο. παραλαβὼν δὲ ὁ Συντίπας τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ βασιλέως ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ οἰκίαν ἀπήγαγεν. εἶτα ἐν πρώτοις οἰκίσκον εὐρυχωρότατον νεωστὶ αὐτῷ ἐδείματο, καὶ τοῦτον ἔσωθεν εὐκόσμως περιχρίσας καὶ λευκότητι καταλαμπρύνας πᾶν εἴ τι τὸν νέον ἐκδιδάξει ἔμελλεν ἐν τοῖς τοῦ οἰκίσκου τοίχοις εὐθύς ἀνιστόρησε. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα φησὶ πρὸς αὐτόν· πᾶσα σου ἡ διαγωγή καὶ ἡ δίαιτα, ὧ νεανία, ἐν τούτῳ ἔστω τῷ οἰκήματι, ἄχρισ ἂν καλῶς ἐκμάθῃς ὅσαπερ ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῦ τοίχοις παρ’ ἐμοῦ ἀνιστόρηται. ἔκτοτε γοῦν ὁ φιλόσοφος τῷ παιδί παρεκάθητο, κάκεισε αὐτῷ διόλου συνδιατιώμενος ἐξεδίδασκεν αὐτόν τὰ ἱστορηθέντα (ἢ τε βρῶσις αὐτῶν καὶ πόσις παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐστέλλετο), καὶ τούτου μεγάλως ἐπιμελησάμενος μέχρι τῆς τῶν ἕξ μηνῶν καὶ μόνων συμπληρώσεως τὰ τῆς διδασκαλίας ἀπήρτισεν, ὡς μηδεμίαν ὥραν περαιτέρω ταύτης τῆς διορίας τὸ πέρασ αὐτῶν παρατεῖναι. καὶ δὴ μεμάθηκεν ὁ παῖς ἅπερ οὐδεὶς ἕτερος μνηθῆναι δύναται.

Translation

[Book, the so-called Syntipas the philosopher]

So, under these conditions the king entrusted his son to the hands of the philosopher. When Syntipas received the king’s son from his hands, he led him to his [Syntipas’] dwellings. What he did then was first to build for him [the prince] a new spacious room² and then – after he duly plastered its inside and whitewashed it entirely – to paint directly on the walls of this room whatever he was about to teach the boy. After this, he [Syntipas] said to him [the prince]: “Boy, let all your life be spent in this room, until you learn well everything I have painted on its walls.” From that moment on, the philosopher dwelt together with the child and living continuously together with him he taught him what had been painted (yet food and beverages were sent to them by the king). He took great care of him so that he completed the training within six months only and he did not need to extend the deadline even by an hour. And thus the child learnt all these things that nobody else has been able to learn.

Commentary

1. This is the title as it can be extracted from the prolog.¹⁰
2. This newly built *oikiskos*/room seems to have been an annexe to the already existing building, Syntipas’ house. On the meaning of *oikiskos* as a “study room” only intended for reading, see Constantine Akropolites, *Letter* 59, 39–40.¹¹

¹⁰ Jernstedt 1912: 3.

¹¹ Ed. Romano, p. 155

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I.7.3 Euthymios Malakes (c.1115–before 1204)

Oration for Manuel I Komnenos When the Sultan Came to Constantinople

FLORIN LEONTE

Ed.: A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Noctes Petropolitanae* (Saint Petersburg, 1913), 162–87

MS.:¹ Vienna, ÖNB, Phil. Gr. 321 (s. XIII), ff. 100r–106v and 108r

Other Translations: Excerpts in Magdalino and Nelson, “Emperor,” 123–83

Significance

The following oration addressed to Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80) was performed in the framework of the celebrations organized in 1161 for the reception of the Seljuk Sultan Kilij Arslan II who was eventually adopted into the emperor’s family. The author of the oration, Euthymios Malakes, outlines the profile of a universal ruler who showed clemency to his opponents in both Asia and Europe. Euthymios provides valuable information with regard to the combined use of rhetoric and vivid imagery in the construction of the imperial persona across the various provinces of the empire. As the author suggests, images of the emperor were placed in many cities in order to be publicly viewed. The unusual rhetorical vividness of the images deployed, the details about artistic objects at court, and the comparisons between the rhetor’s and the artist’s crafts highlight the ideological parallels between the panegyric and the pictorial programs at work during the Komnenian dynasty. The text’s significance arises from the evidence it presents about the presence of imperial iconography in the provinces and its use in the emperor’s agenda of projecting the image of a heroic ruler. As such, Malakes’ oration suggests that imperial art and aesthetics might have undergone a process of decentralization that was parallel to the decentralization of Komnenian religious art.

The Author

Euthymios Malakes, a prominent Byzantine churchman and courtier, was born in c.1115. He was from Thebes² and belonged to a powerful family.³ Euthymios became related to another powerful Theban family, that of the Tornikioi, when his sister married Demetrios Tornikes, *logothete of the drome*,⁴ a very high office in the twelfth century. We can assume that he received a robust education, for shortly before 1166 he was appointed Metropolitan

1 Not consulted.

2 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 180.11–13.

3 See p. 849 n. 63.

4 Darrouzès 1965: 148–67.

of Neopatras, a city in Thessalia.⁵ However, he spent more of his time in Constantinople. This move allowed him to become influential in the Patriarchal Synod and also to exert considerable political influence in the Byzantine capital, where he seized any opportunity to display his rhetorical skills.

Malakes was intensely active as a court rhetorician. His extant letter collection⁶ demonstrates strong connections not only with the court but also with the so-called “Patriarchal School.”⁷ He was a friend of some of the most influential scholars of his time, such as Eustathios of Thessaloniki (c.1115–95),⁸ Michael Choniates (1138–1222), and John Apokaukos (c.1155–1223).⁹ Malakes even wrote a monody for the former in which he praised him for his intellectual and moral virtues.¹⁰ He also composed a poem on the bath in the garden of the Choumnos family.¹¹ Malakes is most famous for his orations, which are addressed to the emperor and also several Byzantine aristocrats: three speeches are addressed to Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80)¹² and a further three orations address Nikolaos Hagiotheodorites (bishop of Athens), Alexios Kontostephanos, and Eustathios of Thessalonike, respectively.¹³

Text and Context

After a series of military campaigns conducted in Asia Minor, Manuel I Komnenos welcomed Kilij Arslan II (r.1155–92), the Sultan of Ikonion in 1161 in Constantinople.¹⁴ Previously, Arslan had shown his discontent with Manuel when the latter was returning to Constantinople from Cilicia and passed through his territory. But because the emperor planned to maintain peace and good relations with the Seljuks, he sought to establish a long-lasting alliance with the Seljuk leader.¹⁵ The Sultan, in turn, was seeking support against other Turkish opponents. Arslan’s stay in the Byzantine capital lasted several months and involved a multitude of celebrations and public events that emphasized the emperor’s magnificence and the sultan’s subservience.¹⁶ The following oration delivered by Euthymios Malakes was part of these celebrations. Like most such highly rhetorical

5 Nesbit and Oikonomides 1994: 18.1, p. 58.

6 Bonis 1937: 38–76.

7 See Introduction.

8 On Eustathios of Thessaloniki see B. van den Berg and E. Cullhed, II.2.1 in this volume.

9 See T. Tsampouras and F. Spingou, I.2.2 in this volume.

10 Bonis 1937: 78–83.

11 See P. Van Deun, I.8.13 in this volume; ed. Bonis 1937: 37.

12 The first, dated to 1161, was prompted by the visit of the Seljuk Sultan Kilij Arslan II to Constantinople; ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 162–87. Another dates from 1175 after Manuel returned from a campaign against the Persians and the last oration is a praise for the emperor’s rhetorical skills; ed. Bonis 1941–1948: 524–58.

13 The attribution of these orations to Malakes is made by Jean Darrouzès. The one is composed for Nicholas Hagiotheodorites, hypertimos of Athens (d.1175) and another one for Alexios Komnenos Kontostephanos (d.1176), his friend and nephew of Emperor Manuel Komnenos.

14 Magdalino 2008: 642–43.

15 Magdalino 2008: 643–44.

16 Magdalino, *Manuel*, 76–77.

addresses to Byzantine emperors, it aims to praise the emperor's deeds and virtues and to publicly display the artistry of the speaker.

Although the precise date of the speech remains unknown,¹⁷ Euthymios' text includes several elements that allow us to better understand its circumstances. At the outset, the author suggests that the emperor has recently returned from a long and exhausting campaign.¹⁸ Most probably, this was one of Manuel's attempts to re-establish Byzantine authority by forging a complex system of alliances.¹⁹ The oration then alludes to another key moment in the emperor's life: the death in 1160 of his first wife, Bertha of Sulzbach, Conrad III's sister-in-law, with whom he had two daughters.²⁰ Euthymios portrays the emperor's painful mourning as he hid in the palace and refused to communicate.²¹ Yet, at the very end of the oration, he makes an intense appeal for the emperor to re-marry and provide the state with a male heir.²² Indeed, at the end of the same year (1161), Manuel married Maria of Antioch, another Latin princess who bore him this heir, Alexios II Komnenos (r.1180–83).²³

Other pieces of evidence about the circumstances of the speech's delivery pertain to the author himself, who makes his presence felt throughout the text. In 1161, he had just arrived in Constantinople. Euthymios states that this was the first speech he had performed in front of the emperor although, as he states, he would have wished to have given other speeches before.²⁴ Indeed, Euthymios later addressed Manuel in two other speeches which suggest that the 1161 oration had been instrumental for his ensuing career. The end of the speech also points to the rhetorician's debut at court, as he asks to be accepted among the members of the imperial circle and to participate in the courtly *theatron*, even if unpaid (ἀμισθος).²⁵

The speech presents the following outline:

1. Introduction: *captatio benevolentiae*. Presentation of the rhetorician, the emperor Manuel I, and the witness to the praise, the "Persian" Kilij Arslan II (§§1–4).
2. The emperor's generosity and wisdom in relation to his enemies (§§5–7).
3. An address to the Sultan (§§8–9).
4. The emperor's might (§§10–11).
5. Ways of representing the manifold aspects of the emperor's personality: deeds and images (§§12–16).

17 An allusion to the precise date of the oration can be found at the end of the text where Malakes exhorts the emperor to marry and have offspring; the oration might have been close in time to the emperor's second marriage with Maria of Antioch which took place on December 25, 1161.

18 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 162–63.

19 Magdalino 2008: 636–39.

20 C. M. Brand, *ODB*, vol 1, "Bertha of Sulzbach;" on Bertha's death see also Basil Achridenos' lament from 1160, ed. R. Gentile Messina 2008.

21 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 164.4–16.

22 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 186.10–30.

23 C. M. Brand, *ODB*, vol. 2, "Maria of Antioch."

24 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 162.20–30.

25 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 187.5.

6. The emperor's clemency towards the people who injured him and the winning power of his fame (§§17–22).
7. Other imperial deeds; the emperor helps the Christian communities in the East (§§23–26).
8. The emperor's political wisdom and intellectual excellence (§§27–30).
9. Final address and epilogue: the emperor should try to re-marry and have a male offspring as his successor. He should also accept the speaker (Euthymios Malakes himself) into his intellectual circle (§§31–32).

This structure indicates that, even if the author followed the convention of praising certain primary virtues (bravery, generosity, intellectual skills), he did not fully comply with the requirements of panegyric composition,²⁶ but only introduced those topics that he deemed relevant for the *kairos* of the oration. His style however does not depart significantly from other imperial orations. He uses a plethora of ancient references: he cites from Homer, Thucydides, Aristotle, and Aesop and mentions the names of ancient Greek sculptors or the pagan gods and games.²⁷ He conveniently assimilates the Seljuks with the ancient Persians and so the Sultan becomes a Περσάναξ (king of the Persians).²⁸ Occasionally, we find biblical allusions, like those to Solomon and David and to Christ's entrance into Jerusalem.²⁹ His sentences are often convoluted and display complex descriptions of situations as well as comparisons. Doubtless, his elaborate style reflects connections to the Komnenian scholarly circle whose members wrote other encomia for Manuel.³⁰ In addition, since this was Euthymios' first publicly performed oration at the imperial court it is plausible that the author sought to emphasize his erudition and sophistication.

Despite the Sultan's presence, the main focus of the oration remains Emperor Manuel, who is compared to Constantine the Great as well as to other legendary rulers. Euthymios presents an all-victorious emperor; hence, wherever he goes, he establishes victory monuments/τρόπαια. The emperor is omnipotent as he embraces east and west, both Western and Eastern rulers recognized him as a world leader, and he was obeyed even in the most remote parts of Europe or Asia.³¹ However, Euthymios embeds several nuances in this otherwise standard rhetorical image. For instance, he suggests that most of the victory monuments were not established following wars, but were rather due to the fame of the emperor who had avoided bloodshed and military conflicts.³² In the same vein, he also

26 These rubrics were outlined by Menander Rhetor; see Russell and Wilson 1981: 76–94.

27 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 180.7 (Homer), 175.26 (Thucydides), 182–83 (Aesop), 172.24–32 (pagan gods and games).

28 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 167.25.

29 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 166 (Solomon), 170.30 (David).

30 Magdalino 2008: 413–88.

31 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 183.26–184.3.

32 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 178–180.

casts a different and more compassionate light upon the emperor when he refers to the grief caused by the death of his first wife.³³

Typically, Euthymios makes extensive use of vivid rhetorical images in the construction of the emperor's own image.³⁴ The author goes so far as to compare his rhetorical craft to that of painters who carefully choose their colors or to sculptors who have to be scrupulous about dimensions and materials. He also draws parallels with the emperor's numerous images set up across the empire's cities.³⁵ His remarks echo many other contemporary textual and artistic formulations presenting the emperor's figure.³⁶ Such references reflect an imperial program for advertising authority that use both rhetorical and pictorial representations. They also point to the emperor's efforts to advertise himself for different audiences (central and provincial, elite and popular) and by different means. Nevertheless, the magnificence of the Sultan's reception and the attention paid to Manuel's appearance (tiara, shoes, etc.)³⁷ indicate that the oration aimed at reinforcing Constantinople's role as the primary site for the dissemination of imperial power.

The text encapsulates the idea of a moderate Byzantine optimism triggered by Manuel's early achievements in defending the Byzantine possessions in Asia Minor by maintaining a balance among various regional powers. In the east, nonetheless, the emperor faced turbulent times: he saw the rise of Nur ad-Din (1146–74), the atabeg of Aleppo and a powerful opponent of Byzantium, and of the Crusader states in the region.³⁸ Subsequently, Manuel decided to create a counterweight to Nur ad-Din's growing influence by offering a special status to Kilij Arslan II. Manuel included him among the members of his family, something not readily acceptable to other members of the Byzantine aristocracy. Indeed, the alliance cemented by Arslan's lavish reception in Constantinople in 1161 eventually led to a completely opposite outcome, for it allowed the Seljuk ruler of Ikonion the freedom to control the surrounding provinces and thereby to become a strong contender for regional supremacy. Unsurprisingly, when Nur ad-Din died in 1174, Kilij Arslan refused to return the towns and the territories he had received in the 1161 treaty.³⁹ Thereafter, Manuel's defeat in the ensuing battle at Myriokephalon in 1176 accelerated the process of Byzantine retreat from Asia Minor.

33 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 164.6–10.

34 Darrouzès 1965: 148–67.

35 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 171–73.

36 E.g. Nicholas Kallikles, Theodore Prodromos, the epigrams in the *Anthologia Marciana*; see Magdalino and Nelson, "Emperor," 123–83.

37 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 163.1–5.

38 C. M. Brand *ODB*, vol. 2, "Nur al-Din": 1505.

39 C. M. Brand, *ODB*, vol. 2, "Nur al-Din": 1505.

Text

[p. 162] Τοῦ αὐτοῦ λόγους εἰς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα κύριον Μανουὴλ τὸν Κομνηνόν, ἐκφωνηθεῖς ὅτε εἰσηλθεν εἰς Κωνσταντινούπολιν ὁ σουλτᾶνος προσελθὼν αὐτῷ.

1. Εὐγε, ὦ βασιλεῦ, ἀνέπαυσάς μου τοὺς λόγους ἐπὶ μακρόν σε διώκοντας· εὐγε ὅτι ποτὲ τῶν μακρῶν πόνων ἔστης καὶ τῶν ἐπὶ τοὺς Βαρβάρους ἐκδρομῶν ἐπὶ μικρὸν ἔληξας, ἵνα σε καὶ ἡμεῖς οἱ ἐπήλυδες ἐπὶ βραχὺ προσβλέψωμέν τε καὶ προσφθεγξώμεθα· ἐκ πολλοῦ γάρ σου τῆς τῶν τροπαίων δόξης ἐρῶντες, ὦ τῶν πώποτε βασιλέων στρατηγικώτατε, καὶ τούτοις κοσμήσαι τοὺς ἑμούςς λόγους ἐθέλων οὐχ ἤττον ἢ ὀρμίσκοις τε καὶ περιδεραιοῖς καὶ τῇ λοιπῇ τοῦ χρυσοῦ φιλοτιμίᾳ, ἣ τὰ σώματα κοσμοῦσιν οἱ φιλοσώματοι, ἐκ πολλοῦ σε μάχης ἐκτός καὶ πολέμων εὐρέσθαι ζητῶν καὶ μικρὸν ἡρεμοῦντα τῶν πόνων καὶ τῆς κατ' ἐχθρῶν ρύμης ἰστάμενον, ἵνα σε κἂν ὡς ἀριστεὰ προσεῖπω καὶ τὰς ἀριστουργοὺς χεῖρας καταφιλήσω σου, οὐδέπω μέχρι καὶ δεῦρο τοὺς ἑμούςς ἐδυνήθην τούτους ἔρωτας ἀναπλήσαι, οὐδὲ ἀνέμεινάς μέ ποτε τὴν γλῶτταν ἦδη κινοῦντα καὶ τὰ χεῖλη διαίροντα καὶ φωνὴν ἄραι καὶ λόγον ἐξενεγκεῖν σοι ῥητορικὸν συστήσασθαι θέατρον. ἀλλ' ἐγὼ μὲν ἐκινούμην πρὸς λόγους, σὺ δὲ πρὸς μάχας ἀπέτρεχες, ἐγὼ τῇ χειρὶ τὸν γραφέα κατεῖχον δόνακα, σὺ δὲ τὸ δόρυ πάλλων ἐκράδαινες, ἐγὼ τὴν γλῶτταν τοῖς σοῖς ἐπαίνοις ἠκόνουν καὶ σὺ τὴν σπάθην τοῖς ἐχθροῖς ἔθηγες, ἐγὼ σοι τὸν ἐπεισόδιον ἐμελέτων, σὺ δὲ τὸν συντακτῆριον προὔφθανες. ἐθάρρησά ποτε τῷ τάχει τοῦ λόγου καὶ σε φεύγοντα λοιπὸν ἐδίωκον, ἀλλ' εἶχες ἄρα καὶ τοὺς λόγους ἐλέγχειν καλουμένους μάτην πτερόεντας. καὶ σὲ μὲν εἶχεν ἄλλοτε ἄλλος χῶρος τῶν ἀντιπάλων πυκνὰ καὶ θαμινὰ μεταπίπτοντα καὶ ἀγῶνες διεδέχοντο μετὰ τοὺς ἀγῶνας καὶ πόλεμοι μετὰ τοὺς πολέμους μηδ' ἀποφῆσαι τοὺς ἰδρωτάς γοῦν περιμένοντα· ἔμενον δὲ παρ' ἡμῖν ὥσπερ ἀκτίνες πάλιν οἱ λόγοι τοῦ σοῦ τάχους ἀπολειπόμενοι.

2. Νῦν δὲ ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ σε τῆς αὐλῆς ἔνδον ἔχω τῶν βασιλείων, τὸν αἰεὶ τὴν οἰκουμένην περιόντα καὶ πλέον ἢ ὁ τοῦ Διὸς Ἡρακλῆς τῶν λησθηρίων ταύτην ἀνακαθαίροντα, ἐπεὶ σε ὑπὸ στέγην ὀρῶ τὸν ὑπαιθρον αἰεὶ καὶ καὶ [p. 163] σῶνι καὶ ψύχει διαμιλλώμενον καὶ ἠλλάξω τῆς μικρᾶς καλύβης τὸν μέγαν τῆς ἀρχῆς ὄγκον καὶ τῆς κατὰ γῆς στιβάδος τὴν βασιλικὴν κλίνην καὶ γνωρίζει σου τὸ κράτος οὐ τὸ πέδιλον μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ θρόνος καὶ ἡ τιάρα καὶ τὸ περιμάργαρον ἔσθημα καὶ ὁ σεμνὸς κύκλος οὗτος καὶ ἡ σὴ πόλις αὕτη ξύμπασα περισκαίρουσα· ἐπεὶ μετὰ τοὺς ἀπανταχοῦ τῆς οἰκουμένης σου δρόμους ἄρτι καὶ τὸν δυτικὸν ὀρίζοντα παραμείψας ὁ ἡμεδαπὸς ἥλιος φαιδροτέρας ὅτι μᾶλλον καὶ θερμοτέρας τὰς ἀκτῖνας ὑπανίσχεις ἡμῖν καὶ φθόνος οὐδεὶς ὑπανεῖναί σου τῇ θερμῇ τὸ τοῦ λόγου πτερόν, ὡς ἐντεῦθεν ἰκανῶς ἀναζωπυρηθέντες γεγωνότερόν τι κατὰ τοὺς θερινούς τέπτιγας μουσικεῦσασθαι, φέρε περιλαλήσωμέν σε τὸν βασιλέα καὶ τῶν σῶν τροπαίων κατατροφήσωμεν. ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο σοι, βασιλεῦ, πρὸ τῶν σῶν ἀνδραγαθημάτων, ἐκεῖνο μὴ μοι μεταξὺ τῶν λόγων ἀναπηδήσης ὀνόματος ἀκούσας Βαρβάρων, μηδὲ μνήμη σε πολέμου διαναστήση τοῦ θρόνου καὶ κενωθῆ μοι τὸ θέατρον. ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ σου νῦν ἐλαβόμην τῷ τέως καὶ παρέστηκέ σοι ῥήτωρ, ὃν ἀκοή σοι μόνον ἐγνώρισε, φέρε δῶμεν ἑαυτοὺς ἀλληλοῖς καὶ σὺ μὲν μου τὴν φωνήν, εἰ βούλει, περιεργάζου, εἰ μὴ τὸν ἱακῶβ ὑποκρίνεται· πολυπραγμόνει τὰ τῶν λόγων ἰμάτια, μὴ τὸν λαμπρὸν νυμφῶνά σου κατασιχνῶσιν, καὶ εἰ τολημρὸς ὁ λόγος, ἂν ὁ πηλὸς τῷ κεραμεῖ δικάζομαι. λαλῶ δὲ τὸ πλάσμα τῷ πλάσαντι·

Translation

[p. 162] *Oration of the same addressed to Emperor Manuel Komnenos, delivered when the sultan came to Constantinople to surrender to him*

1. Well done, O Emperor, you have brought my words to rest after they have pursued you for so long. Well done because you engaged in great labors for a long time and you have just ceased the expeditions¹ against barbarians, so that we, the newcomers,² can see you for a short while and address you. Even if we love exceedingly the trophies, glory of your victories, O [you] best commander of all emperors; even if I want to adorn my speeches with these (victories) no less than with necklaces and collars and with the remaining honors of gold, with which those who love their bodies adorn themselves; even if I strive to find you away from the contest and battles, taking a brief break from your labors and from standing against the enemies' invasions, so that I address you as a hero and kiss your excellent and skilled hands, I would still not be able to appease these sentiments of love, nor you would wait for me to move my tongue, to open my mouth, to bring together the rhetorical theater³ to deliver the speech for you. While I felt the urge to write speeches, you ran to wars; while I was holding the pen in my hand, you were brandishing your spear against enemies; while I was sharpening my tongue for your praises, you were sharpening your sword against enemies; while I was studying the events that involve you, you already anticipate their course. Once, I dared to use the swiftness of my speech and I pursued you as you were fleeing even further, but you were able to prove that the winged words were in vain. At another time, you, who endured many changes, attended to another region of the adversaries took; fights succeeded other fights and wars followed upon wars, and you could not wait for the sweat to dry. Yet, your unhasty words again remained with us, just like the rays [of the sun].⁴

2. Yet now, as I see you in the palace, after you have traveled around the whole world and cleansed it from robbers, more so than Heracles the son of Zeus,⁵ and as I see you under the roof open to the sky, [p. 163] after you have toiled in heat and cold, [it is certain] that you have changed the great dignity of authority for the small hut, and the imperial couch for the bed of leaves on the ground. Your power is made known not only by your sandals but also by your throne, your tiara, the pearl-studded garment, as well as this majestic gathering, with this entire city of yours dancing around you. After your journeys everywhere on the face of the earth, and after you have left the western horizon as a sun for half of the earth because you raise your rays brighter and warmer for us, and no envy of you touches the wing of the speech with its warmth, so that from there, having been more intensely rekindled, we have a sense of music similar to that of the summer cicadas; come now and let us describe you in detail as emperor and let us take delight in your trophies. O emperor, because of your manly deeds you should not leap up in the middle of the speech when hearing the name of the barbarians, nor should the memory of wars make you leave the throne, and the *theatron*⁶ should not be emptied because of me. But since I have held your attention to this point and have come to stand as a rhetorician before you – the rhetorician that your hearing alone has made known to you –, let us

“Διατί με οὕτως ἐποίησας μὴ τῷ σοφῷ προφήτῃ πειθόμενος; γινῶθι νῦν, εἰ δικαίως μέχρι μοι καὶ ἐς δεῦρο τὸ σὸν ἐκέκλειστο παστοφόριον καὶ ἔμεινά σου τοῦ καλοῦ νυμφῶνος ἐκτός, καὶ ταῦτα μηδὲ τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ δεῖπνον κλῆσιν παραιτησάμενος.” σὺ μὲν ταῦτα περὶ ἐμὲ καὶ δέχοιό μου τοὺς ἀπαλούς τούτους ἐρίφους, οὓς οὐ λαβὼν ἐκ τῆς μάνδρας ἀλλὰ θηρεύσας πόνῳ κομίζω σοι καὶ βρῶμα τούτους ποιήσῃς

μέχρι καὶ ἐς καρδίαν σοι καταβαίνοντας καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα εὐλογήσῃς δὴ καὶ ἡμᾶς, εἴ ποῦ σοι εὐλογία τις περιλέλειπται. ἐγὼ δὲ τὸ εἰς ἐμέ σοι λείψαν ἀναπληρώσω καὶ περιεργάσομαί σου τὰς χεῖρας, ἂν ἔτι στάζωσιν αἵματος, ἐξετάσω σου καὶ τοὺς πόδας καὶ σου φιλοκρινήσω τὸ πέδιλον· εἰ μὴ ἄρα βαρβαρικοῖς αἵμασι στίλβει πεφοινιγμένον, ἀλλὰ τοῦ κράτους ἐστὶ παράσημον. πρὸ δὲ δὴ τούτων λαβόμενός σου τῶν ὤτων ὀχλοκοπήσω ταῦτα τοῖς λόγοις, ἵν’ εἰδῷ πῶς ἄρα καὶ ὁ ῥητορικός κώδων ἀναπτεροῖ σε· καὶ μὴ μόνον ταῦτα, προσιόντων δοῦπον ἀνορθιάξεις καὶ πρὸς ἠχὴν ἐγείρεις τὴν ἐνούλιον, μηδὲ περὶ μάχας μόνον ἔχεις καὶ τοὺς πολέμους, ἀλλ’ Ἑρμῆ θύεις, ὡς [ἂν οὕτω] φάναί, καὶ Ἄρει· λόγους μὲν γὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ ἄλλους ἐγεννησάμην καὶ σοῦ γε χάριν τούτους προήνεγκα, ἀλλὰ τεκῶν μόνον [p. 164] ἔπειτα ἐξεθέμην καὶ ἄλλοις τὴν ἐκείνων ἐπιμέλειαν ἐνεπιστευσάμην μέχρι καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἐνώπιόν σου παράστασιν, οὐχ ὅτι ἐπ’ ἐκείνοις τοῖς λόγοις πορνεῖαν ἐμαυτῷ κατηγορήσα κατὰ τοὺς ὅσοι λάθρα τεκνογονοῦντες καὶ τὸν γάμον κλέπτοντες λάθρα καὶ τὸ τικτόμενον ἐκτιθέασιν, ἀλλ’ ὅτι σε πενθοῦντα τότε τὴν βασιλίδαν.

3. Ἄλλ’, ὦ λόγε, ποῖ με κατήνεγκας, πῶς δὲ καὶ τοῦ κατασχόντος πάθους τὴν οἰκουμένην εἰς μνήμην ἤγαγες καὶ οὐ φοβῆ τοὺς τῶν βασιλικῶν καταρράκτας δακρύων, μὴ σε τοῖς ρεύμασιν ὑποσύρωσιν, ὅτι σε τότε, ὦ αὐτοκράτορ, τὰ τῶν ἀνακτόρων εἶχε μυχαιτάτα καὶ μόνος ἀπολαύειν θέλων τῶν θρήνων οὐ παρακύπτειν τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐδίδους εἰς τὰ βασίλεια. νῦν δὲ ἀλλὰ τούτων τὸν λόγον πάλαι σοι ὠδίνων, ὦ βασιλεῦ, εἶτα δὴ καὶ γεννήσας καὶ αὐτὸς βρεφοκομήσας τὸ γέννημα καὶ κομῶσας καὶ βοστρυχίσας καὶ ὡς ἐνῆν ἐπισκευασάμενος παρέστηκά σου μετὰ τοῦ βρέφους καὶ θεατρίζω τὸ ἔκγονον καὶ βούλομαι καταμανθάνειν αὐτὸς καὶ τῷ ὕψει πιστοῦσθαι τὴν τοῦ σοῦ ποταμοῦ τῆς σοφίας περὶ τοὺς ἐμούς τόκους βάσανον, εἰ ἄρα τούτους ὑπανεχέει καὶ περιέπει καὶ τὸ ὄλον ζωογονεῖ, ἀλλὰ μὴ παρωθεῖται καὶ κατακρίνει καὶ τῷ τῆς λήθης παραπέμπει βυθῷ· εἶεν. ἀλλὰ τότε μὲν περὶ μονωδίας εἶχεν ὁ λόγος, εἶτα μικρὸν διαλείπων ἐπενεοεῖτο παρὰ κλησιν. ὦ πῶς εἰς τούτους ἐμπίπτω τοὺς λόγους καὶ τὸ πάθος αὐθις ἀνακαινίζω καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν συγχέω ταύτην πανήγυριν· νῦν δὲ ἀλλὰ δὸς ἡμῖν, ὦ βασιλεῦ, τοῖς σοῖς ἐπαίνοις ἐγχορεῦσαι μικρὸν, δὸς ἐπὶ τὸ χαροπώτερον ὑπαλλάξασθαι ἢ χρῆναι φήσεις κατηφειᾶν αἰεὶ καὶ τοὺς λόγους καὶ μέχρι νῦν τούτους ἀποδεχόμενος μεμνημένους τῆς βασιλίδος καὶ στρεφομένους περὶ τὰ δάκρυα, τὸ δ’ ἐξῆς ἀποστρέψῃ διὰ τῶν σῶν τροπαίων τὰ κρόταλα. ἀλλ’ οἱ λόγοι χρῆμα ποικίλον καὶ μένειν ἐπὶ τῶν αὐτῶν οὐ θέλουσι καὶ τὴν μεταβολὴν αὐτοὶ καλέσαντες ἥδιστον πρῶτοι φιλονεικοῦσι τοῖς ἑαυτῶν ἀποχρήσασθαι. διὰ τοῦτο ἄρα καὶ τὸν Ἑρμῆν πολλαῖς ταῖς διακονίαις οἱ παλαιοὶ σοφοὶ κατεμέρισαν καὶ μυρίοις ἐντεῦθεν περιεστέψαντο τοῖς ὀνόμασι· καὶ ἵνα μὴ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ὀνομάτων καταριθμῶμεν, Πομπαιῶς ὠνομάσθη καὶ Χθόνιος, ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐναπομένων τοῖς κάτω λέγεται καὶ Οὐράνιος καὶ πέδιλα φορεῖ πτερωτά, ἵνα ῥαδίως ἄρα πρὸς τὰ κατὰ σκοπὸν μεταφέροιο. τότε τοίνυν ὁ καθ’ ἡμᾶς Ἑρμῆς ἦν πομπαιῶς καὶ εἶχεν αὐτὸν τὰ σκοτεινὰ χωρία τοῦ Πλούτωνος ἐπιταφίοις θρῆ [p. 165] νοῖς διακονούμενον, ἀλλὰ νῦν ὁ οὐράνιος θέλει κληθῆναι πρὸς τὸ

give ourselves to one another, and you, if you wish, hearken to my voice, unless it feigns Jacob. Look carefully at the garments of the *logoi*, so that they should not dishonor the illustrious bedchamber; and if the *logos* is bold, then I should be judged as would a piece of clay [be judged] by a potter. Yet, I am talking about the image to the one who made it. “Why did you create me in this way as you do not listen to the wise prophet? Know that, if your priestly chamber was rightly closed to me up to this day, I remained outside the beautiful bridechamber, and without begging for an invitation for the dinner.”⁷ Accept my words and these tender children, which I did not take from the byre but, having pursued them laboriously, I give them now to you to provide for them and let them enter into your heart, and thereafter you would bless us as well, if you have a blessing left for us. I will supply what was missing to me and I will thoroughly investigate your hands, if they still drop blood, I will check your feet and I will pick out your sandals. If they do not glitter reddened by barbarian blood, they are a medal of authority. Before these, having captured the attention of your ears, I will count the multitudes with words, so that I can see how the rhetorical sounds give you new wings. And not only these, you call out the heavy sound of those approaching and you make it seem like a war-like sound. You do not only engage in fights and wars, but you seemingly make sacrifices, one would say, to both Hermes and Ares.⁴⁰ For I have composed other speeches as well and I presented them to you, but only after I wrote them, [p. 164] I performed them publicly and entrusted their consideration to others, until they came to your attention, not because in those speeches I denounced myself for some wrongdoing, like those who secretly bear children, marry in secret, and then present their offspring, but because at that time you were mourning the Empress.⁸

3. Yet, O speech, to what topics did you take me and how did you bring the *oikoumene*⁹ into my memory, even if the suffering prevailed? Do you not fear that the downpour of imperial tears would pull you down in their streams, since at that time, O Sovereign, it <the speech> remained for you hidden in the most remote corner of the palace and, as you wished to enjoy the mourning by yourself, you did not allow many people to stop and look at the palace. But now, O Emperor, since I who longed to write you a speech about your past misfortunes, and, then, even giving birth and myself nursing the child and swaddling it, and, as far as I could, getting ready, I now stand with your newborn, and on stage I play the grandchild, and want to learn completely and to entrust to the height [of your majesty] the trial of your river of wisdom regarding my offspring,¹⁰ whether it sustains and treats them well and whether it brings them to life but does not reject, condemn, and send them into the depth of forgetfulness. Let it be! But, then, the speech would acquire the form of a monody, and so would tend to provide intermittent invocations. O, how I use these words, and renew the pathos¹¹ again, and bring confusion to my audience. Yet now, give us, O Emperor, a brief opportunity to take delight in your praises, allow us to make a slight change for a brighter [situation], otherwise you would say that we always deploy sorrow. Having accepted these words which both remind [us] of the empress and bring [us] to tears, you will now

⁴⁰ The reference to Hermes, the god of commerce, and to Ares, the god of war, were allusions to Manuel's engagement in both military campaigns and peaceful endeavors.

τῶν βασιλικῶν τροπαίων ὕψος ἐλαφρίζομενος καὶ ζητεῖ τὰ πέδιλα τὰ πτερόεντα. μὴ τις φθονεῖτω τῶν καλῶν ὀνομάτων τῷ λόγῳ· ἔστω μοι νῦν καὶ διάκτορος καὶ τὰς βασιλικὰς ἀριστείας ἀπαγγειλάτω διατορώτερον.

4. Ἄλλ' ὦ τλήμων ῥήτωρ ἐγὼ τοσοῦτων· ἐν ἀκαρεῖ μνημονεῦσαι κατορθωμάτων ἀναγκαζόμενος, ἃ κἂν χρόνιος ἀσχολία, κἂν ὁ κατὰ κεφαλῆς τοῦ Δημοσθένους ξυρός, κἂν ὁ ἄσβεστος ἐκείνου λύχνος ἀπαριθμήσαιντο· μᾶλλον δὲ τί γάρ με δεῖ τῆς ἐμῆς εὐδαιμονίας κατειρωνεύσασθαι; τί δὲ χρὴ μὴ δημοσιεύειν τὸ τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων εὐτύχημα; ἄλβιος ἐν λογογράφοις ἐγὼ, μόνος εἶπερ τις τῶν πώποτε βασιλικὰς ἀνδραγαθίας συγγραφεμένων, οὐκ ἁμάρτυρον παρέχων τὸν λόγον, ἵνα καὶ τὰ κολάκων ὑποπτευθῆσμαι· ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἐγγὺς ἡμῖν, ὧ παρόντες, ὁ μάρτυς καὶ πάρεστιν ὁ τοὺς λόγους ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων ἰδῶν καὶ παθῶν, ἃ μέλλω νῦν ἐγὼ διηγῆσασθαι. τίς ποτε εἶδεν εὐφημούμενον βασιλέα ῥήτορα μετὰ τοῦ πυξίου παρεστηκότα καὶ τῆς εὐφημίας συμπαρόντα τὸν μάρτυρα; εἰ δὲ δεῖ καὶ ἀξιόπιστίας μαρτύρων, ἀρχηγὸς οὗτός ἐστι Περσίδος, μᾶλλον δὲ τῶν ἀρχηγούντων ἐν αὐτῇ τὸ κεφάλαιον καὶ πιστώσεται μοι τοὺς λόγους ὁμολογῶν τὰ παθήματα. ἀλλ' ἀρχηγὸς ἀληθῶς οὐτοσί Περσίδος, οὗτος ἐκείνος ὁ κρατῶν τῶν Περσῶν, ἄνθρωπος ἀρχὴν ἐζωσμένος τοσαύτην καὶ ἐπὶ μέγα δόξης ὀγκούμενος καὶ οὕτω μὲν ἐπ' εὐγενεῖα κομπάζων, οὕτω δ' ἐπὶ μυριάσι στρατευμάτων κυδρούμενος· οὗτος ἐκεῖνος ὁ Δαρείου καὶ Ξέρξου τῶν τῆς Περσίδος αὐχημάτων ἀπόγονος καὶ ταπεινὸς ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἦκει νῦν καὶ κάτω κλίνει τὴν μέγλαυχον κεφαλὴν τῷ ἡμετέρῳ προσκυνῶν βασιλεῖ. ἐπαίρει μοι καὶ τοῦτο τὸν λόγον, ἂν εὐθύς καὶ ἐκ προοιμίων ὑπέρσεμνά τινα διηγείτο καὶ ὧν οὐχ εὐρηταί που τὰ παραδείγματα· βασιλεῖς μὲν γὰρ πολλοὺς ἠκηκόειν καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν βιβλίων ἀνελεξάμην, οἱ φοβεροὶ μετὰ τῶν ὄπλων ἐδόκουν καὶ ἄνευ ὄπλων ἀπρόσμαχοι, ἦκειν δὲ ἐπ' αὐτοὺς αὐτομόλους οὕτω τοὺς ἀλλαχοῦ που κρατοῦντας καὶ οὕτω μὲν ἰκετεύειν οὕτω δὲ δουλείαν ὁμολογεῖν καὶ τοῖς οἰκέταις ἐκοντὰς τοὺς βασιλέας συντάττεσθαι οὐδεὶς οὐδέπω με λόγος ἔχει διδάξας οὐδ' ἔχω δοῦναι τούτου παράδειγμα. ὦ βασιλέως ἡμετέρου, βασιλέως πάντων ἀνθρώπων· ὦ βασιλέως, ὧ τὸ μὲν ὑπὸ χεῖρα τὰ εὐχαριστήρια προσκυνεῖ καὶ θύει τάχα τὰ λυτρωτήρια, βασιλεῖς δὲ προσκυνοῦσι τὰ ἰκετήρια, μὴ καὶ ζυγὸν δουλείας ἐπαυχενίσαιτο.

[p. 166] 5. Πάλαι μὲν οὖν κατὰ τῆς Ἀσίας στρατεύων ὁ Μακεδῶν ἐκεῖνος Ἀλέξανδρος (ἐδόκει δὲ φοβερὸς καὶ χειρὶ καὶ τῷ πλήθει καὶ τῶν τροπαίων τοῖς θαύμασι) προῦκαλεῖτο τὸν Περσῶν βασιλέα Δαρεῖον μόνον ἐλθόντα οἱ κλῖναι τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ ὁ Πέρσης ἠλαζονεύσατο καὶ οἱ ἐξὸν τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀκινδύνως ἔχειν, ἀλλὰ πίπτειν ἤθελε μετὰ τοῦ φρονήματος· ἀλλὰ νῦν, ὧ Δαρεῖε, σοὺ μὲν ὁ σὸς ἀπόγονος συνετώτερος, Ἀλεξάνδρου δὲ ἐκείνου ὁ ἐμὸς βασιλεὺς φοβερώτερός τε καὶ γενναιότερος καὶ οὔτε προσκαλεῖται τὸν Περσῶν ἄρχοντα μικροψύχου βασιλέως ἔργον ποιῶν καὶ τοῖς σχήμασι ζητοῦντος μόνους κυδαίνεσθαι καὶ βλέπει τοῦτον ἐξ αἰφνιδίου δουλοπρεπῶς ἐπιστάντα καὶ τοῖς αὐτοῦ ποσὶ προσκνυζόμενον. μέχρι τούτου μέγας Ἀλέξανδρος ἐπιθυμῶν μὴ ἐπιτυγχάνων ἅπερ ἐξ αὐτομάτου τῷ βασιλεῖ μου προσγίνεται. μέγας ἐν βασιλεῦσιν ὁ Σολομῶν, ὅσῳ μετὰ τῆς λοιπῆς μεγαλοπρεπειᾶς καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ σοφίᾳ ξυμπάντων ἦν περισσώτερος καὶ ἦκεν ἡ βασιλίσσα Νότου, φησὶ τὸ γράμμα τὸ ἱερόν, τοῦ βασιλέως τὴν σοφίαν θαυμάζουσα· ἀλλ' ἰδοὺ πλέον Σολομῶντος ὧδε (τὰ γὰρ ἐξῆς ἀρπάζω τοῦ γράμματος) ὅσῳ καὶ γυναικὸς ἀνὴρ πλέον τῆς Σολομῶντα ζητούσης ὁ τὸν ἐμὸν ζητῶν αὐτοκράτωρ· τὰ γὰρ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἀμφοτέροις ἴσα

be deflected thanks to the rattle of your trophies. Orations are an elaborate undertaking and do not insist on the same [topics], and since they themselves summon the change, they are the first ones to pleasantly contend with those who make most use of them.¹² For this reason, the wise men of old times put Hermes to many uses and so gave him many names. To count his names, he was named Pompaïos and Chthonios¹³ but as he does not only remain in the lower regions he is also called Ouranios¹⁴ and wears winged sandals, so that he can easily travel to his destination. Then, our Hermes escorted the soul of the dead and the dark places of Pluto¹⁵ kept him busy with funeral [p. 165] songs. Now the heavenly one (*ouranios*) wants to be called towards the height of the imperial monuments and searches the winged sandals.¹⁶ Let no one be envied for a speech with the good names <of the Byzantine emperor>. Let me undertake now the office of the messenger and let me report the excellent imperial deeds in a more thrilling way.

4. But O me, the patient rhetorician, for a brief moment I am forced to recall so many deeds, which even an intense activity, the razor on Demosthenes' head or his unquenchable lamp, would have reckoned.¹⁷ Or, rather, why do I need to dissimulate my good fortune? Why do I need to keep secret the success of my words? I am happy among the prose-writers, since really alone among the writers of the past imperial virtues, I do not offer this speech without witnesses, so that I cannot be suspected of flattering. For look, O beholders, the witness is present with us, and he sees and feels the words reflecting the deeds which I am about to relate. Who has seen the famous Emperor-rhetorician sitting at the writing table and standing by the witness of good reputation?¹⁸ And if a trustworthy witness is needed, this is the Persian leader, or rather the head of the leaders in Persia, and he will confirm my words and agree with the [account of] events. This true leader of Persia, who has power over the Persians, a man girded with so much power and brought to great honor and pride because of his nobility, acted proudly during numerous expeditions. He, a successor of the greatness of Darius and Xerxes of Persia, comes now to us, humbles himself in front of us, and bows his boastful head in adoration of our Emperor. He also elevates this speech of mine, and right from the beginning very solemn accounts would be narrated, whose models are nowhere to be found. For while I had heard many emperors and I have read in books about emperors who seemed formidable with their weapons and overwhelming without weapons when they came to those who ruled elsewhere and changed sides, but nothing ever taught me about rulers in supplication, or who confess their servitude, or who come to be placed under the authority of their family members, nor have I ever known a precedent for such a ruler. O Emperor of ours, O Emperor of all people; O Emperor for whom what is under his hand welcomes [his] gratitude and makes sacrifices for [his] salvation. Supplicatory rulers worship you in order not to wear on their necks the yoke of servitude.

[p. 166] 5. In the old days when Alexander the Macedonian¹⁹ was campaigning against Asia (he seemed terrible because of his hand,²⁰ the multitudes that he led, and the amaz-

διδόσθωσαν καὶ οὐ σοφίαν μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀνδρείαν καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς τῶν ἀρετῶν προσιστορῆσαι πάντως ἐλήλυθε. τί μὴ λέγω τὸ μείζον; τῷ Σολομῶντι μὲν ἢ βασίλισσα πλέον οὐδὲν ἀφῆκε τοῦ θαύματος καὶ ἀκοῦσαι τὴν σοφίαν ἐλθοῦσα μόνον ἀπῆλθε θαυμάζουσα, ὁ δὲ Περσῶν οὗτος φύλαρχος καὶ θαυμάσαι μὲν ἤκεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν δουλείαν τῷ βασιλεῖ μου πιστώσασθαι καὶ μέγας ἐνταῦθα παραγενόμενος ἔθναρχος εἶτα δούλος ἀναχωρεῖ καὶ δουλείας ὁμολογίαν ἀφῆκεν ὧδε μετὰ τοῦ θαύματος. ὦ βασιλέως τοσοῦτου, βασιλέως καὶ χειρὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς καὶ φήμη τοὺς βασιλέας καὶ δωρεῶν μεγαλοπρεπεῖα πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὑπάγοντος· ὦ βασιλέως, ὦ προσκυνοῦσιν οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς ἅπαντες, οἱ μὲν πόρρωθεν διὰ τὸν φόβον, οἱ δὲ καὶ προσιόντες διὰ τὸ μείλιχον καὶ γαλήνιον· ὦ βασιλέως μέχρι μὲν νῦν Αὐσόνων, νῦν δὲ καὶ βασιλέων καὶ τῶν ἑκασταχῆ κρατούντων τῆς γῆς· ὦ βασιλέως καὶ ὑποκλίνειν εἰδότης τοὺς δυνατοὺς τῆς γῆς ἅπαντας καὶ βασιλικῶς δεξιῶσθαι καὶ ταῖς ὑπὲρ αὐτοὺς κυδαίνειν τιμαῖς.

6. Ἀλέξανδρος μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον ἀναμένει πυθέσθαι τοῦ εἰς χεῖρας ἐλθόντος, πῶς ἂν αὐτῷ ποτε χρήσαιτο· ὅθεν καὶ φάναι λέγεται πρὸς τὸν Πῶ [p. 167] ρον (μέγας δὲ οὗτος ἦν Ἰνδῶν βασιλεὺς καὶ τῶς γέγονεν ὑπὸ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον)· “Λέγε, ὦ Πῶρε, ὅ τί σοι θέλει γενέσθαι.” τοῦ δὲ εἰπόντος “Βασιλικῶς μοι χρῆσαι, ὦ βασιλεῦ,” τότε ὁ Μακεδῶν ἀναμνησθεὶς ἐξ ὧν ὁ Πῶρος εἶπεν, ὡς ἔοικεν, ὡς ἄρα εἶη γε βασιλεὺς, βασιλικῆς θεραπείας τὸν βασιλέα ἤξισωσεν. ὁ δ’ ἐμὸς βασιλεὺς, τὸ τῆς σοφίας ταμεῖον, τὸ τῆς φρονήσεως ἀγαλμα, φθάνει τοῖς ἔργοις τὰς ἀποκρίσεις, μᾶλλον δὲ οὕτε πυνθάνεται τοῦ Περσάρχου, πῶς ἂν αὐτῷ χαριεῖται· οἶδε γὰρ ὅ τι δεῖ τοὺς βασιλέας ποιεῖν καὶ πολλῶ μείζονας ἢ κατὰ τὰς αὐτοῦ ἐλπίδας καὶ τὴν ἀξίαν τὰς εὐεργεσίας ἀπονέμει καὶ τὰς τιμὰς· ὁ μὲν γὰρ δούλον ἑαυτὸν καλεῖ καὶ τὰ τῶν δούλων θέλει ποιεῖν καὶ προσκυνήσας εἶτα παρίσταται, ὁ δὲ καὶ παῖδα ποιεῖται καὶ τοῖς οἰκείοις ἐγγράφει καὶ ἀξιοῖ καὶ τῆς παρ’ αὐτῷ καθέδρας, ἧς καὶ μεγάλοι βασιλεῖς ἐπεθύμησαν. πάλαι μὲν οὖν Δημάρτος ὁ Κορίνθιος, Ἀλεξάνδρου τὸ πρῶτον ὑπὸ τὸν χρυσοῦν οὐρανίσκον ἐν τῷ Δαρείου θρόνῳ καθίσαντος, μεγάλης εἶπεν ἡδονῆς στερηθῆναι τῶν Ἑλλήνων τοὺς τεθνηκότας πρὶν ἢ θεάσασθαι τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἐν τῷ Δαρείου θρόνῳ καθήμενον· ἐγὼ δ’ ἂν καὶ αὐτὸς οἰκειωσαίμην ἄρτι τοῦτο τὸ Δημαρτέιον καὶ πολλῆς ἂν φαίην ἔστερησθαι τῆς ἡδονῆς τῶν ὑπὸ τινος Ῥωμαίων ἐκείνους, ὅσοι θανόντες οὐ πάρεισι γε νῦν ἰδεῖν τὸν ἑαυτῶν βασιλέα λαμπρὸν λαμπρῶς ἐνθάδε προθρονιζόμενον καὶ τὸν μέγαν τὸν Περσῶν ἀρχηγέτην αὐτῷ καλῶς ὑποποδιζόμενον. θέαμα τερπνὸν οὕτω καὶ ξένον καὶ οἶον οὐδέπω τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς Ῥωμαίων εἰστίασεν· ἄρχοντας μὲν γὰρ ἔθνων καὶ δυνάστας (πάλαι τε ἦν ἢ καθ’ ἡμᾶς ἀρχὴ μεγάλη καὶ πολυδύναμος) καὶ πολλοὺς τε πολλὰκις προσερχομένους ἐδέξατο, καθαρὰν δὲ τὴν τῆς δουλείας ὁμολογίαν καὶ τὸν ζῆλον τῶν παρ’ ἡμῖν σεμνοτήτων, ὅθεν καὶ οἱ τῆς θεᾶς ἔρωτες ἐξανήφθησαν, μόνος ὁ Περσάναξ οὗτος ἐμφαίνει δίχα πολέμων ἐνεστηκότων ἀνάγκης (ἦν μὴ τις λέγη τοὺς προλαβόντας τε καὶ τοὺς μέλλοντας, οὓς ἀπὸ τῶν γενναιοτέρων οἱ ἀσθενεῖς ὑποπτέουσι) καὶ δίχα τῆς ὑποκαθημένης ἐν τοῖς κουφογνώμοσι δολιότητος αὐτομολήσας εἰς τὸν αὐτάνακτα. ὅθεν καὶ τοὺς βασιλικούς μὲν θησαυροὺς οὐκ εἶδεν, ὡς τοὺς παρ’ Ἐζεκία πάλαι τῷ βασιλεῖ Βαβυλῶνος, ἀλλ’ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀφθόνως ἐρρύσατο καὶ ἦν ἐν πολέμοις ἔγνω πάλαι χεῖρα τοῦ βασιλέως πλήκτριαν, ταύτην νῦν γνωρίζει πλουτίστριαν.

[p. 168] 7. Αἰσθάνομαί σου, βασιλεῦ φιλοπάτορ καὶ μετριόφρον, αἰσθάνομαί σου προβαλλομένου τὰ πάτρια καὶ μοι ἀντίθης τὸν πατέρα τούτου, τὸν πάλαι τῶν Περσῶν

ing victories) he spoke to Darius, the Emperor of the Persians who came alone to bow his head to him, and the Persian acted boastfully, and he told him that he was allowed to have remained the ruler without any danger, but that now upon reflection he wished him to fall. Now, O Darius, your successor is wiser than you, while my Emperor is more formidable and more courageous than Alexander and he does not challenge the Persian ruler by acting as a mean-spirited Emperor who finds pleasure only surface appearances and sees this one standing in servitude suddenly groveling at his feet. Up to this point the great Alexander, who desired not to judge as if spontaneously, is connected to my Emperor. Great among the emperors, Solomon was so much greater in his magnificence and wisdom than everybody. As the Scripture says, there came to him the empress of the South who was amazed at the Emperor's wisdom.²¹ But see, there is something greater than Solomon (for I seize the succession of events from the Scriptures) and greater than the woman inquiring for Solomon, the one who is searching for my Emperor. Let the same things concerning the ruler be granted to both of them and let not only wisdom but also bravery and justice and the other virtues as well be fully discussed. Why not speak about what is greater? The empress left no impression of wonder on Solomon and having arrived to hear wise sayings she alone left in amazement. Instead, this leader of the Persians came to marvel and also to confirm his servitude to my Emperor. Thereafter, having become a great leader of people, he leaves as a servant and so following upon the marvel he confesses his servitude. O great Emperor, who subdued enemies with his hands, other emperors with his glory, and all the people with the generosity of his gifts! O Emperor, to whom all the rulers of the earth prostrate: some who came from afar respect him out of fear, others came close because of [his] gentleness and [his] serenity. O Emperor of the Ausonians until now, and now also of the emperors and of the rulers in all parts of the earth; O Emperor, who knows how to subject all the powerful peoples of the earth and also to host in an imperial manner and take delight in their honors.

6. For initially Alexander waits until he finds out more about the one who falls into his hands, how he could be useful for him at some point. Hence it is said that he told [p. 167] Poros²² (he was the king of the Indians and he obeyed Alexander for some time): "Say, O Poros, what do you want to happen to you." When he said: "Treat me like a king, O Emperor," the Macedonian remembered what Poros apparently said that he would be a king straightaway, as he deemed the king worthy of imperial service. My Emperor, a treasury of wisdom and the statue of judgment, matches decisions with his deeds, furthermore, he does not learn by hearsay about how the Persian leader could be pleased. He knows what is needed to make the Emperors much greater still and in accordance with his hopes, he imparts dignity with benefactions and honors. For while one calls himself a servant, wants to act like the servants, and so stands in adoration, the other adopts him as a son and includes him in his family and deems him worthy of offering him a throne, which even great emperors have desired.²³ A long time ago, Demaratos the Corinthian, when Alexander first sat under the golden canopy on the throne of Darius, said that mortals were deprived of the Greeks' great pleasure before they saw Alexander sitting on Darius' throne.²⁴ I myself have become familiar with this Demaratos and would say that they

ἄρχοντα, πρὸς τὸν σὸν πατέρα καὶ βασιλέα δουλοπρεπῶς ἐνθάδε παραγενόμενον· καὶ τιμῶν τὸν πατέρα λέγεις τὰ ἔργα παρόμοια; πολλοῦ γε καὶ δεῖ δουρὸς ἀκωκῆ καὶ λογισμῶ κρίσιν ἐς ταυτὸν ἔρχεσθαι. ὁ μὲν γὰρ κρίνει τὸ τῆς σῆς ἀρχῆς ὕψος, ὅτι ξυμπάσας ἀληθῶς βασιλείας κατὰ τὰ τῶν μεγεθῶν ἢ ἀριθμῶν Ἄσια μέτρα ὑπερπέπαικεν, ὅθεν καὶ τὴν ὑπεροχὴν αἰδεῖται καὶ τὸ κράτος φοβεῖται καὶ προσελθεῖν προαιρεῖται καὶ τὴν δουλείαν ὁμολογήσαι σοι· ἐκεῖνον δὲ ἄρα ἐχθρὸς ἐλαύνων ἐδίωκε καὶ πέτραν ὁ λαγῶς ἐζήτει καταφυγὴν καὶ τὴν τοῦ ὄρους λόχμην τὸ κνώδαλον. δεῖγμα μὲν γὰρ σοι καὶ τοῦτο τῆς πατρικῆς γενναιότητος, ὅτι τῶν καταπονουμένων προῖσταται καὶ τοὺς τῶν οἰκείων ἐλαυνομένους φέρων αὐτοῖς ἐγκαθίστησι. σοῦ δὲ ἦν ὄντως πολλῶ μείζον τὸ κράτος, ὅτι σοὶ ἄρα καὶ ἐν καλῶ καθεστῶτες οἱ τῆς γῆς δυνάσται προσπίπτουσιν. ἦκέ σοι πάλα καὶ ὁ τὴν Ἀντιόχου διέπων μετὰ τοῦ ἴσου τούτου φρονήματος, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ οἶδα μίαν τὴν Ἀντιόχου πόλιν, οὔτω πολλὰς τὰς τῆς περιόδου πόλεις ἐπίσταμαι καὶ συγκρίνειν ἐναυθὰ πόσῃ διάστασιν ἄλλογον. εἶδεν ἢ καθ' ἡμᾶς αὕτη πόλις καὶ βασιλέας μεγάλους ἐκ τῆς Ἑσπεράς κάτωθεν ἤκοντας καὶ φοβεροὶ μὲν ἦσαν, ὅσῳ κατὰ τὰς ἄμμους ἔμβριθον τοῖς στρατεύμασι, καὶ προσεκύνησάν σοι βασιλεῖς ἐκεῖνοι καὶ τὸ σὸν ἀνύψωσαν κλέος περιφανῶς ὑποθρονιζόμενοι, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ ξυνενοοῦμαι τὰ πρῶτα καὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ τὸν σκοπὸν ἐκείνοις ἀναμοχλεύω καὶ γνωρίζω τὴν ἀνάγκην αὐτοῦς ὅψε ταπεινώσασαν.

8. Εὐγέ σοι, ὦ Πέρσα, τῆς εὐβουλίας, ὅτι παλαιῶν Περσῶν ἔθος πέμπειν τοὺς παῖδας ἐς τὰ κοινὰ τῆς δικαιοσύνης διδασκαλεῖα τῶ πολλῶ χρόνῳ κατημελημένον ἀνακαινίζεις αὐτὸς προστρέχων εἰς τὸν μόνον δικαιοτάτον βασιλέα, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάσης ἀρετῆς κατακώχιμον. εὐγε, ὅτι τὸν ἀληθινὸν τῆς γῆς βασιλέα κατὰ τοὺς πρότριτα Πέρσας ἀναζητεῖς καὶ προπέμψας ἐκείνους, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἀνερευῆσαι τὴν φάντην αὐτὸς ἐπέστης ἄρτι παριορδάνιος, ἴν' ἰδῆς, ὁποῖους οἶδε καὶ σχεδιάζειν ὁ βασιλεὺς μου τοὺς ποταμούς. μὴ τίς σοι καὶ λουτροῦ χρεῖα; δεῦρο τοῦ ποταμοῦ τοῖς νάμασιν ἐμβαπτίσθητι καὶ σου τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἐκπλυνθέντων ὄψει καὶ τὸν ἐν οὐρανῶ βασιλεύοντα. ἀλλ' οὐ σοι δοκεῖ τοῦτο τῶ τέως καὶ πυρὶ λατρεύειν ἐθέλεις καὶ τῶ Ἡλίῳ τὸν ποιητὴν παρωθούμενος· οὐκοῦν σεβάζου τὸν βασιλέα, τῆς οἰκουμένης τὸν ἥλιον. ἔστι σοι καὶ πῦρ οὗτος ξύμπαν ἀποτεφρῶν τὸν πολέμιον· τούτῳ χαρὶ [p. 169] ζου καὶ τὴν προσκύνησιν. ἀλλ' ἀποτρέχεις οὔτω ταχέως· ἀπάγγειλόν μοι τοὺς λόγους, οὓς σοι καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἐπῆλθε λέγειν τὴν καθ' ἡμᾶς ἀρχὴν διοδεύοντι. ἄρα τὰς πόλεις ἠρίθμεις; ἄρα κατέλεγες τὰ στρατεύματα; ἄρα γῆν ἀροσίμην ἐσκόπει; ἄρα παρῶδευες τὴν αἰοικήτον; ἀγωνιῶ μὴ παρέδραμόν σε τοῦ βασιλέως αἱ πόλεις, ἃς ἀνακόπτων τῶν σῶν βαρβάρων τὰς ὀρμὰς ἀνεστήσατο. ἀλλ' εἶδες πόλεις ἐπὶ τῶν πεδιάδων; εἶδες ἀκρονεφῆ παρὰ τοῖς ὄρεσι φρούρια; εἶδες ἐπὶ τούτοις βασιλικὰς εἰκόνας προβεβλημένας; ἐκεῖνα πᾶσαι τὸν ἐμὸν γνωρίζουσι βασιλέα αὐθήμερον ἐγείραντα τὰ πολίσματα. ἀπάγγειλόν μοι τοῖνον πρὸς τοὺς γειτονοῦντας βαρβάρους, ὅτι πλείους τῶν βαρβαρικῶν στρατευμάτων ἔχει τὰς πόλεις ὁ βασιλεὺς. τὰ δέ σοι κατὰ τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον ποῖα; ἔχαιρες τὸν πορθμὸν διαβαίνων καὶ τὰς καινοτομίας Ξέρσου συνενοοούμενος ἢ ἐσκυθρῶπαζες μᾶλλον τὴν τότε χλεῦν ἀνανεούμενος καὶ ἐδειλίας μὴ σοι ἀποτίσῃ τὴν ὕβριν τὴν τῶν προγόνων ἢ θάλαττα; ὅταν εἶδες τὴν πόλιν, πῶς ἐμερίσθης τῶ θαύματι; πότερον τὸ κάλλος ἠγάσθης ἢ ἐξεπλάγῃς τὸ μέγεθος; μᾶλλον δὲ πόλιν βλέπειν ἐδόκεις ἢ κόσμον ὅλον ἀναμετρεῖν; μὴ τίς σοι πόλις τοιαύτη; μὴ σοι τοιαῦτα βασίλεια καὶ λαμπρὸν ἐν τούτοις τὸ βῆμα καὶ ῥήτορες ἐν μέσῳ τὰς ἀριστείας ἀνακηρύττοντες; σοὶ μὲν οὖν ἐπὶ

were deprived of the Romans' great pleasure as, having died, they are not present to see their radiant Emperor now exerting leadership here and the great lord of the Persians who walks behind him. Thus, a delightful, unusual, and sight not seen until now gave a feast to the eyes of the Romans. Even if he has often received many powerful archontes²⁵ and the leaders of nations who came to him (for previously our rule was great and very strong), only this Persian leader has displayed a clear confession of servitude and zeal for our dignities, without the need of threats of war, which kindled the love for the spectacle (unless one mentions the predecessors and the successors whom the weak ones suspect because they are more noble). Only he acted without the underlying deceit of the reckless one who deserts (everybody) until (he becomes) sole ruler. For this reason, he did not see the imperial treasuries, as if they were those of Hezekiah for the ruler of Babylon,²⁶ but he drew abundantly from them, and the hand which he knew before as a striking arm, now he knows as the hand which makes him rich.

[p. 168] 7. I notice, O father-loving and modest Emperor, that you put before your eyes the matters of the fatherland and you compare his father, the past ruler of the Persians who came here as a servant for your father and Emperor. And when you honor the father do you talk about similar deeds? He needs a sharp spear²⁷ and reasoning to arrive at the same judgment. For he can estimate the magnitude of your rule, because Asia truly surpassed all kingdoms in dimensions and numbers, whence he fears its superiority and power and decides to come and confess his obeisance to you. Then, the enemy pursued that one, and like the hare he looks for the stone as a refuge and like the wild beast he searches for the thicket in the mountains.²⁸ For this also stands as a model of fatherly nobility for you, because he presided over those who were subdued and, having brought the persecuted members of the family, he became their ruler. Your power was much greater, because the rulers of the earth who previously were in a good situation prostrated themselves to you. A long time ago, the ruler of the city of Antioch came with a similar plan, but since I know about the one city of Antioch, I can compare the many cities and the incommensurable distance.⁴¹ This city of ours also knew great rulers coming from the West.²⁹ They were frightening, with as many armies as sand, and those rulers showed obeisance to you, and increased your fame when they sat on lower thrones. Yet I keep in mind the beginnings, I unveil to those the aim of the journey, and I know the need that humbles them late in the day.

8. Well done to you, O Persian, for your prudence, because you renew the long-neglected custom of the ancient Persians to send their children to the shared schools of justice,³⁰ and you yourself approach to the only most just Emperor and possessor of all virtues. Well done, because you search for the true Emperor of the earth for three successive days according to the ancient Persians and, as it seems, after you earlier sent those to search for the manger, you stopped just near Jordan,³¹ in order to see the rivers that my Emperor knew well.³² Do you need a bathing place? Then, here, be baptized in the river's stream and when your eyes are clean, you will see even the king of the heavens. But, up

⁴¹ This may be an allusion to an episode in Manuel's campaign in Antioch in the 1150s.

τούτοις ἐκεῖνο λέγειν πάντως ἐπέρχεται, ὃ καὶ Δαρεῖος εἶπεν ὁ Περσῶν βασιλεὺς τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου βασιλείαν ἀποδεχόμενος· ἐκεῖνός τε γὰρ ἀνασχὼν τὰς χεῖρας εἰς οὐρανόν, μάλιστα μὲν αὐτῷ φυλαχθῆναι τὴν ἀρχὴν ἠΰξατο· εἰ δ' ἄλλον χρὴ βασιλέα τῆς Ἀσίας γενέσθαι, μὴ ἄλλον εἶναι τοῦτον ἢ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον. καὶ σὺ ἂν ἡδέως κατεύχοιό σου τῆς ἐξουσίας, μή ποτ' ἂν αὐτῆς ἄλλον ἢ Μανουὴλ ἐπιβῆναι, τῶν πάντων βασιλέων τὸν μεγαλοπρεπέστατον.

9. Σὺ μὲν οὖν οὕτω ταῦτα καὶ πολλοὺς ἐντεῦθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἀρχετύπου τῶν ἀρετῶν τοὺς τύπους ἀναλεξάμενος σπεύδεις τοῖς ὑπὸ σέ παραδοῦναι καὶ σου διακοσμήσασθαι τὴν ἀρχήν· ἐγὼ δέ σου λαβοίμην ἔτι καὶ ἀξιῶσω περιμεῖναι τῷ λόγῳ τὰ βασιλέως ἔργα κηρύττοντι, ἴν' εἰδῆς, ὡς οὐ παράγει χρόνος τούτου τὰς ἀριστείας οὐδὲ καλύπτει λήθη τὰ τρόπαια, καὶ μάθης οἷόν ἐστι δεινὸν βασιλεῖ τοιοῦτῳ συμβάλλειν ἀθανατοῦντι τῶν ἐχθρῶν τὰ πτώματα. εἶδες βασιλέα τηλικόν; εἰστίασάς σου τὴν ὄψιν τοῖς ὑπερσέμνοις θεάμασι; μεῖνόν σου καὶ τὴν ἀκοὴν ἐστιᾶσαι τοῖς παραδόξοις ἀκούσμασι. μὴ [p. 170] μοι τὰ σὰ μόνον φαντάζου, μὴ τὰ τῶν ἐκ γειτόνων βαρβάρων, ἐφ' οἷς ὁ βασιλεὺς μου πολλάκις τρισαριστεὺς ἀνηγόρευται. ἀλλὰ γὰρ εἰσιν ἄλλαι πόλεις, εἰσιν ἔθνων ἄλλα γένη τῆς Ἑώας καὶ τῆς Ἑσπέρας μέχρι περάτων γῆς παρατείνοντα καὶ μυρίον ἐκείθεν τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῶν τροπαίων ἐπισωρεύσαντες ἔχομεν· ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἐπὶ τούτοις ἔδει καὶ σοὶ ῥητόρων, ἔδει γλώττης ἐστομωμένης, ἵνα ταῦτα τοῖς Πέρσαις ἀνακηρύξη τρανότερον. ὡς ἐγὼ ξυνηνοοῦμαι, πῶς ἢ Περσίς σε ξύμπασα περιστήσεται τὰ σεμνὰ τοῦ βασιλέως ἀναμαθεῖν ἱκετεύοντες, καὶ οὐ φέρω τὸν τηλικοῦτον ὄγκον βραχεῖα γλώττη κατασμικρύνεσθαι. τουτὶ μὲν ἴσως ἐρεῖς οὕτω ῥαδίως, ὡς "ὄν ἐζήτησαν εὐρηκα βασιλέα καὶ προσελθὼν αὐτῷ προσεκύνησα," ὅπερ ἦν ποτε λέγειν ἐπανελθοῦσι καὶ τοῖς Πέρσαις ἐκείνοις, οἱ τὸν Χριστὸν προσεκύνησαν· τὰ δ' ἄλλα ὡσπερ ἐκείνοις τῶν κατὰ Χριστὸν μυστηρίων ἀπόρητα, οὕτω δῆτα καὶ σοὶ τὰ λαμπρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως ἀριστεῖα λέγειν ἀνέφικτα. ἀλλὰ σοὶ μὲν οὔτε λαμπρῶν, ὡς ἔοικε, πάρεστι τῶν τροπαίων, οὔθ' οἱ κηρύσσοντες πάρεσι καὶ πυκνὰς οὐκ ἀνεγείρων τὰς νίκας οὐδὲ τοὺς ἐπαινέτας κεκληρώσασθαι· ἐγὼ δὲ ἀλλὰ νικητὴν οὕτω καὶ τροπαιοῦχον ἔχων τὸν βασιλέα ῥήτωρ αὐτῷ παρὰ τῆς τέχνης προβέβλημαι καὶ θαρρῶ σου τὰς ἀκοὰς κατακλύσαι τῷ πλήθει καὶ καταπλήξαι τοῖς θαύμασι.

10. Βασιλέα γὰρ ἐνταῦθα περιϊστάμεθα οὐ χθὲς καὶ πρῶην ἐπὶ τῆς οὕτω τέχνης ἰστάμενον οὐδὲν αὐτῷ πρὸς βασιλείαν μετὸν οὐδ' ἐκ προγόνων τοῦ σκήπτρου καὶ ἐπ' αὐτὸν καταβαίνοντος, εἶτα τὸ κράτος ἀρπάσαντα καὶ μηδὲν ἀρχαιότερον ἑαυτῷ διήγημα παρεχόμενον, οὐδ' ἀρετῆς ἀνδρα καὶ παιδείας ἀνεπιστήμονα, πόνων τε καὶ καμάτων καὶ τῶν ἐν ταῖς μάχαις ἀπείρητον, ἴν' ἢ λοιπὸν βραχυλογῶμεν διὰ τὴν ἔνδειαν ἢ καὶ μακρηγοροῦντες ψευδῶμεθα· οὐ τοιαύτην δυστυχοῦμεν δυστυχίαν ἀγεννοῦς ῥήτορος, ἀλλὰ μακρὰν μὲν ἡμῖν τὸ τῆς βασιλείας ἔλκει σχοινίον καὶ (ὃ φησι Σολομών) ὡς ἀληθῶς τρίπλοκον, ὅθεν ἂν τις καὶ ἀδιάρρηκτον ἐσεῖσθαι τάχα τοῦτο κατεμαντεύσατο· χρυσῆν δὲ τὴν σειρὰν ὄλην στρέφει καὶ βασιλικοῖς ἐμπρέπουσαν ἄνθεσι, δεσπότης μὲν εἰρηνικός κατὰ Σολομῶντα καὶ πολιοῦχος, ἐν πολέμοις κατὰ τὸν Δαυὶδ ἀντίμαχος ἄμαχος, πρᾶυς καὶ χαρίεις πρὸς τὸ ὑπήκοον, βαρὺς καὶ σύννους πρὸς τὸ πολέμιον, ἐν ἀλκῇ καὶ τόνῳ νεανικώτατος, ἐν σκέμμασι καὶ βουλευτηρίοις γεραίτατος, νοῦς ὅλος ὦν καὶ ταλαντεύων λογισμοῦ τὰ πρακτέα καὶ κατὰ νοῦν ἐρευνῶν εὐεπηβολώτατα καὶ ἀπρόσκοπα ὅσα θυμὸς ὑποβάλλει καὶ παράλογος ὄρεξις (ταῦτα δὲ οὐδὲ βασιλέως, [p. 171] ἀλλὰ τυράννου)

to this time, this did not occur to you and you wish to worship the fire and the Sun since you reject the Creator.⁴² Certainly then, honor the Emperor, the sun of the *oikoumene*. To you, he himself is the fire that consumes any enemy. [p.169] Therefore obey him graciously as well. You travelled home so swiftly: tell me what came to your mind while crossing your realm. Did you count the cities? Did you make a catalogue of the armies? Did you see the fertile land? Did you pass through the uninhabited land? I am worried that the imperial cities did pass you by unnoticed, which he rebuilt by pushing back the invasions of your barbarians. But did you see cities on the plains? Did you see the citadels covered by clouds on the mountains? Did you see the imperial images displayed there? These all make known my Emperor, who raised the fortifications in a single day. Announce on my behalf to your neighboring barbarians: the Emperor's cities outnumber the barbarian armies. What possessions do you have on the Hellespont? Did you rejoice when traversing the straits, even though you understood Xerxes' peculiar acts; or rather did you get angry when reviving the old joke and you feared that the sea would pay back the excess of your predecessors? When you saw the city, how did the marvel affect you? Which of the two: did you admire the beauty or were you astonished by its magnitude? Did it seem to you that you are looking at a city or that you measure [with your eyes] the entire world? Do you have such a city? Do you have such palaces and a magnificent tribune inside the palace and rhetoricians praising the Emperor's great deeds? Above all, did it come to you to say what Darius said when he acknowledged the rule of Alexander? For that one, when he raised his hands to the sky, he prayed that the kingdom be preserved for him.³³ If Asia needed another Emperor, there should be no one else but Alexander. You should also pray earnestly for your authority, lest no one else supersedes Manuel in his rule, the most magnificent of all rulers.

9. After you collected these from here and many [other] models from our archetype of virtues, you strive to transmit them to your subjects and to adorn your rule with them. I would take hold of you and would consider you worthy to wait for the speech proclaiming the imperial deeds, so that you see that neither the length of time creates his great deeds nor forgetfulness covers the victory monuments, and that you learn how terrible it is for such a great immortal Emperor to gather the corpses of the enemies. Have you ever seen such a great Emperor? Have you ever entertained your vision with such holy sights? Wait until you please your hearing with other marvelous reports. [p. 170] Do not think only of your matters or those of the barbarian neighbors, against whom my Emperor was often proclaimed thrice best. For there are other cities, there are other peoples of the East and the West, stretching up to the end of the earth and we have heaped up a multitude of trophies from there. In addition, you also need rhetoricians and a tongue of steel in order to unveil these feats to the Persians more clearly. As I imagine, all Persians will surround you and beseech you to learn about the Emperor's glory. I cannot diminish such a great achievement with a brief account. Perhaps, you will say this as easily as "I found the ruler

42 Although Malakes certainly knew about Islam, he might have intended here to assimilate the Seljuk religion to a pagan belief.

καὶ πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ἀποπεμπόμενος. ἔνθεν τοι καὶ ὡς θεὸς ἡμῶν ἄρχει κατὰ τὸν Σταγειρόθεν σοφόν, καὶ οὐκ ἄνθρωπος· παρ' οἷς γὰρ φησι νοῦς κυβερνήτης καὶ πολιοῦχος, οὗτοι θεὸν ἔχουσι καὶ νόμους τοὺς ἄγοντας· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἢ νοῦς ἢ λόγος ἄνευ ὀρέξεως· νοῦς δὲ ὁ θεὸς ἢ θεῖον τοῖς θεηγόροις ἠγόρευται· ἀνθρώπου δὲ κρατεῖν ταυτόν ἐστι καὶ θηρίου· θηριῶδες γὰρ ἢ ἐπιθυμία καὶ ὁ θυμός, οἷσπερ ὁ ἄνθρωπος συγκατέζευκται· καὶ τοὺς ἀρίστους δ' ἔστιν οὗ ταῦτα διέφθειρε. περιζώννυται καὶ ῥομφαίαν ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐπὶ τῷ μηρῷ καὶ πῦρ ἀνάπτει θυμοῦ, ἀλλὰ νοῦς καὶ τὸ ξίφος ἀκονᾷ καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἀναφλέγει καὶ πολλάκις αὐτὸ κατὰ τῆς ἀσεβείας καὶ τῶν αὐτῆς υἰῶν ἀνερρίπισεν, οἷς καὶ τὰ βέλη αὐτοῦ ὡς καιομένοις (κατὰ τὸν ψαλμῶδόν) ἐξειργάσατο. τοιαῦτα ὁ ἐμὸς βασιλεὺς, ὃν ὀλκῆ μικρᾷ λόγου καὶ βραχεῖ μεγέθει τῶν ἐγκωμίων σήμερον ταλαντεύομεν.

11. Σὺ δέ μοι λέγε τὸν Ξέρξην ὁ Πέρσης καὶ τῆ χρυσοῦ διαγλαΐζου πλατάνῳ καὶ τοῖς σοβαροῖς ἐκείνοις ὑπενθρονίσμασιν, ἃ βασιλείαν μὲν ἴσως ἐμφαίνει, βασιλέα δὲ οὐ πάντως χαρακτηρίζουσιν, ἵνα μὴ τὰ κατὰ τὸν Ἑλλησποντον λέγω καὶ τὰς τῶν στοιχείων καινοτομίας καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῆς ἀπονοίας χαρίσματα· καὶ σύ μοι λέγε Μακεδῶν τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον εὐσθενη νεανίσκον ἀγαθῆ τύχῃ φερόμενον. καίτοι πίνακα μόνον ἐνεστησάμην τῷ βασιλεῖ μου καὶ τὰ πρῶτα διεχάραξα χρώματα καὶ σκιὰν βασιλικὴν σοι μόνον ὑπέδειξα· εἰ δέ μοι μείνης ἀνθολογήσαι καὶ τὴν λοιπὴν χρωματουργίαν ἐπισκευάσασθαι, τάχ' ἂν ὀλοτελὲς σοι δεῖξω τὸ τοῦ βασιλέως ἀνδρείκελον καὶ θαρρῶ σου τῷ κάλλει τὴν ψυχὴν ὄλην θηράσασθαι. πλὴν ἄλλ' ἐν Ὀλυμπίᾳ μὲν εἰκόνες πάλαι τοῖς νικῶσιν ἀνεστηλοῦντο καὶ τοῖς ἀναστηλοῦσιν ἥρτητο φόβος τὰ σοφῶν ἔργα καθαιρεῖσθαι καὶ ἀνατρέπεσθαι τὰς εἰκόνας, ἣν ἐν τῷ μέτρῳ ψεύδοιντο τὴν ἀλήθειαν καὶ ὁ ἀνδριάς ὑπερβάλλοι τὸν ἀθλητὴν ἐν τῷ μεγέθει τοῦ σώματος· ἐγὼ δὲ νῦν εἰκόνα ταύτην ἀναστηλῶν ἀθλητῆ γενναίῳ μάλα καὶ σοφῷ βασιλεῖ οὐκ Ὀλύμπιον ἀγῶνα κρατήσαντι πάλαι ἢ δρόμον ἢ τι τῶν ὅσα παίζουσι τὰ μειράκια, οὐδ' ἐνθάδε μόνον ἢ ἐνθάδε στεφανωσαμένῳ τὰ νικητήρια, ἀλλ' ἀπανταχῆ τῆς οἰκουμένης ἀνδρικὰ στησαμένῳ καὶ ἀληθῶς βασιλικά τρόπαια, οὐκ ἐπὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς μὲν ἔχω τὸν φόβον οὐδὲ δεδίττει με τὸ τῆς εἰκόνας ὑπέμετρον (οὐ γὰρ χαλκὸς ἐμοὶ τὰ τῆς ὕλης, ἵνα εἶεν πως οὐ δυσπόριστα, οὐδὲ μικρὰ τὰ τοῦ πρωτοτύ [p. 172] που, ἵν' ὑπερβάλλῃ ταῦτα τὸ μίμημα), δέδοικα δέ μοι καθαιρεθῆναι τὸν ἀνδριάντα πολλῷ τοῦ πρωτοτύπου πάντως λειπόμενον. οὕτω μέγα τὸ τοῦ ἐμοῦ νικητοῦ σῶμα καὶ ἀληθῶς ὑπέρτατον, οὕτω καὶ τὰ τῆς ὕλης τίμια καὶ πόνῳ περιττῷ κομιζόμενα· εἰ δ' ἄρα ἦν καὶ μείζον ἀποξέσαι ὧδε τὸ ἄγαλμα, πολλοῦ ἂν ἔδει τοῦτο καθαιρεθῆναι, καὶ τοῦ νόμου τῶν Ὀλυμπίων ὑπερφρονῶν ὑψοῦ τὸ ἄγαλμα τοῦμὸν ἀνεστήλωσα· ὁ γὰρ τοι νόμος τῶν ἐγκωμίων χαίρει μάλιστα ταῖς ὑπερβολαῖς καὶ ἀγαπητόν, ἦν τις τὸν αἰνετήριον ῥητορεύων μεγαλύνει τὸν λόγον καὶ μείζονα τῶν πραγμάτων ὄγκον αὐτῷ περιτίθησι.

12. Ταῦτ' ἄρα καὶ Στησικράτην τὸν λαξευτὴν ἐγὼ πολλάκις ἐπήνεσα προθυμούμενον Ἀλεξάνδρῳ λαξεῦσαι τὸν Ἄθων ὄρος τὸ Θράκιον καὶ ἀνδριάντα ἐπιξέσαντα Μακεδόνων μέγαν οἶον καὶ ἀτεχνῶς τὸν Ἄθων ἐμφαίνοντα· καὶ ἐπηγγέλλετό γε ποιήσῃν ὁ Στησικράτης οὗτος τὸ ξόανον τῆ λαῖα μὲν Εὐρώπῃν πᾶσαν περιλαμβάνοντα τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον καὶ ὅσα τῶν Εὐρωπαίων ἐθνῶν ἀπάντων κατημεγέθησε, θατέρᾳ δὲ τῶν χειρῶν τὴν Ἐω καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν Ἀσίᾳ φέροντα τρόπαια. ἀλλὰ Στησικράτης εἰκόνων ἦν λαξευτὴς καὶ λίθον εἶχε τὴν ὕλην καὶ ἐζήτει τὴν φιλοτεχνίαν τάχα κομψεύεσθαι· εἰ δὲ καὶ εἰς ἔργον ἤγαγε τὴν ὑπόσχεσιν, αὐτὸ κατερεῖ τὸ ὄρος εἰς ὄψιν πᾶσιν ἐγκείμενον. ἐμοὶ δὲ νῦν ὁ λόγος,

whom I was looking for and coming in front of him I bowed down to him,” something which was also said by those returning Persians who honored Christ. Just as the other mysteries of Christ are forbidden to those, in the same way the glorious imperial achievements remain unattainable to you. But, as it seems, you do not have magnificent monuments, nor are messengers of victories present and they do not gather many victories nor have they won heralds by lot. Yet I, the rhetorician who has an Emperor who is both victor and trophy-holder, I present myself to him with my craft and I dare to deluge your ears with the multitude of wonders and to astonish you with them.

10. We stand here around the Emperor not because he mastered the craft [of ruling] yesterday and long ago, nor because he has a share in the rule, nor because the scepter of the ancestors was transmitted to him, and then having seized the power he offered himself a no older [imperial] account; nor because he is a man ignorant of virtue and education, inexperienced in efforts, toils, and military deeds. We are not unhappy, for such is the misery of a low-born rhetorician, but a rope dragged us far from the imperial office and, (according to Solomon) as it is thrice true, from the point whence one would foretell that this will be unbroken. He turns the entire golden lineage which is also suitable for imperial flowers and he is a peaceful lord like Solomon and a protector of cities.³⁴ In wars he is capable of confronting without fight like David, he is gentle and generous to his subjects, or severe and circumspect towards the enemy. In strength and force he is like a very young man, in devising plans and councils like a mature man; he has a whole mind and he balances his thoughts; he searches with his mind the cleverest plan and the uncharted things which the temper and the absurd desires bring in (these are not features of an Emperor [p. 171] but of a tyrant) and sends them away from himself. Thence, according to the wise man from Stagira,³⁵ he rules us like a god, not like a human being; for, besides, he is said to be the governing and protecting mind, which are guided by God and the laws. For there is nothing, either mind or reason without desire; the mind is proclaimed the god or the divine element for those who discourse about God. It is the same to control both humans and beasts. For yearning (*epithymia*) and desire (*thymos*) are beastly elements, two elements which are joined in humans as well. It is possible that these destroy even the best people. The Emperor girds himself with the sword on his thigh and kindles the fire of anger, but reason both sharpens the sword and rekindles the fire of desire, and often rekindles it against disrespect and its offspring with which he forges the arrows (according to the psalmist).³⁶ Such is our Emperor, whom we measure today with the small course of the speech and with the limited length of praises.

11. You, Persian, tell me about Xerxes and take delight in the golden plane tree³⁷ and those haughty consecrated seats, which reveal the imperial office, but they do not entirely describe the Emperor, not to mention those feats on the Hellespont, the novelty of elements, and the remaining gifts of his madness. And you, Macedonian, tell me about Alexander a strong young man who achieved [many feats] because of a good fate. I brought only one drawing board for my Emperor, I separated the first colors, and only showed you the imperial shadow. If you stay to collect flowers and to re-draw them re-equipped with the remaining colors, I would show you right away the complete human

ὦ βασιλεῦ, ὁ καλὸς τῶν ἀριστέων ἔργων χαλκοτύπος ἢ καὶ γλυφεύς, ὁ καὶ μόνοις τοῖς ἀνδραγαθοῦσιν εἰδὼς ἀποτορνεύει τὰ ξόανα, μηδὲ μέχρις ἐπαγγελίας μόνης ἰστάμενος, εἰκόνα σοι ἀναστηλῶσαι μεγάλην καὶ θαυμασίαν οἶαν ἐπαγγεῖλάμενος λίθῳ μὲν καὶ χαλκῷ χαίρειν εἶπεν, οὐδὲ παρενοχλεῖν ἐθέλει τοῖς ὄρεσιν· αὐτὰ δὲ σοι τὰ ἔργα τῆς οἰκείας τέχνης ὕλην ποιούμενος αὐτεῖκελον ὄντως καὶ πολυχρόνιον ἀνεγερεῖ σοι πάντως τὸ μῶρφωμα. ἀλλ' ἐλαθόμην ἐνταῦθα καὶ μίαν εἶπον εἰκόνα τοῦ πανταχοῦ τῆς γῆς ἀνεστηλωμένου καὶ πᾶσαν οἰκουμένην μερῖσαμένου ταῖς διὰ τῶν ἔργων στήλαις καὶ τοῖς μορφώμασι· τοῖς μὲν γὰρ Ἑλληνῶν ὡς ἐδόκει πάλαι καὶ τοὺς σφῶν θεοὺς καὶ τὰς ἑορτὰς ταῖς πόλεσιν ἔμερίσαντο, Νέμεα τελοῦντες Ὀλύμπια τε καὶ Πύθια καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν κακοδαιμόνων ὡς ἀληθῶς παίγνια καὶ θεὸν ἄλλον ἄλλη τοῖς τελουμένοις ἐπωνύμως ἐπιφημήσαντες. ἐντεῦθεν ὁ Ζεὺς ὁ Πύθιος ὁ Ὀλύμπιος καὶ τὴν Δῆλον εἶχεν Ἀπόλλων καὶ τὸν Ἄλφειον ποταμὸν καὶ ἄλλος ἀλλαχοῦ τῆς γῆς ἀνεστήλωται. αἱ δὲ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἄρτι πόλεις, μᾶλλον δὲ τῆς οἰκουμένης ξύμπαντα τὰ πληρώματα; ἀλλὰ μία μὲν ἐν ἀπάσῃ πόλει περικροτεῖται πανή [p. 173] γυρις, τὰ λαμπρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως ἀνδραγαθήματα, μίαν δὲ εἰκόνα φέρουσι ξύμπασαι, τῆς βασιλικῆς τροπαιουχίας τὸν πίνακα χρώμασι διαφόροις ἐγκεκρωσμένον καὶ ἄλλως ἀλλαχοῦ ποικιλλόμενον.

13. Μᾶλλον δέ, ἵνα τῶν ψευδωνύμων θεῶν ἀφέμενος ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ καὶ ἀγαθοῦ Θεοῦ παραδειγματίσω τὸν ἀγαθὸν αὐτοκράτορα οἰκεῖον μάλα καὶ προσφυῆς ἀποδιδούς τὸ παράδειγμα, ὥσπερ ὁ κοσμοσώστης Χριστὸς εἷς ὢν αὐτὸς τῆς οἰκουμένης πάσης ὁ λυτρωτῆς ἕκασταχοῦ τῶν πόλεων εἰκονίζεται καὶ λαμπραῖς ὅτι μάλα θεοπρεπῶς κυδαίνεται πανηγύρεσιν, ἄλλης τῶν εἰκόνων ἄλλο τι παρεμφαινούσης τῶν τεραστῶν οἷσπερ σεσώσμεθα, τῆς μὲν τὸν καινὸν τόκον, τῆς δὲ τὸ φρικτὸν πάθος, τῆς δὲ τὴν ὑπὲρ λόγον ἀνάστασιν καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας σωτηρίας μυστήρια, οὕτω δὴ καὶ ὁ ἐμὸς βασιλεὺς, τὸ τοῦ ἐμοῦ Χριστοῦ μίμημα, εἷς τέ ἐστὶ καὶ πανταχοῦ τῆς γῆς μεμέρισται· καὶ φέρουσι τούτου τὰς εἰκόνας αἱ πόλεις τῶν ἀρετῶν διδασκάλους, αἷς διεσώσατο τὸ περίγειον, καὶ ἴδοι τις ἂν αὐτὸν πολιοῦχον μὲν ἐνταῦθα, ἐκεῖσε δὲ πολιορκητὴν ἀνεστηλωμένον καὶ τελευτῶντα πρὸς λαμπρὰ τρόπαια, πῆ μὲν τοὺς ἀλλοφύλους αἰχμαλωτίζοντα, πῆ δὲ τοὺς ὑπὸ χεῖρα λυτρούμενον, ἢ μὲν τῶν πόλεων τὰ πρῶτα βάρθρα πηγνύντα καὶ τοῦνομα τῶν πόλεων χαριζόμενον, ἢ δὲ στεφάνοις τειχέων περιτιθέντα καὶ πεσόντων πυργωμάτων ὕψος ἐγείροντα καὶ τὴν κλησιν τῆ πόλει παροιχομένην ἀνακομίζοντα καὶ πανηγύρεις ἐπὶ τούτοις καὶ σκιρτῶσιν αἱ πόλεις καὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ τὰ γέρα παγκόσμια. τί μοι πρὸς ταῦτα Ἡρακλέους αἱ στήλαι καὶ τὸ κενὸν ἐπὶ ταῖς στήλαις φύσημα, ἃς ἐφ' ἐνὸς τόπου πηξάμενος λέγει μὲν τὴν οἰκουμένην περιῶν αὐτοῦ τῶν πόνων καὶ τῶν ἄθλων παύεσθαι; ἐγὼ δ' οὐκ ἔχω πάνυ πιστεῦειν κενὰς ὁρῶν τὰς πόλεις εἰκόνων, αἱ μοι τηλικούτον τὸν ἀθλητὴν γνωρίσουσι. τί δ' οἱ πύργοι τοῦ Μακεδόνα, οὓς εἰς μνήμην ἐκεῖνος τῶν ἑαυτοῦ τροπαίων ἀνέστησεν εἰς ὕψος ἀείρας αὐτοὺς ὑπέρτατον καὶ τῆ πλίνθῳ πιστεύσας τῶν ἑαυτοῦ κατορθωμάτων τὴν φυλακὴν; πολλῶν σοι τοῖνον, ὦ βασιλεῦ, ἀνεστηλωμένων ἀπανταχοῦ τῆς γῆς εἰκόνων καὶ πόλεως οὔσης οὐδὲ μᾶς, ἣτις οὐχὶ τοῖς σοῖς τροπαιοῖς ἐνωραίζεται, ποῖ δὴ τρεπτέον ἡμᾶς τὸν λόγον, πρὸς ποῖαν δὲ τῶν πόλεων βαδιούμεθα; τάχα γὰρ νῦν ἀνθρώποις φιλιστοροῦσιν εἰόκαμεν καὶ παρακεκίνηκε μὲν ἡμᾶς τὰ τερπνὰ τῶν πόλεων ἀγλαΐσματα, εἶτα τῇ προθυμίᾳ ταλαντευόμεθα καὶ πάσας ἀμηχανοῦντες ἀναμετρεῖν ἐν ἀπόρῳ τῆς ἐκλογῆς καθεστήκαμεν.

image of the Emperor and dare to catch your entire soul in beauty. But only in Olympia in olden times were images set up as monuments for victors and fear was instilled into the builders to cleanse the works of the wise people and to change the images, if they erred with the real dimensions and if the statue exceeded the athlete in terms of the body's measurements. Now, as I set up this image for the noble athlete and wise Emperor who did not win the Olympic competition in the past or the race or any game played by young lads, neither was he crowned with the trophies only here, but who has set up manly and truly imperial trophies everywhere, I have no fears about those nor am I alarmed about the dimensions of the picture (for I do not have copper as a material, so that it would be easy to procure, nor is the model small, [p. 172] so that a depiction reproducing its features would exceed these). Yet, I feared that I would purge the statue which would depart greatly from the model. So great is the body of my victor and truly very high, that the materials are also important and conveyed with a great effort. If a <sculptor> had to finish in this way a greater statue, there would have been a need to purge it extensively, and since I overlook the law of the Olympians,³⁸ I set up my own statue. For, usually, encomia rejoice in certain excesses if a rhetorician produces an exalted encomiastic speech and includes a great number of deeds in it.

12. Thus, I often praised Stesikrates,³⁹ the sculptor who proposed to hew Alexander in stone on the Thracian mountain of Athos and to carve the great statue of the Macedonians. Stesikrates promised to make an image of Alexander embracing with [his] left hand the whole of Europe and all the European nations that he ruled over and, with [his] right hand, the Orient and the trophies he collected in Asia. Yet, Stesikrates was a sculptor of images and had stone as a material and aimed at revealing his ingenuity in refined ornaments. Had he taken his promise to fruition, he would have made the mountain available for all. O Emperor, this oration, a good coppersmith or stone-carver of the best deeds, capable of polishing the effigies only for those who act in a manly fashion, not only presented as a promise alone, but also promising to outline your wonderful and great image, spoke not in copper and stone nor does it want to annoy the mountains. But your deeds are fashioned from the very similar material of my own craft and so your durable shape will emerge completely. But here I forgot to mention several things and talked about one single image of the one who was set up as a monument all over the face of the earth and divided the whole of the *oikoumene* according to the monuments and the shapes for the deeds. For, as it seemed to the Hellenes in the past, they allotted to their cities both gods and celebrations, performing the Nemean, the Olympian, or the Pythian festivals⁴⁰ and other pagan games and they made pledges to those who celebrated another god in another city. Here was Zeus the Pythian, the Olympian, and Apollo had Delos and the river Alpheios and another god in another part of the world had a monument set up. Yet, our cities are they rather all complementary pieces of the *oikoumene*? One assembly celebrates in the entire city [p. 173] the Emperor's splendid achievements, all bear the images of the Emperor, the tablet of imperial victories painted in many colors and elsewhere modified in different ways.

14. Τὰς μὲν δὴ τῶν Παιόνων πόλεις παρελατέον καὶ τὰ Δακῶν, εἰ [p. 174] δοκεῖ, καὶ τῶν Γετῶν πεδία παροδευτέον, ἃ τε Τριβαλλοὶ καὶ Δαλμάται τῶν βασιλικῶν τροπαίων φέρουσιν εἰκονίσματα καὶ ξύμπαν ἔθνος Παρίστριον· ἀλλὰ μὴδ' αὐτοῖς τὰς ὄψεις ἐπιβλητέον οὐχ ὅτι χάριεν οὐδὲν οὐδὲ τερπνὸν ἔχουσι καὶ φιλοκάλων ὀφθαλμῶν ἄξιον, ἀλλ' ἐννοοῦμαι τὸν περὶ Γοργόνος λόγον ἐντεῦθεν, μὴ τᾶλλα μῦθος ὧ τουτί γε μὴν εἰκόνιζε πρὸς ἀλήθειαν, ὡς ἄρ' οἱ τοῖς καινοῖς ἐνατενίζοντες θεάμασι καὶ φρικώδεσιν αὐτοῦ πεπηγότες ὑπὸ τοῦ θάμβους ἐναπομένουσι καινὰ καὶ ὑποπτεύω καὶ ταῦτα καινὰ καὶ ξένα θεάματα, μὴ τῶ κάλλει τούτων ἐναπομείνας τῶν ἐξῆς οὕτω λελείπομαι. ἦ τί σοι τῶν κατορθωμάτων ἐκείνων, ὧ βασιλεῦ, μεγαλοπρεπέστερον, ἢ Δακῶν μὲν καὶ Τριβαλλῶν αἰ λείπει βοῶσι παρ' ἡμῖν ἔτι μένουσαι καὶ μὴδὲ τόσῳ χρόνῳ δαπανηθεῖσαι καὶ ὅσα τῆς κατ' ἐκείνων νίκης ἔχομεν σύμβολα; μαρτυρεῖ δὲ Δαλμάτης τῇ καθ' ἡμᾶς δουλεύων ἀρχῇ καὶ πρὸ τῶν σῶν ποδῶν κυλινδούμενος· ἔτι καὶ δοῦλον ἔχω τῆς τῶν Παιόνων μάρτυρα συμφορᾶς καὶ ἀνακαινίζω τὴν μνήμην τῆς μυριοπληθοῦς ἐκείνης αἰχμαλωσίας, ἀφ' ἧς μικροῦ τὴν καθ' ἡμᾶς μεγάλην πόλιν ἐστενοχώρησας, καὶ μέχρι τούτων ἰστῶ τὸ θαῦμα τῶν τοῦ Δαρείου μυριάδων, αἱ Μακεδόσιν ἐδούλευσαν.

15. Βάλλει μοι τὰς ἀκοὰς ἔτι καὶ τὸ ρέιθρον Ἰστρου τοῦ ποταμοῦ, οὐκ ὀξὺ ῥέον οὐδὲ προρρέον οὐδὲ μορμύρον γενικῶ τῶ ρεύματι· ἀλλ' εἴ μοι τις ἐπὶ μικρὸν ποιητικὴν αὐτονομίαν χαρίσεται, γείτονα ποταμὸν ὃ Ἰστρος καλεῖ καὶ ζητεῖ συμμαχίαν αὐτὸς ἀμηχανῶν σου τὴν ὀρμὴν ἐπισχεῖν, καθὰ καὶ παρ' Ὀμήρῳ Ξάνθος ὁ προρρέων τῆς Πριάμου πόλεως ποταμὸς πρὸς τὰς Ἀχιλλέως οὐκ ἀντέχων φορὰς ποταμὸν καλεῖ τὸν Σιμόντα καὶ "δεῦρο" λέγει, "φίλε κασίγνητε, σθένος ἀνέρος σχῶμεν ἀμότεροι". ἀλλὰ Ξάνθος μὲν ἐκεῖ πλημμυρεῖ τὸ ρεῦμα καὶ ὑποσύρει τὸν ἀριστέα, "Πηλείδης δ' ὦμωξεν ἰδὼν εἰς οὐρανὸν εὐρύν", τὸ ἔπος φησί. σὲ δὲ μόνον βλέπων ὃ Ἰστρος ἀναστέλλει τὸ ρεῦμα καὶ σοι τὰ νῶτα παρέχει βάσιμα καὶ διαπλωτίζει τῶ ἴππῳ καὶ καινὸν ἐμπίπτεις ἐξαιφνηδὸν τοῖς ἐχθροῖς θέαμα καὶ καταφρύγεις τὸν ποταμόρρουν οὐχ ὑπὸ ταῖς Ἡφαίστου φλοξίν, ἃς ἐπαφήκεν Ἡρα τῶ Ξάνθῳ τὸν ποταμὸν κατακαίουσα (οὐ γὰρ ἐθέλεις ἀλλοτριῶ καὶ ἀσθνεῖ πυρὶ πρὸς τὸ τῆς μάχης ἔργον ὑπερθερμαίνεσθαι, ὅπερ ἐν Ἡφαίστῳ παραδηλοῦται τῶ χωλῶ κατὰ τὴν ποίησιν καὶ κυλλοποδίονι), ἀλλ' οἴκοθεν ὑπανῆψας τὴν φλόγα καὶ τῶ πυρὶ τῆς προθυμίας τὸν [p. 175] ποταμὸν ἀπνηθράκωσας· καὶ σπένδεται σοι λοιπὸν καὶ τὴν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς παρέχει διαπεραίωσιν. ἔφριξέ σου καὶ τὴν καινὴν ναυστολίαν οὗτος ὁ ποταμὸς καὶ μετὰ μίαν λέμβον ἢ καὶ δευτέραν ὡς τὰ πολλὰ παρεπλέετο· πληθὸς τε νεῶν αὐτομάτων καὶ ὡς ἂν ἐρεῖ τις ἀκαριαίων ἐπὶ τῶν νώτων δεξάμενος τάχα μὲν τῶ παραδόξῳ καταπλαγεῖς ὑπεπόδισε, τάχα δὲ καὶ ταῖς ὀλκάσιν ἀπογεφυρωθεὶς τὸ ποταμὸς δοκεῖν ἐντεῦθεν ἀπώλεσεν, ἵνα μὴ μόνον Ξέρξης μεγαλαυχοῖη πορθμὸν ἀπογαιῶν Ἑλλησπόντιον.

16. Ἀλλὰ νεῶν ἐπεμνήσθην καὶ Σικελίαν φαντάζομαι, Ἑλλησπόντον εἶπον καὶ τὰ πελάγη κατὰ νοῦν βάλλομαι καὶ τὸν πορθμὸν Ἰταλίας ἀναμετρῶ τῶ τοῦ νοὸς ἀκατίῳ τὴν ἐς αὐτὸν στελλόμενος κέλευθον. βαβαὶ πηλίκων καὶ πόσων τῶν ναυαγίων, βασιλεῦ, ἐπλήρωσας τὸν Ἴόνιον, ὅσας τριήρεις Σικελικὰς τὰς μὲν αὐτάνδρους αὐτοῦ κατέδυσας, τὰς δὲ ἀρπάσας ἡμῖν ἀπέδωκας καὶ νεῶν μὲν τὰ τῆς παρ' ἡμῖν θαλάττης ἐπίνεια, δεσμοτῶν δὲ τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἐπλήρωσας δεσμοτήρια· ἐδόκει γὰρ σοι καὶ τὴν γῆν πληρώσας τροπαίων ἐπὶ τὴν θάλατταν μεταβέβηκας, ἵνα Δαρείου μὲν τὰς συμφορὰς ἀπαγγέλλῃ γῆ τε καὶ θάλαττα, ναυαγοῦντος ἐν Μαραθῶνι καὶ ἐν Ἀσίᾳ φεύγοντος τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον, σοῦ

13. But, to put away the false gods and in order to make an example of our own good Emperor by reference to the true and good God, I will offer a suitable model: just as Christ, the Savior of the world, is represented as the Savior of each city and as He takes delight in spiritual and splendid assemblies, because each icon suggests something else with which we were saved from terrible things, for instance, one [showing] the wondrous birth, another the great passion, or another the incomprehensible resurrection and the other mysteries for our salvation, in the same way our Emperor, the depiction of my Christ, is one and he is shared in all the places of the earth. The cities bear his images of virtues as teachers with which the whole world was saved and someone can see him as a guardian of cities here or represented as a besieger there, obtaining magnificent trophies in war, somewhere else taking prisoner peoples from other nations, or releasing the prisoners, founding cities and granting his name to cities, reinforcing the walls and raising the height of towers fallen in decay, or recovering the past name of a city. In addition, the cities celebrate in large assemblies and leap [with joy], and the Emperor receives magnificent presents. In comparison to these, what are the Pillars of Heracles⁴¹ and the ineffective winds against the pillars, which the one who fixed them in one place [Heracles] and traveled the whole world says that they put a limit to his efforts and deeds? I do not have much to believe when seeing the cities empty of images, cities which will get acquainted with such a great athlete. What are the Macedonian's towers which he set up in remembrance of his own trophies lifting them up to the highest peak and entrusting the preservation of his deeds to clay?⁴² O, Emperor, since all over the face of the earth there are many images set up for you and there is no city which is not adorned with your trophies where should I turn my speech, to which city should we walk? For right now we resemble the history lovers and the charming urban ornaments impressed us, but thereafter we hesitate in eagerness and, unable to evaluate all [achievements], we stand here wondering what to choose.

14. If one rides past the Paionian and the Dacian cities [p. 174] or passes by the Getae's plains, one would see that the Triballi and the Dalmatians and all the people of Paristria carry the images of imperial victories.⁴³ One must cease gazing at those not because they have nothing charming or worthy for the beauty-loving eyes, but I am thinking here of the Gorgon's story,⁴⁴ even if the story did not represent that in truth: for those who look fixedly at the wondrous and awe-inspiring spectacles, after they put together new things, are amazed (I suspect because of these new and strange spectacles) so that persisting in their beauty I will miss the ensuing aspects of my speech. Which deed, O Emperor, is more magnificent than those great successes for which the booty of the Dacians and the Triballi cry out to remain among us and not to be consumed for such a length of time as we possess symbols of the victory against those? Witness is the Dalmatian who obeys our rule and who prostrates to you. In addition, I have the servant who can testify to the misfortunes of the Paionians and I renew the memory of that great captivity from which you liberated our great city, and up to these events know the miracle which saw the multitudes of Darius that obeyed the Macedonians.⁴⁵

δὲ τὰς ἀνδραγαθίας τῆ γῆ συμμαρτυροίη καὶ θάλαττα καὶ σου "τὰς ἀρετὰς καὶ ἐν ταῖς νήσοις ἀναγγελοῦσι," καθὼς φησιν ἡ προφητεία περὶ Θεοῦ. καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν δράκοντα τὸν ἐν τῇ θαλάττῃ, ὃν ὁ Ἡσαΐας λέγειν δοκεῖ, ἐπισείσαντά τε τὸ οὐραῖον καὶ τὰς σκολιότητας ὑποδείξαντα, μόνον ἠπειλεις ἐπάξαι τὴν μάχαιράν σου τὴν μεγάλην, τὴν ἰσχυράν, καὶ θανατοῖς τῷ φόβῳ καὶ τῷ φωλεῷ πείθεις ἐν ὕλῃ θνήσκειν τῆς ἀπειλῆς χεμαινόμενον· ὡς γὰρ αἰσθόμενος ἀδικίας κατάρξαντά σοι τὸν νησιώτην τύραννον, ἐκεῖνα εἶπας τῶν τοῦ προφήτου· "ἀποδώσω νήσοις ἀπόδομα καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀρῶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἔθνη τὴν χειρά μου καὶ εἰς νήσους ἀρῶ σύσσημόν μου." τὰς μὲν ἐν τῷ μέσῳ ναυμαχίας Θουκυδίδης καταλεγέτω τάχα Λακῶνων ἀριστέων οὐδὲ παρ' ἡμῖν ἀμοιρῶν, οἱ τὰ λαμπρὰ περὶ Σικελίαν ἤγειραν τρόπαια, ὅτε καὶ τὰ τοῦ Ἰεζεκιήλ καιρὸν εἶχε λέγεσθαι πρὸς τὸν τύραννον· "ἐν καρδίᾳ θαλάττης ἦσαν δυνάμεις σου καὶ οἱ κωπηλάται σου καὶ οἱ κυβερνηταὶ σου καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄρχοντες οἱ πολεμισταὶ σου καὶ πᾶσα ἡ συναγωγή σου ἐν μέσῳ σου πεσοῦνται ἐν καρδίᾳ θαλάττης." ἐγὼ δὲ ἀριθμοῦμαι τὰς πόλεις, ἃς περὶ τὸν πορθμὸν Ἰταλίας αὐτοβοεῖ παρεστήσω μοι· ἐν αἷς δὲ πόλεσι ταύταις καὶ τῇ προκαθημένη τούτων νήσῳ θεωρουμένης τῆς [p. 176] ἀρχῆς τῷ τυράννῳ, ὡς ἦσθετο τούτων ἤδη λαμβανομένων, τὴν κεφαλὴν λοιπὸν ἔσπευσε περισώσασθαι, ὥσπερ ἀμέλει ποιεῖ καὶ τὸ θηρίον ὁ δράκων, οὗ τὴν εἰκόνα τούτῳ δεδώκαμεν, τὸν λοιπὸν ὄλκον τοῦ σώματος προδιδούς ἐξ ἀνάγκης, ἵν' ἑαυτῷ τὴν κεφαλὴν περισώσῃται· καὶ ὡς ἑώρα ξύμπαν αὐτῷ τῆς ἀρχῆς τὸ σῶμα ταῖς σαῖς χερσὶν ἐνσφιγγόμενον, τὴν κεφαλὴν Σικελίαν μυχῶ θαλάττης ὑποκρυψάμενος ἠγάπα μόνην ἑαυτῷ περισώζεσθαι. ἀλλ' εἰ μὴ ταῖς τοῦ χηραμοῦ στενότησιν ἐντριβόμενος θερμαῖς δυσωπείαις ἐξεκαλέσατό σου τὸν ἔλεον, τάχ' ἂν καὶ περὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐδυστύχει καὶ Σικελίαν εἶχες μικρὸν ὄσον καὶ τοῖς Αἰτναίοις κρατῆρσιν αὐτοῦ κατενεπίμπτρας τὸν δράκοντα.

17. Ἀλλὰ τί μοι θάλαττα ἔτι, τί δὲ μὴ παρανήχομαι τὰ πελάγη καὶ ταῖς ἠπείροις ἐναγλαίζομαι; τί δὲ χρὴ παραπλέειν τὸν ἀπὸ γῆς εὐθηνούμενον; πάλαι γὰρ ἡμᾶς αἱ τῶν Κιλικῶν πόλεις παρακαλοῦσι, πάλαι βοῶσιν ἐπάνω τῶν ἀκρονεφῶν ὀρέων ἰστάμεναι κατὰ τὸν τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου λόγον, μὴ συγχωρούμεναι πόλεις ὡς μὲν πόλεις ὡς δὲ μεγάλα καὶ ζηλωταὶ καὶ οἷα μέρος εἶναι τῆς ὑπὸ σὲ μεγάλης ἀρχῆς· ἃς τέως μὲν ὑποφυγούσας καὶ χρόνῳ πολλῷ καὶ καμάτῳ γενομένης ὑπὸ τὸν ἐκεῖ τύραννον φθάνεις ἔλῶν καὶ μιᾶ πεντάδι μόνῃ τῶν ἡμερῶν ἀναιματῶ ξυμπάσας παραστησάμενος ὥσπερ μητρὶ θυγατέρας αἰχμαλωτισθείσας τῇ τῶν Ῥωμαίων φέρων ἀποδίδως ἀρχῆ· βάρη δὲ ταύταις οὐκ ἀνασπᾶς οὐδ' ἀποκείρεις τὸν βόστρυχον, ὅποια δὴ τοὺς δραπέτας ἀνθρωποὶ τιμωρούμεθα, ἀλλὰ καὶ δεξιὰν ἐπιβάλλεις λαμπρότερον, ἅττα πολλοὶ ποιοῦσι τοῖς ἐκ πλάνης ἐπιστρέφουσιν. οὕτω ραδίως, οὕτως ἀπόνως, οὕτως ἐν ἀκαρεῖ οὐδὲ ποιμὴν ἀρνίον ἀποπλανηθὲν ἐπανήγαγεν, ὅτι μὴ καὶ τὴν ράβδον ἔστιν οὗ περιέκλασε καὶ θηρίῳ δῆπου περιτυχῶν πήραν αὐτὴν καὶ καλαύροπα καὶ σκεῦος ἅπαν ἄλλο ποιμαντικὸν αὐτοῦ που ρίψας ᾤχετο φεύγων τῆς μάνδρας ὄλης ἐπιλαθόμενος. οὐδ' ἐν χορῷ παιδαρίων, ἃ παιδιαῖς προσησχόληται, χωρὶς πληγῶν ὑπεξῆλθον δίχα δακρύων οἱ ξύμπαντες, ἀλλ' ἔστιν οἷς τὸ βρασματοῦδες καὶ παφλάζον τοῦ γέλωτος εἰς ἀγενεῖς κλαυθμυρισμοὺς ἐτελεύτησε. μὴ γὰρ ἔχει τις εἰπεῖν ἕνα σοι γοῦν στρατιώτην ἐκ τῶν τοσοῦτων μυριάδων πεσόντα μηδὲ πληγέντα μηδὲ δακρύσαντα; σὺ ἄρα μόνος ἐν ἀνθρώποις ὥσπερ τᾶλλα ἔχεις ὑπὲρ ἀνθρώπους οὕτω δὴ καὶ τὸ νικᾶν ἀκμητὶ καὶ τρόπαιον ὡς μὲν λαμπρὸν ἀνεγείρειν ὡς δὲ καὶ λύθρων, ἵνα μὴ λέγω δακρύων, παντελῶς ἀνεπίδεκτον. καὶ σὲ μὲν σώζει Θεὸς [p. 177]

15. The Danube's stream, which does not flow swiftly, nor does it pour forth, nor does it roar and boil when its main stream also strikes my hearing. But if someone briefly offered me a poetic licence, [I could say that] the river Danube calls the neighboring river and demands an alliance since it is unable to hold in check your assault, just as in Homer's epic poem, Xanthos, the river flowing in front of Priam's city, was unable to hold out against Achilles' attacks and called the Simois saying: "Come, dear brother, let us both put together our manly strength."⁴⁶ But Xanthos floods the surroundings and drags down the virtuous warrior: "The son of Peleus then cried looking up to the wide sky," the poem says.⁴⁷ But only when the Danube sees you, it raises its stream, it makes the river bed for passage, and provides a passage to the horse. You fall upon the enemies as a new sight and you consume the watercourse, not with Hephaistos' flames, which Hera threw at Xanthos when she drained the river⁴⁸ (for you do not want to be excessively warmed toward the fight by the weak and strange fire which overwhelmed Hephaistos, the limping and the club-footed one),⁴⁹ but you kindle the flame beneath at home and [p. 175] burn the river to a cinder with the fire of eagerness. And he makes peace with you in the end and offers passage to the enemies. This river caused your new naval expedition to tremble and afterwards it let many escape. After it received on its back a multitude of self-propelling ships, the river stepped back, as it had been struck down by an unusual sight, and having been bridged with trading ships he erased the image of a river, so that not only Xerxes could boast that he landed through the strait of Hellespont.⁵⁰

16. I remembered the ships and now I fancy Sicily;⁵¹ I mentioned the Hellespont and I set the seas into my mind and I measure the straits of Italy with the light boat of my thoughts after I sailed into this journey. Oh, goodness, you filled the Ionian Sea with such a multitude of shipwrecks, O Emperor! You destroyed so many Sicilian triremes some together with their crew, others you delivered to us after you seized them, and you filled with ships our ports and with prisoners our prisons. For indeed you passed onto the sea after you filled the earth with victory trophies, so that the land and the sea report Darius' misfortunes when he suffered a shipwreck at Marathon and fled Alexander into Asia. But the sea, together with the land, bears witness to your deeds and reports on your virtues on the islands, according to the divine prophecy. The dragon of the sea, about whom seemingly Isaiah said it moved its tail and showed its crookedness, you only threatened to kill with your long and powerful sword and you put to death with the fear [you instilled in him] and caused the enraged beast to die only with that threat; for having sensed that insular tyrant who committed the injustice against you, you uttered those prophetic words: "I will offer a gift to the islands and, behold, I will raise my hand on the nations and I will raise my insignia on the islands."⁵² Let Thucydides narrate in detail the intense naval battles of the Laconian heroes which we also know. Those heroes erected around Sicily glorious monuments, as when Ezekiel said to the tyrant: "in the heart of the sea were your powers, your rowers, and your steersmen, and all your warrior chiefs and the entire assembly will fall in the middle of the sea."⁵³ I count the cities which by a mere shout you showed me around the straits of Italy. In these cities and in the main island of the tyrannical rule, when he noticed those which were already taken [p. 176], he hastened to

ἔξω βελῶν καὶ τραυμάτων πρὸ τοῦ πολέμου τῶν ἐχθρῶν κλινομένων σοι, σὺ δὲ τοὺς ὑποπτήσσοντας τραυματίζεις ἢ ἐν μαχαίρα καὶ φόνῳ περιγράφη τὸ τρόπαιον; οὐ μὲν οὖν ἀλλ' ἀνθρωπίνων αἱμάτων ἄγευστός σοι καθάπαξ ἢ τῶν Κιλικίων γῆ διετέλεσε. τῆ θείᾳ γοῦν προνοίᾳ τὴν συμμαχίαν ἀριστείαν ταύτην ἐπιγραφόμενος κἀντεῦθεν ἄδων εὐχαρίστως μετὰ τοῦ προφήτου πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, "σὺ εἶ ὁ ἀποκαθιστῶν ἐμοὶ τὴν κληρονομίαν μου," ἔτι κἀκεῖνο λέγειν ἤθελες τὸ προφητικόν· "οὐ μὴ συναγάγω τὰς συναγωγὰς αὐτῶν ἐξ αἱμάτων," καὶ μὴν οὐδ' ἐν ἀνδροκτασίᾳ ταύτας συνήγαγες· ὥστε μοι ἀντικρυς ἐκεῖνο δίδως διανοεῖσθαι, ὡς εἶ τις μονονοῦκ τῶν πόλεων ἄγρα ὡσπερ δὴ καὶ τῶν ἰχθύων ἐστίν, καὶ δίκτυά τινα καὶ πόλεσι περιπλέκονται, δι' ὧν ἀλώσιμοι γίνονται, τοιοῦτόν τι καὶ σὺ ταῖς ἀμφὶ Κιλικίαν πόλεσι περιβαλὼν οὕτως ἡρέμα ταύτας καὶ δίχα πόνου ξυνήγαγες.

18. Τὰ δὲ περὶ τὸν ἀνδραποδιστὴν τῶν πόλεων οἶα· ὡς πρῶτα μὲν τὰς λόχμας εἰσέδου καὶ τὰς νάπας περιεβάλετο καὶ τοῖς βουνοῖς εἶπε "καλύψατέ με" καὶ τοῖς ὄρεσι "πέσετε ἐπ' ἐμέ," τάχα μὲν ἐφ' οἷς κακῶς ἐφρόνησεν αἰσχυρόμενος, τάχα δὲ ἐφ' οἷς ἠνόμησε δειλαιόμενος. εἶτα τὸ σὸν φιλόφρονον, ὦ βασιλεῦ, ταχὺ βαλλόμενος κατὰ νοῦν, ἐνταῦθα πρῶτον τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἑαυτοῦ βουλευμάτων ἀπάρχεται καὶ ὁ καρπὸς ἀγαθὸς τεραστίως ἐκ τῶν πετρῶν ἀναδίδεται μεταμαθεῖν τὸ συμφέρον καὶ λιταῖς καὶ δάκρυσι τὴν σωτηρίαν ἑαυτοῦ πραγματεύσασθαι. οὕτω φρονήσας, οὕτω καὶ σῶζεται· οὐ γὰρ οἰκτεῖρεις μόνον τὸν ἀποστάτην ἰκέτην ἄρτι γενόμενον καὶ ἦν ἀπέγνω χαρίζῃ τούτῳ ζωὴν, ἀλλὰ καὶ προσευεργετῆς τὸν ἀγνώμονα καὶ ᾧ πρὶν τὴν ῥομφαίαν ἐστίλβους μὴ ἐπιστρέφοντι καὶ ἐν κημῷ τὰς σιαγόνας ἄγξειν ἠπειλεῖς ἅτε πρὸς σε μὴ ἐγγίζοντι, τούτῳ μειλίχιον οἶον προσβλέπεις νῦν καὶ φιλόφρονον καὶ ἡ χθὲς ἐστιλβωμένη ῥομφαία κατὰ τὴν στρεφομένην ἐκείνην τὰ νῶτα δίδωσι καὶ ὁ μισούμενος ἐλεεῖται καὶ ὁ διωκόμενος προσλαμβάνεται καὶ οὐδὲ ἡ φλόξ τῆς ῥομφαίας φλόξ ἔτι ἔμεινε καίουσα, ἀλλὰ τὸ πῦρ αὐτῇ τὸ πρηστήριον εἰς λαμπαδοῦχον πῦρ μετεσκεύασται καὶ ὁ χθὲς κατὰ σκότον ἠλάσκων καὶ ταῖς ὀπαῖς τῆς γῆς ἐντριβόμενος νῦν ταῖς τῆς σῆς δόξης ἀκτίσι περιφανῶς ἐναστράπτεται. τί μὴ λέγω τὸ πᾶν; ὁ πένης χθὲς καὶ ἀνέστιος πλοῦτῳ πολλῶ περιρρεῖται καὶ ἀτεχνῶς εὐδαιμονίζεται σήμερον καὶ σεβαστὸς ὁ πλανήτης ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀποστάτου σεμνολογεῖται σοι. οὕτω κολάζειν οἶδας τοὺς ἀμαρτάνοντας· μόνον ἐκτείνεις τὸ τόξον, μόνον κραδαίνεις [p. 178] τὸ δόρυ καὶ ἀποξύνεις δῆθεν εἰς μορμολύκειον καὶ τελευτᾷ σοι τὰ τῶν ἀπειλῶν εἰς εὐποιίας ὑπόθεσιν.

19. Τί μοι πρὸς ταῦτα Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ μεγάλου τὰ ἐπὶ τῇ φιλοφροσύνῃ σεμνολογήματα, ὅς ὑβριστοῦ τινος δήμου ταῖς ἑαυτοῦ εἰκόσιν ἐμπαροινήσαντος ἐνεγκεῖν λέγεται πρῶως καὶ τὸν ἀτάσθαλον ὄχλον ἐκεῖνον διατηρῆσαι τιμωρίας ἀνώτερον; καλὸν μὲν γὰρ τὸ συγχωρεῖν τοῖς προσκεκροκόσι, τὸ δὲ προσευεργετῆν τὸν ἀμαρτόντα κάλλιον· καὶ πῦρ θυμοῦ διανάπτειν ἐτοιμῶς βασιλικὸν ὄντως, ἀλλὰ τὸ φλόγα τοιαύτην ἐκ πολλοῦ δικαίως ἀναπτομένην καὶ μυρίασι τρεφομένην ταῖς ὕλαις, ὡς ἀναβῆναι γοῦν καὶ πρὸς κάμινον, οὕτως ἀκαρεῖ κατασβέσαι καὶ εἰς εὐεργεσίαν διαμεῖψαι ῥύακας, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο ἢ βασιλέας καὶ μοι φαντασίαν ἀγγέλων παρέχει καὶ τὸ θαῦμα διανοοῦμαι τῆς Βαβυλωνίας ὧδε καμίνου, ἧς ὁ φλογμὸς εἰς δροσισμὸν ἐτελεύτησε. καὶ Κωνσταντίνου μὲν φιλοφροσύνης δεῖγμα καὶ ἡμερότητας ἐν ᾧδεταί τοῦτο· καίπερ γὰρ ἄλλων μυρίων προσόντων τῷ πανευφρόνῳ τῶν χαρακτήρων, ὡσπερ ἄλλης ἀρετῆς ἀπάσης, οὕτω δῆτα καὶ τῆς πραότητος, ἀλλὰ τοῦτό γε οἶμαι τὸ πάντων εἶναι μεγακλεέστερον, τοῦ δ' ἐμοῦ βασιλέως

save the remaining head, as indeed the beast also acts, the dragon whose image we gave him, for he had to abandon the remaining part of the body in order to save his head. And as he saw the entire body of the rule bound together in your hands and as he hid deep in the sea the head-Sicily he was eager to save only that for himself. But, unless he demanded with warm supplications your mercy, given that he was familiar with the narrowness of the cleft, perhaps he would have been unlucky about the head and you would have taken Sicily in possession after you burned the dragon in the Aetnean mixing bowls.

17. Why do I still talk about the sea, swim along the seas, and take pride in the continents? Why do I have to sail away from the one who thrives on the land? For in the past the cities of the Cilicians appealed to us, in the past, those [cities] placed on the mountains reaching to the skies called us, according to the Gospel: there were both some cities which were not yielding to us, as well as other cities big and zealous, which are part of your great kingdom.⁵⁴ You reached with your mercy those cities (which up to that point took refuge and were under the tyrant for a long time) and with a lot of toil, and in only five days without shedding blood he made them stand like daughters captive to their mothers and entrusted them to the Roman rule. In these [cities] you do not remove the pedestals nor do you destroy the ornaments, acts by which we humans seek vengeance against runaway slaves. Instead, you set your right hand more nobly, something which many do for those who return from a mistake. Similarly, without pain, and swiftly, the shepherd brought back the little lamb from wandering, as he does not make noise with the rod. When he happens to be close to a beast, having thrown away the leather pouch, the shepherd's staff, and all his other shepherdly things, it runs away. Nobody escaped from the dance of the playful little children, without wounds and tears, but this is for those for whom the booming and the spluttering ended up in ignoble childish cries. For, can one point to you from among all this multitude, one soldier who fell without wound or tears? But you alone among men, as in other respects, have the means beyond human capacity to win without toil and to raise a glorious monument and entirely free of blood and gore, not to mention tears. And does God keep you safe [p. 177] from arrows and wounds before wars when the enemies attack you? Do you wound those who cower beneath, or do you make the monument of victory with a sword and murder? But indeed, the Cilicians' land which has not tasted human blood lived on. Therefore, having revealed this alliance with divine providence as a great deed of arms, I sing delightedly towards God with the prophet: "You alone restore my lot."⁵⁵ Furthermore, you were willing to say those prophetic words: "I will by no means assemble their bloody meetings"⁵⁶ and indeed you did not assemble them by means of man-slaughtering. Therefore, immediately a thought came to me: if there is a hunt of cities as if of fish and some nets are folded around the cities on whose account they would become easier to conquer, in the same way, after you encircled the cities in Cilicia, you brought them together gently and without trouble.⁵⁷

18. The matters and the events involving the slave-dealer of cities were such that when he first got into the thickets, occupied the woodlands and told the hills "cover me"⁵⁸ and to the mountains "fall upon me," he immediately felt shame about the things which he maliciously planned, and started to act in a cowardly fashion because of the deeds which

ἐγὼ προσηγορήσω ὁμόχρονόν τε ὄν τῷ προτέρῳ καὶ ἀληθῶς ὁμοίotropον.

20. Τίς οὐκ οἶδε τὰ τῶν Ἀντιοχέων κατὰ Κυπρίων ἐμπαροινήματα, ἃ κακότης μὲν ἡγεμόνος καὶ στρατιωτῶν ἀφροσύνη καὶ χρημάτων ἔρωσ ἐιργάσαντο, βασιλέως δὲ γενναιότης καὶ στρατηγῶν εὐτολμία καὶ ὁ τοῦ δικαίου λόγος ἐζήτουν τίσασθαι; ἀλλὰ νικᾷ κἀνταῦθα χρηστότης καὶ ὁ τολμητῆς ἰκετεύει καὶ ὁ βασιλικὸς τῆς συμπαθείας ῥέει κρουνὸς καὶ τῷ ἀμαρτωλῷ πρὸς εὐεργεσίαν ἢ δίκην στρέφεται. ὦ κρουνὸς οὗτος χαρίτων ὄμβρον μιμούμενος τὸν οὐράνιον, ὃς τοῖς ἀμαρτωλοῖς θεόθεν καὶ τοῖς δικαίοις ἐξίσου πᾶσιν ὀμβρίζεται. θέλεις ἰδεῖν ἐπὶ τοῦ ἰκετείας σχήματος τὸν ἀλαζόνα πρὸ μικροῦ τὸν ἄρπαγα; τοῦτό οἱ μόνον εὐμήχανον, κἂν εἰ μὴ περιττῶς δόξω λέγων, καὶ τῆς Ὀμηρικῆς τάχα σοφίας ἦν ἄρα περὶ τὰς λιτὰς περισσώτερος, ἀποτίλλει τὴν κόμην. εὐγε, ὦ οὗτος· δικαίως ἀκοσμίαν κατεψηφίσω τῆς ἀσυνέτου σου κεφαλῆς, ἢ περὶ τὴν κοινὴν ἡσέβησε κεφαλὴν. γυμνοὶ τὰς χεῖρας (ταῦτα τῆς ἀρπαγῆς αὐταῖς ἐπιτίμιον), γυμνοὶ καὶ τοὺς πόδας· τί γὰρ τὴν ἀλλοτρίαν ἐπάτησαν; κάλων ἐξαρτᾷ τοῦ τραχήλου καὶ ζητεῖ τὴν ἀγχόνην ἀγχόνης ἔργα διαπραξάμενος. “ἰδοῦ, φησιν, ὦ βασιλεῦ, καὶ τῶν δεινῶν ἐγὼ τολμητῆς· κἂν [p. 179] ἐθέλης αἰχμάλωτον ἄγειν, ἵνα με τοῖς ἀδικηθεῖσι παραδῶς παίγνιον, ὃ δὴ μέ τις ἀγέτω τῆς καλωδίας λαβόμενος· φέρω καὶ σπάσθην ἐχθροῖς καὶ ἐμαυτῷ τὸ ξίφος ἠκόνησα. δεῦρό μὲ τις εὐεργέτει νεκρὸν ποιήσας ἐλεύθερον· ἢ δ’ Ἀντιόχου μεγάλη πόλις μέγαν ζητεῖ βασιλέα καὶ σοὶ τὸ χρῆμα, βασιλεῦ, οἰκειότερον. ἔχεις ταύτην· ἰδοῦ σοὶ παρ’ ἡμῶν ὑπανέωγε. καὶ τῇ νήσῳ Κυπρίων μεγάλα κείτονται χάριτες, παρ’ ἐμοῦ μὲν ὅτι ξυνηκε μὴ λακτίζειν πρὸς κέντρα μηδ’ ἐντρανὲς ὄραν πρὸς τὸν ἥλιον, παρὰ δὲ τῆς ἐμῆς μέχρι καὶ ἔτι δεῦρο μεγάλης πόλεως, ὅτι βασιλέα μέγιστον ἐκληρώσατο καὶ τὴν πάλαι κληρουχίαν ἀπολαβοῦσα τῇ μεγάλῃ Ῥωμαίων ἀρχῇ καὶ πάλιν ἐντέτακται.”

21. Ταῦτα τοῦ χθῆς ἀδικοῦντος καὶ νῦν παρακαλοῦντος τὰ ῥήματα. τούτοις χθῆς ληστής καὶ σήμερον δραπέτης ἐκκαλεῖται τὸν ἔλεον, μᾶλλον δ’ ὁ μὲν λέγει μὲν ἄττα δεῖ λέγειν τὸν χρησάμενον συμφοραῖς, ἀναμένει δὲ οἱ τὴν ἐσχάτην ψῆφον ἐπενεχθῆναι καὶ τὴν ἀκμὴν τοῦ ξίφους φαντάζεται. τί δ’ ὁ συμπαθῆς βασιλεὺς καὶ πλήττει μὲν εἰδῶς τὸν μαχόμενον, ἐλεεῖν δὲ τὸν ἰκετεύοντα καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς πολεμικῆς αὐθαδείας ἐπὶ τὸ ταπεινὸν τῶν παρακλήσεων καταπτήσαντα; τοῦ θυμοῦ τὸ βέλος ἀμβλύνει καὶ τῆς ὀργῆς σβεννύει τὰς φλόγας, αἷς τὸ πολεμικὸν ξίφος ἐχάλκευσε, καὶ ἄλλοιοῖ τὸν τῶν πραγμάτων χειμῶνα καὶ διαλύει τὰ νέφη καὶ ὑπομειδᾷ τὸ φιλόφρονον καὶ σχεδιάζει θυμηδίας ἔαρ αὐτικά, διττὰς πλουτοῦν καὶ πραείας τὰς αὔρας, τὸ συμπαθὲς καὶ τὸ μεγαλόδωρον· καὶ ἀναζῆ μὲν ὁ παρ’ ἐαυτῷ νεκρὸς τῷ δόγματι τῆς ἀφέσεως, ἐνδύεται δὲ ὁ γυμνὸς τὸ λαμπρὸν καὶ παμφαῖνον τῆς εὐφροσύνης ἱμάτιον καὶ ἐπανήκει πρὸς πόλιν ταῖς βασιλικαῖς χάρισι καὶ τὰς χθῆς ἐναλλομένας χεῖρας καὶ εὐσταλεῖς χρυσίω καταβαρεῖται καὶ κροτεῖ τοὺς πόδας, οὓς πρὶς ὑπέτρεμε, καὶ μνηύει χαρμονὴν τοῖς πολίταις τῶν χθῆς δακρύων ἰσόρροπον. τὰ δὲ ἐξῆς σοὶ, βασιλεῦ, οἶα; ἔχεις τὴν Ἀντιόχου πόλιν οὕτω καλὴν καὶ μεγάλην μηδὲ τῶν ὀπλων ἀψάμενος, ἔχεις ἔθνος τοσοῦτον εὐοπλον εὐοπλον μηδὲ πεζὸν ζημιωθεὶς μαχητὴν. οὕτω μάχην ὠδίνεις καὶ γεννᾷς τρόπαιον, οὕτω πόλεμον διώκεις καὶ νίκη σοὶ συναντᾷ· μόνῳ γὰρ τῷ δούπῳ τῶν ὀπλων τοὺς πολεμίους καταβροντῶν πρὸ τῶν ποδῶν ἔχεις προκυλιδουμένους καὶ σοὶ παραχωροῦντας τῶν πόλεων.

22. “Ὡ τρόπαιον τοῦτο θεῖον, ὅταν οὐ λύθρῳ μολύνεται· ὦ φιλόφρονος νίκη συνηροῦσα τοὺς στρατιώτας μηδὲ τὰς πόλεις ἐκτρίβουσα· ὦ νίκη [p. 180] τῆς ποιητικῆς

he committed unlawfully; accordingly, O Emperor, having quickly understood your benevolence, he begins to act according to good thinking, and the good fruit is abundantly delivered from the stones to make him learn better that the benefit and salvation can be achieved through prayers and tears. When he thinks in this way, he is also saved: for not only do you have mercy for the rebel who right now has become a supplicant and you offer him a life which he rejected, but in addition you did good to the senseless one and now you regard as a gracious and loving person the one for whom you made the sword to shine and whose jaws you threatened to throttle in a muzzle because he did not approach you. Moreover, the sword which shone yesterday was turned back, the hated one was forgiven, and the chased one receives help. The flame of the sword did not remain a burning flame, but the raging fire was turned into a bright-beaming fire and the one who yesterday was roaming in the dark and was familiar with the holes of the earth now manifestly experienced the light emanated by the rays of your glory. Why relate the whole story? The one who was poor and homeless yesterday is flooded with much wealth and is made absolutely happy today and speaks solemnly to you as a respectful wanderer instead of an apostate. This is the way you know how to chastize those who make mistakes. You only stretch the bow, you only swing [p. 178] the spear and make him fear you, and then he turns the previous threats against you into a matter of beneficence.

19. What is this in comparison to Constantine the Great's achievements in matters of generosity? He is said to have behaved gently and when a certain excessive community offended his images, he nevertheless kept that reckless crowd above punishment. To pardon the offenders is a good thing, to bring benefits to the one who did wrong to you is even better. For it is indeed an imperial feature to kindle the fire of anger, but as can be kindled in the oven an intense flame which is justly kindled and fed by a multitude of elements and reasons, thus it can immediately be quenched and turned into torrents of generosity, but this either ...⁵⁹ emperors and gives me the appearance of angels and thus I have in mind the miracle of the oven of Babylon, whose flame he turned into dew.⁶⁰ This one is chanted as an example of Constantine's generosity and gentleness. Among other numerous features added to the all-praiseworthy [one], as well as all other virtues, meekness is, I believe, more famous than any other feature; I will address this one which is contemporaneous with my Emperor and indeed his.

20. Who does not know the drunken insults of the Antiochians against the Cyprians, which were caused by their ruler's evil-doing,⁶¹ the folly of their generals and their love of money, but which the Emperor's generosity, the courage of his generals, and the rule of justice sought to repay?⁴³ But here as well honesty prevails, the bold man becomes a supplicant, the imperial spring of sympathy flows and justice turns the sinner to benefaction. O, such a great spring of graces like a storm falling from the sky, which is showered equally upon all the sinners and the just! Do you want to see in the act of supplication the boastful person and would-be thief? This single ingenious act for him (even if I were to seem superfluous and I spoke more than the Homeric wisdom about the entreaties)

43 Allusion to Manuel's campaigns against Cilicia and Antioch.

ὑπερτέρα δόξης καὶ τὸ ἑτεραλκὲς οὐκ ἔχουσα. εἰ δὲ καὶ ὁ μέχρι σοῦ γενναῖος καὶ περιώ-
 νυμος Μακεδῶν νικᾶν οὕτως ἡπίστατο, οὐκ ἂν τὰ λαμπρὰ Θηβαίων τεῖχη κατέπιπτε καὶ
 μεγάλη πόλις οὕτω κατέσκαπτο· νῦν δὲ καὶ Ξέρξης τὰς λαμπρὰς Ἀθήνας ἐπίμπρα, τὰς
 τῶν τριακοσίων ἀριστείας μὴ φέρων καὶ τοὺς πεσόντας αὐτῷ στρατιώτας ἐκ τῆς πυρ-
 καΐας τάχα παραμυθούμενος. καὶ Ἀλέξανδρος ἐμίσει Θηβαίους, ὅτι μαχόμενον ἔβαλλον,
 ἵνα μὴ Τροίαν λέγω πόλιν ἐκείνην, τῆς Ὀμηρικῆς δέλτου τὸ περιλάλημα, ἧ κατάρχει μὲν
 πολέμου τὸ Πανελλήνιον Ἑλένην οὐκ ἀποδιδούση μηδὲ παραιτουμένη τὸν πόλεμον, εἶτα
 ἐπὶ τοῖς πεσοῦσιν ἀριστεύσιν ἀγανακτεῖ καὶ μετὰ τὴν νίκην κατασκάπτει τὴν πόλιν καὶ
 κατασφάττει τοὺς ὄχλους τῶν ἀριστεῶν ἀντίποινα· εἰ δὲ φοβεροὶ τοῖς πολέμοις καὶ πρὸ
 τῶν ἔργων ἐδόκουν, ἦν ἂν ἔτι Τροία καὶ τῇ ἐμῇ πατρίδι τὰ θαυμαστὰ τεῖχη παρέμεινε
 καὶ χρυσὸς τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις περιεμάρμαιρε τὴν ἀκρόπολιν.

23. Τοῦτο μὲν οὖν σοι τοιοῦτον, ὦ βασιλεῦ, ὁ δὲ λόγος εἰ μὴ τὸν κόρον ὑπώπτευε
 (μᾶλλον δὲ κόρος μὲν τῶν σῶν τροπαίων ὥσπερ οὐκ αὐτὸν ἔχει τὸν λόγον, οὕτως οὐδ'
 αὖ τοὺς ἀκούοντας· δέος δὲ μὴ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐπιλιπούσης τὰ νεώτερα τῶν ἀριστευμάτων ἢ
 καὶ καινότερα ἕξω μείνη τοῦ καταλόγου), εἶχεν ἂν ἔτι περὶ τὴν Ἀντιόχου καὶ τῷ λαμπρῷ
 θεάτρῳ σου συνεπόμευεν, ὃ ἐτέλεις εἰσελαύνων ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν παντὸς τοῦ πλήθους πρὸ
 τῶν τειχέων καὶ τῶν πυλῶν ἐκχυθέντων σοι, ὅποτε πᾶσαν ὑπερβάλλων λαμπρότητα
 ἐνὸς ἐξείχου τοῦ παραδείγματος. τὰ σεμνὰ σου συνάπτων τοῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὥσπερ
 ἐκεῖνος νικητῆς τε εἰσήει τὴν Παλαιστίνην ἐπὶ τῆς ὄνου μηδὲ πολέμου γευσάμενος καὶ οἱ
 χιτῶνας ὑποστρωννύντες τὰ πλήθη καὶ κλάδους τῶν φυτῶν ἐπισείοντες τὸ "Ὡσαννὰ τῷ
 σωτῆρι" θεοπρεπῶς ἀνεκραύγαζον, οὕτως ἄρα δὴ καὶ σε ἔφερε τε μόνος ὁ ἵππος τὸ τῶν
 τροπαίων ὕψος ὑποτυπούμενης τῆς ἀναβάσεως, καὶ κατὰ γένος καὶ φρήτρας Ἀντιοχεῖς
 προπομπεύοντες ἐν χερσὶ τοὺς κλάδους καὶ τοὺς ὕμνους εἶχον ἐν στόμασι καὶ ὁ θαυμα-
 στὸς ἐπὶ τούτοις ὕμνος τῶν παίδων ὁ πάλαι τῷ Χριστῷ προσαδόμενος. οἷον δὲ ἄρα
 ἦν σοι τῆς ὁδοῦ καὶ τὸ πάρεργον; δέχεται σοι τὴν φήμην ἐκεῖθεν ἢ Δαμασκός, φρίττει
 σε μακρόθεν τὸ Χάλεπ, ὥσπερ ἀμέλει πάλαι καὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ στρατηγὸν ἡρέμα τῶν τῆς
 Παλαιστίνης ὄρων δρασσόμενον καὶ διὰ λαμπρῶν ἐρχόμενον τῶν τροπαίων. πόρρωθεν
 αἱ τῶν Χανα [p. 181] ναίων πόλεις ὑπέφριττον. δῶρά σοι τοίνυν ἐκεῖθεν συμπεφυρμένα
 τοῖς δάκρυσιν καὶ μακρὰ παρακλήσεις καὶ τὰ ἐθελοδοουλείας χειρόγραφα καὶ ἵνα σοι μέ-
 χρι καὶ ἐπὶ τούτους ἢ τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰκῶν παραμείνη, ἦν σοι δεδώκαμεν ἄνωθεν, τέως
 μὲν σοι δῶρα τῷ ἡμετέρῳ βασιλεῖ καὶ βασιλεῖς Ἀράβων προσάγουσι, τέως δὲ καὶ τοὺς
 πάλαι παρ' αὐτοῖς κατόχους πεπεδημένους χριστιανούς, οὓς ἐκ μακροῦ τοῖς τάφοις ζῶ-
 ντας ὑπέχωσαν, τῶν δεσμῶν ὑπεκλύεις καὶ ὑπεξάγεις τῶν τάφων καὶ ὑποζωγραφεῖς τὴν
 ἀνάστασιν.

24. Ὡ πηλίκους τεραστίοις οὐκ ἐγχορεῦειν δύναμαι πομπικώτερον, οὐδ' ἐπικοσμεῖν μου
 τοὺς λόγους ἐξ ὅσον ἄρα καὶ βούλομαι· ἀλλ' ὁ καιρὸς τυραννεῖ μου τὸν πόθον ἐπιτροχά-
 ζειν ὥσπερ ἐγκελεύομενος. ὡς γοῦν καλῶς εἶχέ σοι ταῦτα καὶ ἐπανήκειν ἔδει τὸν ἀθλητὴν,
 τὰς μὲν πομπὰς καὶ τὰς τελετὰς καὶ τοὺς κρότους, οὓς ἡ ἐνεγκαμένη πόλις καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς
 ἄθλους τούτους προηκαμένη νικητὴν ὑποδεχομένη φιλοτίμως ἐστεφανώσατο. ἀλλὰ τί δεῖ
 περὶ ταῦτα τρίβειν τὸν λόγον ἑτέροις ὅσοις ἀνθυφελκόμενοι; τέως δ' αὖ ἀλλ' ἐπανήκων
 τῇ σῆ πόλει τὴν ἐπιτιμωτέραν ἐζήτεις ποθῶν ὁμοῦ καὶ ποθοῦμενος καὶ ταχὺς ἐπιστῆναι
 θέλων τοῖς ἑρασταῖς· καὶ ὡς ἐδόκει σοι χωρεῖν διὰ τῆς Περσίδος, Πέρσαις μὲν οὐκ ἦν τὸ

tears one's hair out. Well, O you, you were justly condemned for the excess of your witless head, which committed a sacrilege against the common head [the Emperor]. He empties his hands (robbery is an honorable thing for them), and shows the feet as well! Why did they tread on a foreign head? He is dependent on the neck of the good ones and seeks the state of dependence by achieving the acts of dependence. "You see, O Emperor, he says, I dare to do terrible things. [p. 179] If you want to take a captive, in order to hand me over as a toy to those who were injured, let one carry me after having taken hold of the rope; I also carry a sword for the enemies and I myself sharpened the sword. Here, one was kind to me as he set a dead man free. The great city of Antioch asks for a great Emperor and the matter is more appropriate for you, Emperor.⁶² You have this [city]: you see, we opened it for you. Many charms are left to the island of Cyprus, because I understood not to attack, nor to look towards the sun. For my still great city it was good, because it obtained by lot the greatest Emperor and having received his inheritance he included it again in the great Roman kingdom."

21. These are the words of the one who yesterday was unjust and now is supplicating. The robber of yesterday and the runaway slave of today asks for mercy for those things. Rather, he is the one who says what is necessary during times of misfortune and waits for the final decision to be inflicted upon him and has the sword's edge in mind. Why is the Emperor sympathetic, this Emperor who knows both how to strike the fighter and who has mercy for the supplicant and for the one who arrived at the humility of supplications after hostile stubbornness? He blunts the arrow of anger, quenches the flame of his wrath with which he forged the warrior spear, changes the storm of events, dissolves the clouds, smiles gently with generosity, and at once generates a spring of joy, that enriches the twofold gentle breezes, the concord, and the generosity. And the one who died because of the doctrine of forgiveness returns to life by himself, the naked one dresses in the brilliant and shining dress of joy and returns to the city with the imperial grants. He is overloaded in his hands, which yesterday were trembling and are now filled with gold, and he stamps his feet (even if he trembled before), and to the citizens he conveys a joy equal to yesterday's tears. O Emperor, are such people those who befit you? You captured the city of Antioch, so beautiful and great, even if you did not capture it with arms. You captured such a great nation, famous for horses well armed, without losing a single foot soldier. Inasmuch as you labor for a fight and make a monument, so you put away a war and victory comes to you; for now, the soldiers beaten down by the clash of weapons are prostrating at your feet and the cities are stepping out of your way.

22. O divine monument, not stained by blood. O life-loving victory, which saved the soldiers and did not destroy the cities. O victory [p. 180], greater than the poet's glory and free of any doubts. If the equally noble and far-famed Macedonian knew this way of winning, he would not have destroyed the glorious walls of the Thebans, and no great city would have been so utterly razed to the ground. Even Xerxes would [not] have burned down glorious Athens, not bearing the war-like achievements of the three hundred and consoling the soldiers falling from the funeral pyre for him. Alexander hated the Thebans because they repelled the contender, not to mention that city of Troy for which, as the

πρᾶγμα πρὸς τρόπου καὶ σοι συχνὰ τῷ τότε διεπρεσβεύοντο τὴν γῆν αὐτῶν μὴ πατεῖν, μὴ παρασύρη καὶ τὸν χοῦν τὰ στρατεύματα, ὥσπερ ἀμέλει καὶ οἱ παρὰ τῷ Εὐαγγελίῳ Γεργεσηνοὶ πέμψαντές φησι τὸν Ἰησοῦν παρεκάλουν πόρρω τῆς γῆς γενέσθαι τῆς κατ' αὐτούς, τὰ τῶν θαυμάτων πλήθη μὴ στέγοντες. βάρβαροι μὲν οὖν σου καὶ τὰ πλήθη μὴ χωροῦντες καὶ δεδιττόμενοι τὰ τεράστια παρητοῦντο τὴν ὄψιν καὶ ἀποφράττειν τὰς ὁδοὺς ἤθελον, σὺ δὲ τούτοις προσχωρεῖς καὶ μὴ βουλομένοις καὶ διὰ μέσων βαίνεις αὐτῶν, ἀστραπαῖος ἐπιπίπτων καὶ καταπλήττων ἐκ μόνης ὄψεως, μᾶλλον δὲ τὸ μὲν τῆς ἀστραπῆς ἀναβεβλήσθω τέως παράδειγμα καὶ ὅσα φοβερὰ τὸν τοῦ πολέμου χρόνον ἀνεμενέτωσαν.

25. Σοὶ δὲ τότε τὰ πρὸς τοὺς Πέρσας ἦσαν εἰρηνικὰ καὶ γ' ἐμιμήθης τὸν ποταμὸν Ἄλφειον γαληνῶ τῷ ῥοθίῳ καὶ διειδεῖ καὶ γλυκάζοντι διὰ τῶν ἀλμυρῶν ἐξ ἀπιστίας ἐθνῶν ἐπὶ τὴν φίλην ῥέων πηγὴν, τὴν καθ' ἡμᾶς λέγω πόλιν, ἣν καὶ πηγὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν θαρρύντως καλῶ. εἰ γὰρ καὶ τοῖς βαρβάροις τὰ πρῶτα πρὸς συμφορὰν ἐτελεύτησεν, ὅτι τὰς σφῶν ἀμπέλους [p. 182] κομώσας καὶ κυπριζούσας ἤδη τοῖς βότρουσι καὶ τὰς χώρας λευκανθιζούσας καὶ τοὺς καρπούς διδούσας ταῖς ἄλωσιν ἢ πολλή σου τῶν στρατευμάτων ἵππος συνεπάτησε καὶ κατενεμήσατο, ὡς λιμὸν τοῖς ταλαιπῶροις σχεδιασθῆναι δίχα χαλάζης καὶ βρούχου καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν φοβερωτέρων Θεοῦ. ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν τῆς ἀνάγκης ἦν· οὐ γὰρ Βελλερεφόντας εἶχες τοὺς στρατιώτας, ἵνα ὑπὲρ γῆν περωτοῖς τοῖς ἵπποις ἐλαφριζόμενοι φέρωνται, καὶ δέον γῆν πατεῖν τὰ λοιπὰ τῷ ἵππέων δοτέον πλήθει, ὃ καὶ αὐτὸ μεγάλῳ κατὰ σὲ βασιλεῖ πάντως ἀκόλουθον· καὶ γὰρ οὐδ' ὑπὲρ τὴν χρεῖαν ἦσαν τῶν ἵππων. καίπερ πολλὰ τῶν Περσῶν ὄντα γεώργια ἴν' ἐς τὴν τῆς τρυφῆς ὕβριν ταῦτα κατακενώσωμεν, ἀλλὰ τοσαύταις μυριάσι τῶν ἵππων μόλις πρὸς χρεῖαν ἐξήρκεσαν. σοὶ δ' ἐξὸν καὶ ποιμένας καταθιοιῆσθαι καὶ ἀγέλας ἐλαύνειν καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ προστιθέναι, ἃ καὶ γῆν παριόντες οἰκείαν οἱ στρατιῶται νεανιεύονται, ἀλλὰ μικροῦ καὶ πεινῶντας ἐξάγεις τοὺς στρατιώτας καὶ σοὶ διαγογγύζοντας, οὐχ ὅτι κατὰ τοὺς Ἰσραηλίτας τῶν ἀναγκαίων ἐλείποντο, ἀλλ' ὅτι γε πολλῶν καὶ ὑπὲρ τὰ ἀναγκαῖα παρόντων αὐτοὶ κατατρυφᾶν ἐκωλύοντο. οὕτως ἐκῆδου τῶν Βαρβάρων, οὕτως ἀσοφῆτι τούτους ἤθελες (ὃ δὴ λέγεται) παρελθεῖν.

26. Πλὴν ἀλλὰ μέγα σοὶ κἀναυθὰ τῆς ὁδοῦ ταύτης τὸ πάρεργον. ὄρῃς τὰ πρόβατα τῆς μάνδρας κυρίου, ὧν οἱ βαρεῖς λύκοι κατεκυρίευσαν, καὶ σποδοειδῆ μὲν ἦσαν καὶ ῥαντὰ καὶ ποικίλα καὶ ὅλως τὴν ποιμαντικὴν Ἰακώβ τοῦ πατριάρχου φιλοτεκνίαν ἐμφαίνοντα, ταῖς γε μὴν τοῦ Λάβαν μάνδραις τέως ἐνεσηκάζοντο· καὶ σοὶ μὲν πάλοι τῶν τοιούτων προβάτων ἔμελεν, ἵνα μὴ τοῖς κακίστοις λύκοις ἐπαναφύρωνται· αὐτὰ δὲ σε τὸν ποιμένα τὸν μέγαν ἰδόντα μετὰ τῆς ποιμαντικῆς παροδεύοντα βακτηρίας, ἦν σοὶ Θεὸς αὐτὸς ἐνεχείρισε, τέως μέντοι τῶν τοῦ Δαυὶδ ἐκεῖνα βοῶσιν· "ἀπόδος τοῖς γείτοσιν ἡμῶν ἐπταπλασίως εἰς τὸν κόλπον αὐτῶν· ἡμεῖς λαὸς σου καὶ πρόβατα νομῆς σου· καὶ πρόσσχος ὁ ποιμαίνων τὸν Ἰσραήλ, ὁ ὀδηγῶν τὸν Ἰωσήφ ὡσεὶ πρόβατον." τέως δὲ καὶ τὴν τοῦ Ἰακώβ ζητοῦσι ποιμαντικὴν τὰ Ἰακώβ ἐπίσημα πρόβατα καὶ τοὺς φύλακας κύνας ἐπιποθοῦσιν ἱκετικὸν προσβληχόμενα· μῦθοις μὲν γὰρ ἐδόκει πάλοι καὶ ποιοῦσι τοὺς λύκους κατασοφιζομένους τὰ πρόβατα καὶ ἀπελαύνουσιν οἱ λύκοι τοὺς κύνας καὶ ἐν ἡρεμίᾳ διασπαράτ [p. 183]τουσί γε τὰ πρόβατα· τὸν δὲ μῦθον οἱ Πέρσαι τοῦτον ἤγαγον εἰς ἀλήθειαν καὶ τοὺς πνευματικούς κύνας, τοὺς ἀγρύπνους τῆς τῶν χριστιανῶν ποιμνῆς φύ-

book of Homer reports, one began the Panhellenic war because [the city] did not return Helen nor did it quit the war. Thereafter, he was irritated by the falling heroes and after the victory he destroyed the city and killed the many chiefs as retribution. If only they had appeared terrible to the enemies before the events, Troy would have continued to exist, the walls would have remained in my fatherland⁶⁴ and gold would have sparkled all around the acropolis of the Athenians.

23. This is such a great feature of you, O Emperor, and the speech, if it did not suspect a certain satiety (rather it is the satiety of your monuments as it does not take hold of this speech inasmuch as it does not take hold of the audience; the fear is that the newer great deeds remain out of the catalog), would have more about Antioch and would accompany you in the procession together with your theater that you lead when driving into the city. At that moment, the entire population stands in front of the walls and the gates open up for you, when you, surpassing any kind of brilliance, outshone any model of rulership. You are reminiscent of the honors given to Christ by his followers, and just as that victorious one came into Palestine riding a mule and without plans for war, while the multitudes spread their tunics and waved branches of plants they shouted fittingly for a god:⁶⁴ "Osannah to the Savior." In the same way, the horse alone brought you, thereby suggesting the majesty of the monuments of the expedition; the Antiochians processing in groups divided according to nations and brotherhoods with branches in their hands and hymns in their mouths, even the wonderous hymn of the children sung to Christ from the old days.⁶⁵ What happened during the journey? From there, Damascus receives the rumor of your arrival, Aleppo shudders at you, as in the past Israel also neglected the general who slowly took hold of the mountains of Palestine and came because of glorious victories.⁶⁶ [p. 181] Thence the cities of the Canaanites bristled. There were gifts for you mixed with tears and intense supplications and documents of voluntary servitude, so Christ's image would remain with you – the image which we gave you before. In the past, even the kings of the Arabs brought gifts to our Emperor; in the past, you have loosened the chains for the Christians fettered and held fast by them, whom they covered with earth in their tombs, and you carry them out secretly from the tombs, and represent the Anastasis.

24. I cannot enjoy such great deeds in a more magnificent way, nor can I adorn my speech as much as I wish. But time forces my desire to run more gently. As the situation is favorable for you, there was a need for the champion to return and re-establish the processions, the festivities, and the applause, with which the city, deserted because of these deeds, proudly crowned itself after it received you. But why do I have to waste the speech which is drawn away to other such things? For a time, having returned to your city, you longed for a greater one, desiring and at the same time desired, wishing to stand near admirers as quickly as possible. And, as it seemed to you to advance through Persia, this was not a favorable situation for the Persians and they often sent embassies to you in that time [requesting] that you not trespass on their land, or allow armies to sweep across their soil, as indeed it is said in the Gospel that the Gergesenes having sent for Jesus demanded that he stay far from their land, since they could not abide his many miracles. The barbarians, not having room for your multitudes and fearing your greatness, resisted

λακας, ἐκ τῶν κατ' αὐτοὺς ποιμνίων κακομηχάνως ἐλάσαντες κατορχοῦνται τῆς ἐρημίας καὶ τὰ Χριστοῦ σπαράττουσι πρόβατα. τότε μὲν οὖν τοῦ πυρός σοι τῆς εὐσεβείας αὐθις ἀνακαχλάσαντος καὶ ὑπερεκχεῖσθαι ζητοῦντος, ἵνα τοὺς ἀσεβεῖς καταφάγηται, τέως μὲν ἐπέχεις τὰς φλόγας καὶ ζητῶν ἐπιτήδειον, πείθεις δὲ τοὺς Βαρβάρους χριστιανοὺς ἀνεῖναι τὰς βίας καὶ χώραν σφίσι δοῦναι πλατεῖαν εἰς τὸ παρρησιάζεσθαι τὴν εὐσέβειαν καὶ τοὺς πνευματικούς πολιούχους ἐκάστης δέξασθαι πόλεως. ἐδόκει ταῦτα καὶ νυμφοστολεῖς τὰς Ἐκκλησίας πάλιν Θεοῦ καὶ φιλοκρινεῖς τοὺς νυμφίους, ἵνα μὴ τὰ τῶν γάμων ὑβρίσωσι· καὶ χήρας γαμίζεις οὐ νέας, ὡς ἡ τοῦ ἀποστόλου θέλει διάταξις, ἀλλ' ἐκ μακροῦ χηρευούσας καὶ τῶν νυμφίων τρυχομένας τοῖς ἔρωσι. καὶ νῦν αἱ τῆς Ἐφῶς Ἐκκλησίαι πάλιν λευχειμονοῦσι, τῶν χηρικῶν ἀμφίων ἀπεκδυσάμεναι τὴν σκοτόμαιναν, καὶ περιβάλλουσι τοὺς νυμφίους καὶ ἄδουσι τοὺς ἐπιγαμίους καὶ τὰ τέκνα παραμυθοῦνται καὶ πάντας αὐταὶ ἔχουσι πάλιν καὶ τῶν ἐπιγαμίων ἁσμάτων ὁ βασιλεὺς πάντως ὑπόθεσις.

27. Ἄλλ' ὦ τοῦ τάχους τῶν ἐς αἰεὶ δρόμων καὶ τῆς ἀπαύστου καὶ φορᾶς καὶ κινήσεως· ὑπὲρ τὰς ἵππους Εὐμήλου καὶ οἱ ἵπποι σου καὶ οἱ δρόμοι σου καὶ τὸν πτερωτὸν ὑπερφαινεις Περσέα, πλὴν ὅσον οὐκ εἰς αἰθέρα θέλεις μετεωρίζεσθαι οὐδὲ πτερῶν προσθήκη τὸν ἄνθρωπον παραμυθεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ φύσεως τάχει καὶ προθυμίᾳ γνώμης ὑπελαφρίζεσθαι. θάττον τις ἴδῃ τὸν ἥλιον ἢ σε τοῦ δρόμου παυσάμενον· οὕτως ἀεικίνητος εἶ, εἰ μὲν βούλοιο τις λέγειν, ὡς αὐτὸς ἥλιος, εἰ δὲ τις αἰροῖτο, καὶ ὡς πάντων ὑπερηρμένος καὶ ἀληθῶς αἰθέριος ἢ ἐμπύριος· οὕτω γὰρ που καὶ ὁ δαιμόνιος Ἀριστοτέλης τὸ τοῦ αἰθέρος ἔτυμον παραδίδωσιν. ἄρτι γὰρ ἐν καλῷ μένειν οὕτω τὴν καθ' ἡμᾶς Ἀσίαν κατασπαζόμενος ταχύς ἐπὶ τὰ Θρακικὰ πεδία πάλιν ἀπέπτῃς καὶ τῆς Εὐρώπης ἔχει σε τὸ μεσαίτατον καὶ κειμένων σοι καὶ ταῦτα τῶν ὄπλων ζύμπας ἐχθρὸς ὑπεκλίνετο καὶ κατατάττεις ἐν βραχεῖ καὶ πόνων ἄτερ τὴν οἰκουμένην τὸ κατὰ πάντων κράτος ἀναδησάμενος. ὦ πηλίκον ἐν τῇ Εὐρώπῃ καὶ οἶόν μοι τὸν κύκλον ἐγύρωσας ἀφ' ἐνός που τῶν τρόπων ὡς ἀπὸ κέντρου τείνας τὰ διαστήματα καὶ σύμπαν ἔθνος δια [p. 184] γράφας ἐσπέριον καὶ τέως εἰς βουλήν περιαγαγὼν πάντας μίαν, ἵνα σοι πάντες δουλεύσωσιν. οὐκ εἶχες τάχα κέντρα ὁ κύκλος· οὐδὲ γὰρ ὄπλον ἐκίνησας, ἀλλ' ἀσοφητὶ καὶ ἡρέμα πᾶσαν ἐσπέραν ἐδουλαγώγησας.

28. Ὡ καινὸς κύκλος οὗτος, ὃν οὐ τετραγωνίζοντες ματαιοπονοῦσι Περικλεῖς καὶ Ἀντιφῶντες καὶ Βρύσωνες· ἔχει γὰρ, ἔχει πάντως καὶ τὸ τετράγωνον, ὅσον καὶ φύγων πάμπαν ἔστιν ἀνώτερον. ἢ πῶς οὐ λίαν ἐπαινετόν, ἂν ἐγὼ μὲν ἐδόκουν ὅτι σοι θήρας μέλει μόνον, σὺ δὲ καὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν ἐκυρίευσες, ἂν ἐγὼ μὲν πάταγον ὄπλων καὶ ἀκοντίων δοῦπον ἀνέμενον, ἵν' ἐννοοίμην οὕτω καὶ πόλεμον, σὺ δὲ τῇ φήμῃ μόνη καταπλήττων εἶχες τὰ ἔθνη χειρούμενος; οἱ μὲν γὰρ σοι πυκνὰ περὶ τῆς εἰρήνης ἄλλοθεν ἄλλος ἦκον διαπρεσβεύοντες καὶ δουλείαν ὁμολογοῦντες καὶ σοι τὸν ἔλεον ἐκκαλούμενοι, οἱ δὲ σοι καὶ ὡς ἡδικημένοι περὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν προσίασι καὶ κατηγοροῦσι μὲν τῶν ἡδικηκῶτων καὶ προκαλοῦνταί σου τὴν ῥάβδον ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀμαρτόντας τὴν σωφρονίστριαν· σὺ δὲ διαιτᾶς αὐτοῖς τὰς δίκας πανσόφως καὶ τοὺς τῶν βαρβαρικῶν φρονημάτων ὄχθους διαλεαίνεις καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν αὐτοῖς κατατάττεις νομοθετήσας τὸ ἀστασίαστον ἢ καὶ ὡς οἰκέταις δεσπότης ἐγκελευόμενος ἀρχικώτερον, ἵνα σου μὴ τὴν ἀριστουργὸν χεῖρα μόνον εἰδεῖεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν γλῶτταν μάθωσι τὴν ἐμπύριον, μηδὲ βασιλέα σε μόνον γενναῖον, ἀλλὰ γε καὶ σοφὸν γνωρίσωσιν αὐτοκράτορα, μηδὲ στρατηγὸν δεξιὸν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ δικαστὴν

what they saw and wanted to block the roads, but you joined them, even if they were unwilling. You walked towards them, even if they did not want this, and you walked among them, falling upon them like lightning and terrifying them with your presence alone. But let the thunder be delayed and let the terrible things occur only during the time of war.

25. Your relations with the Persians were peaceful at that time and you resembled the Alpheios river gushing and running with its serene, transparent, and sweet course, in the middle of nations who were salty because of their distrust towards the friendly spring; I mean our city which, without hesitation, I would call the spring of goodness. However, for the barbarians the first actions ended in misfortune, [p. 182] because the numerous cavalry of your armies trod and occupied their vineyards with growing and blooming grapes, whitening the country, and giving fruits in bunches. This situation was caused by the sufferers who neglected hunger in addition to the hail, locusts, and other terrible divine calamities. Yet this was needed: for you did not have soldiers like Bellefonte, so that they, as if they were light, are carried above the earth on winged horses, and it was necessary to allow the multitude of horsemen to tread the land, a situation which, according to you, was entirely appropriate for a great Emperor. For their care was not beyond the needs of their horses. The Persians had many fields and crops so that we would empty those in excess, but they were scarcely enough for the multitudes of horses. It is permissible for you to feast on sheep, to drive cows, and to add others, because the soldiers, when passing through their homeland, act like hot-headed youth; yet, you drive out the soldiers, who are almost hungry and murmuring against you, not because, like the Israelites, they were missing what was needed, but because they were prevented from delighting in many things and that which is beyond the necessities. As you were concerned with the barbarians, you wanted – as it is said – to pass by in silence.

26. However, here is the extraordinary feature of this road. You see the sheep of God's fold, which the savage wolves threatened; they were ash-colored, sprinkled, many-colored, and showed Patriarch Jacob's shepherdly care, until they entered the folds of Laban;⁶⁷ but you have long cared for the sheep, so that they do not mingle again with the evillest wolves. When these sheep see you, as the great shepherd passing by with the shepherd's staff which God handed you, they certainly call to their minds David's sayings: "Pay back into the laps of our neighbors seven times. We are your people and the sheep of your pasturage. Hear, Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock." For a time, Jacob's marked sheep ask for Jacob's shepherd's art and the guard dogs bleat like yearning supplicants. For, according to old stories,⁶⁸ the wolves outwitted the sheep, drove away the dogs and then quietly [p. 183] killed the sheep. The Persians turned this fable to reality. By a mischievous plot they drove out the spiritual dogs, the guardians of the Christian flock, they subdued them in the desert and pulled apart Christ's sheep. Then, when the fire of piety once again boiled up and was about to overflow and sought to consume the impious ones, you kept the flames in check and looking for what was necessary, you persuaded the barbarians to give back the Christians their strength, to give them a broad place to freely practice their faith, and to receive the spiritual leaders of each city. These actions seemed to follow their course and you escort again God's Churches and carefully select

ἀκριβέστατον.

29. Ἄλλ' ὦ ρεῦμα σοφίας, ὦ ποταμὸς ἀνυπόστατος· μόνον ἐπεμνήσθην ταῦτα καὶ περικλύζομαι, μόνον εἰς νοῦν ἐβαλόμην καὶ παρασύρουσί με τὰ ρεύματα. ἐπίστασθε οἱ τὸν ποταμὸν περιπλέοντες τοῦτον καὶ τῶν ναμάτων πίνοντες ἀφθονώτερον· ἐπίστασθε τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως σοφίαν οἱ τὸν περὶ αὐτὸν συμπληροῦντες κύκλον καὶ τῆς ἡδίστης γλώττης κατεμπορούμενοι, πῶς μὲν περὶ τὰς διαλέξεις ὑπὲρ τοὺς πάλαι Σέξτους καὶ Πύρρωνας (πλουτεῖ δέ οἱ τὴν πειθανάγκην ὁ λόγος), ὑπὲρ τοὺς ἐκ τοῦ Περιπάτου καὶ τῆς Στοᾶς, καὶ πῶς τὸ παρατυχὸν ἅπαν ποιεῖται λαμπρὰν φιλοσοφίας ὑπόθεσιν, ἂν ψυχῆς ἐπιμνησθῆ, πρῶτα μὲν τὰ Φαίδωνος ἀνακινῶν καὶ Καλλίου καὶ ὅσα οἱ περὶ Σωκράτην περὶ ψυχῆς καὶ τὰγαθοῦ διεξέρχονται, εἶτα δὲ καταλήγων ἐς Μωσέως καὶ τὸ Θεοῦ δοξάζων ἐμφύσημα καὶ ἀναβαίνων μὲν εἰς οὐρανὸν μετὰ τοῦ πάλαι κύκλου τῶν φιλοσόφων καὶ διαβαίνων τὰς ζώνας καὶ περὶ [p. 185] θέων τοὺς ἄξονας, ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ μετὰ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς φιλοσόφων τοῦτον διασκεπτόμενος καὶ Θεοῦ τιθέμενος ποιήμα. γέμει δέ οἱ τὰ πάντα τῶν θείων λόγων καὶ τῶν θειοτέρων δογμάτων καὶ τὸ δικαστικὸν βῆμα καὶ ἡ τράπεζα καὶ ἡ κλίνη καὶ καιρὸς ἅπας καὶ ζωὴ ξύμπασα· καὶ πολυπραγμονεῖ τῆς ἐν Εὐαγγελίοις σοφίας τὰ μυστικώτερα καὶ κρυφιδέστερα καὶ ἐπὶ γλώττης αὐτῷ τὰ καινὰ τοῦ θείου Παύλου νοήματα καὶ φθάνει τοὺς περὶ λόγους αἰεὶ στρεφομένους λύων αὐτὸς τὸ ἄπορον εὐστοχώτερον καὶ ἀπαυγάζει τὴν ἐγκεκρυμμένην τούτοις σοφίαν καὶ γίνεται κατὰ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος εὐεργετῶν τὸ ὑπήκοον. ὦ βασιλέως καὶ ψυχῆς κηδομένου καὶ χειρὶ μαχομένου καὶ πληττομένου τοὺς πόδας καὶ τῆ γλώττῃ σοφίζοντος, διὰ πάσης τῆς διαρτίας τοὺς ὑπηκόους ὀλβίζοντος.

30. Ἀλλὰ τί μοι κα πολέμους ἀνανοῆ καὶ πάλιν; μὴ βαρβάρων ἐμνήσθης καὶ διασκέπτῃ τὴν συμβολὴν καὶ τὴν ἐκδρομὴν κατὰ νοῦν βάλλεις καὶ φαντάζῃ τὴν συμπλοκὴν; ποῖ ποτε ἄρα γε προβῆσθαι; τί δέ σοι πέρασ ἔσται τῶν δρόμων; ἢ καὶ ὑποῦ θέλεις ἀνερειφθῆναι, ἵνα μὴ ὀφθαλμούς τις αἴρειν ἔχῃ πρὸς σε, μηδ' ἴκταρ (ὁ φασι) βάλλειν δύναιτο, μικρὸν ὅσον καὶ τὰ πάντα κατεργασάμενον; ἐπιλείπει σε τὸ ἔργον, ὦ βασιλεῦ, καὶ ὁ πόλεμος καὶ ἐν εἰρήνῃ βαθεῖα καθίσεις πᾶσαν ἐλὼν τὴν ὑφήλιον, πράγματά τε σχοῖεν οἱ σιδηρές καὶ οἱ χαλκεῖς, οἱ περὶ τοὺς ραισπήρας ἔχουσι καὶ τοὺς ἄκμονας, (τοῦτ' ἐκεῖνο τὸ τοῦ προφήτου) εἰς δρεπάνας τὰ ὄπλα μεταχαλκεύοντες καὶ μεταποιοῦντες τὰς ζιβύνας εἰς ἄροτρα. τί γὰρ δεῖ καὶ ὄπλων, ὅταν οὐ πάρεισι πόλεμοι; τί δὲ καὶ δεῖ καὶ πολέμων, ὅταν οὐδεὶς ὁ μαχόμενος; εἶεν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τούτοις οὐδὲ κομπάζεις, οὐδὲ τὸ τηλικούτον τῆς μοναρχίας χρῆμα τὸ σὸν ἐτύφωσε φρόνημα. Βαρβάρων ταῦτα καὶ Μακεδόνων· αἰνίττομαί σοι τὸν Φίλιππον, ὃς πολλοῦ ἂν ἄξιός ἦν, ἐὰν ἐπὶ πολλοῖς καὶ γενναίοις ἐμεγαλαύχει τοῖς κατορθώμασι, νῦν δὲ ἀλλὰ μίαν τὴν ἐν Χαιρωνεῖα κατ' Ἀθηναίων μάχην κρατήσας καὶ τῷ τροπαίῳ καταστρατηγηθεὶς ἔξω γέγονεν ἑαυτοῦ καὶ οὐκέτι γε εἶναι ἄνθρωπος ᾤετο. ἀμέλει τοι καὶ παῖδα ἑαυτῷ ἐπιστήσας ἐκάσθης ἔω ἐπιλέγειν ἐκέλευε· "Φίλιππε, φρόνει θνητὸς ὢν," καὶ οὕτως ἐσωφρονίζετο ἀτεχνῶς οὕτως φάναι παιδαγωγούμε [p. 186] νος· "ἐπὶ τίνι καταστέλλεις τὸν τύφον, Φίλιππε; ἐπὶ τίνι δέδιαις; μὴ λάθοιο σεαυτοῦ καὶ νομίσεις μένειν ἀθάνατος, ὅτι τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις πονήρως ἔχουσι καὶ ἀρρώστως καὶ γνώμη δεινοῦ σοφιστοῦ μᾶλλον ἢ ῥώμῃ καὶ θάρσει κατὰ σοῦ κινήθεισι γέγονας δυσαντίβλεπτος. ἀλλ' ὁ ἐμὸς βασιλεὺς πάλαι μὲν ἔχει τὰ σὰ καὶ ὅσα ἐν μέρει παιδιᾶς αὐτοῖς κέχρηται, ἔχει δέ σοι καὶ τὰ τοῦ σοῦ παιδὸς Ἀλεξάνδρου, ὃς ὅλοις ὑπερβέβηκε μέτροις τὰ σὰ, προσελάβετο δὲ

the bridegrooms, in order that they do not disdain marriage. You wedded widows who were not young, as the Apostle's command stipulates, but who had been widows for a long time and had been consumed by their love for bridegrooms. And now the oriental Churches are once again clad in white after they took off the dark night of the widow's garments; they surround the grooms, sing the nuptial songs, encourage children, and have everything. Again, the Emperor was the one who made the nuptial songs possible.

27. But O, the swiftness of the races to eternity and of the never-ending rush and movement. Your horses and your ways are superior even to Eumelos' horses, and you are superior to winged Perseus, except that you do not want to rise into the air, nor to deceive the people with added wings, but you want to be light because of nature's swiftness and the eagerness of thought. One would notice more easily the sun than you when ceasing your course. You are always on the move, one would say, like the sun itself, if one preferred, and as if raised above everything and truly a heavenly and empyrean being. Thus, to some degree, the marvelous Aristotle transmitted the true meaning of the upper realms of heaven (the ether). For after you embraced our part of Asia to remain thus for the good, you flew away again towards the Thracian plains and Europe's center holds you; having put down their arms, all your enemies capitulated and you briefly gave orders and, effortlessly, you made the *oikoumene* dependent on your authority against all. You circled Europe as if you moved from the center, [p. 184] and you gradually enrolled all the western nations, until you brought all of them under one will, so that they all obey you. Soon, the circle did not have center points. Yet, you did not move an arm, and without a sound and in silence you turned all the western nations into your subjects.

28. O, this new circle, which heroes like Pericles, Antiphones or Brysones labor in vain as they could not make a square. For it holds, it entirely contains the square, because it has no flaw at all. Or how not very praiseworthy, if I thought that you cared only for beasts, while you dominated the peoples, if I waited for the clatter of arms and the loud sound of javelins, in order to think of war, but you subdued the peoples only by astounding them with the reports about you. Often some people came to you from other places to ask for peace, to confirm their obeisance, and to demand your mercy. Others, as if suffering in matters concerning their rule, came forward and accused the wrongdoers and demanded your temperate staff of office against the wrongdoers. You arbitrated their trials most wisely and smoothed the hills of their barbarian minds. You set down their rules of governing and you stipulated that they should not fight among themselves; or, like a master, you urged the family members in a more authoritative way in order that they become acquainted not only with your marvel-making hand, but also learn about your fierce tongue/speech, to know not only a noble Emperor but also the wise Emperor, not only the skilled general but also the most righteous judge.

29. O stream of wisdom! O overpowering river! I have just renewed those memories and I am washed away by them. I have just fixed them in my mind and the streams carry me away. You who navigate this river and drink the more plentiful streams have knowledge; you who belong to the circle around him and you who enjoyed an enchanting language, know the Emperor's wisdom surpasses Sextus and Pyrrhon of old (his speech

καὶ ὅσα οὐδ' ὄναρ ὑμῖν ἐφαντάσθησαν. τί γὰρ ὑμῖν τῶν ὑπὲρ τὸν Ἴόνιον ὑπὸ χεῖρας ἦλθε; τί δὲ τῶν ἀνὰ Λιβύην; καὶ ὅμως οἶδε μετριοφρονεῖν εἴπερ τις τῶν πώποτε βασιλέων. καὶ ὁ μνήμων ἀπέστη παῖς.”

31. Ἄλλ' ἐπὶ τούτοις αὐτοῖς (ὦ δίκη καὶ νόμοι καὶ ἀρετὴ βασιλέως) ζητῶ καὶ τὸν σκύμνον ἰδεῖν τῷ λέοντι παρασκαίροντα· ζηλοτυπῶ καὶ τὸν καλὸν ἀετὸν ἔχειν καὶ τὸν ἀετιδέα προσιπτάμενον· ἀλλ' οἴεσθε λέοντός μοι μέλον εἶναι καὶ ἀετοῦ; ἄρρυνα παῖδα τοῦ βασιλέως ζητεῖ, ὃς ἄν ἀπὸ τοῦ ταχέος οὕτω καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ γενναίου γεννάδα, διάδοχον τοῦ τοσοῦτου κράτους, εἰκόνα τῶν ἀρετῶν τῶν τοσοῦτων. μή μοι μέλλε περὶ τὸν γάμον, ὦ βασιλεῦ· κοινὸς ἐγὼ σοι πρέσβυς τῆς οἰκουμένης ὅλης παρίσταμαι· παγκόσμιόν σοι τοῦτον τὸν ἰκετήριον ὑπὲρ κοινῆς εὐεργεσίας προβάλλομαι. ἄγε μοι τὴν βασιλίδα, γίνου νυμφίος, ἐγὼ σκευάσομαι τὸν ἐπιθαλάμιον· τίκτε μοι τὸν βασιλέα, ἐγὼ σοι καὶ τῶν γενεθλίων λόγων ἐπιμελήσομαι. τάχα μὲν οὖν ὁ παῖς αὐξηθεὶς σοι καὶ τὰ ὑπερφυῆ σου βλέπων ἀνδραγαθήματα ἐκείνο τοῦτο τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου πείσεται τε καὶ φθέγγεται· ἀνιάσεται μὲν ὡς εἰκός, ἐρεῖ δὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἡλικίας· “πάντα προλήψεται ὁ πατήρ, ἐμοὶ δ' οὐδὲν ἀπολείψεται μέγα καὶ λαμπρὸν ἔργον μεθ' ὑμῶν ἐπιδείξασθαι.” κλαύσονται δὲ πικρὸν καὶ οἱ Βάρβαροι καὶ τοὺς μυθικοὺς βατράχους τάχα μιμήσονται ὥσπερ ἐκείνιο γοερὸν ἀνωδύραντο μέλλειν ἤδη τεκεῖν ἀκηκοότες τὸν ἥλιον, ὃς καὶ δίχα τῶν παίδων καλῶς αὐτοῖς τὰ τενάγη καὶ τὰς λίμνας κατέφρυγεν, οὕτω δὴ μόνον ἐπὶ τῶν ὄπλων βλέποντες ἔσσεξαν. ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ Βαρβάρων μὲν οὐτὶ μέλον, ὑπὸ πλείονων τῶν ἡλίων καταφρυγέσθωσαν, τῷ δὲ σῷ παιδί καὶ ἡμετέρῳ μετὰ σὲ βασιλεῖ ἀρκέσει πρὸς παραμυθίαν τὸ τοῦ πατρὸς μόνον φέρειν τὰ δευτερεῖα τοὺς λοιποὺς τῶν βασιλέων ὑπερελαύνοντι.

32. Ταυτὶ μὲν οὖν οὕτως εἶη καὶ ἀποτέκοις ἡμῖν καὶ χρίσειας τὸν βασιλέα καὶ εἰκόνα λίποις τῶν ἀρετῶν σου χαρίεσσαν, ὁ δ' ἐμὸς οὗτος λόγος, εἰ καὶ αὐχμηρὸς παρέστηκε σοι καὶ ἀκαλλῆς, μὴ διεσκευασμένος πρὸς τὸ [p. 187] ἀβρότερον μηδὲ λαμπρὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ τῆς σοφίας λειμῶνος ἐξηρτυμένος τὸν στέφανον, καὶ ὑποπτήσῃν ἔδει μάλιστα τοῦτον βασιλεῖ λαμπροτάτῳ γχρ οὕτω προσιόντα καὶ ὡς εἰπεῖν ἀστεφάνωτον, ἀλλὰ παρησιάζεται σοι καὶ τοῦτο. διὸ καὶ ἡμῖν, ὦ βασιλεῦ, ἄνες τὸ σὸν βῆμα καὶ ἀναπέτασον ἡμῖν τὰ βασίλεια, δὸς χώραν τοῦ λέγειν ἀμίσθω ρήτορι, μὴ ἀποκλείσης γλῶσσαν εὐγνώμονα· ἕως ἐπιστοιβάξεις τὰ τρόπαια, προστίθει καὶ τοὺς συγγράφοντας· ἕως οὐ λήγεις τροπαιοχῶν, μηδ' ἀποπέμψῃ τοὺς ρήτορας. ἔχεις σὺ χεῖρας, ἔχομεν καὶ ἡμεῖς γλῶτταν· θέλεις αὐτὸς ἀριστεύειν, ζητοῦσι καὶ οἱ ρήτορες φθέγγεσθαι. πρόσθε καὶ ἡμᾶς τῷ περὶ σὲ τούτῳ κύκλῳ, τοὺς καὶ πρὸ τῆς προσθήκης ἀνακηρύττοντας. καὶ προστεθείς μοι καὶ σὺ, βασιλεῦ, τῷ περὶ τὸν ἄνω βασιλέα συντάγματι μετὰ τὴν ὧδε πολυχρόνιον βίωσιν.

is rich in persuasive compulsion), the Peripatetics and the Stoics, and how any chance matter becomes a brilliant pretext for philosophy. If mention is made about the soul, he first discusses the ideas of Phaedon and Callias and all those theories which Socrates' followers discuss in detail about the soul and the good. Then, proceeding to Moses, he outlines the doctrine of divine breathing. He climbs to the sky together with the ancient philosophers, traverses the regions, [p. 185] reading their tablets, examines it together with our philosophers, and considers it a divine work. Everything – the tribunal, the table, the couch and the whole life – is filled with divine speeches and the even more divine doctrines. He probes into the hidden meanings of the Gospel's wisdom and divine Paul's newer ideas are on his tongue. He keeps up with those who are always engaged in studies and solves the difficult problems more successfully. He unveils the wisdom hidden into these (*logoi*) and thereby becomes a benefactor of the citizens. O, Emperor caring for the soul and fighting with the hand, stamping your feet, wise in your speech, and always bringing happiness to your subjects.

30. Yet, why ...⁶⁹ recall wars again? Do you remember the barbarians and examine the cooperation? Do you set the expedition in your mind and imagine the struggle? Where will you advance? What will be the end of your journeys? Do you want to go up to a summit, so that no one could raise the eyes to you, nor they could come closer (as they say), by almost overpowering everything? Actions and wars will disappear, O Emperor, you will sit in deep peace and embrace the whole world. The smiths and the coppersmiths with anvils and hammers, (according to the prophet) would have their arms re-forged into sickles and would turn their hunting spears into plows.⁷⁰ For why do we need arms when there are no wars? What is the need for wars when nobody fights? Moreover, you do not brag about these deeds, nor did such a great deed of rulership delude your thinking. These are the attitudes of barbarians and Macedonians. I will refer as in a riddle to Philip, who would have been very worthy, if he boasted with his many great achievements. Having prevailed in one battle at Chaeronea against the Athenians and having outwitted in a victorious battle, he went out of himself and thought that he was not a human any more. Thus, he called a child and ordered him to say every morning: "Philip, know that you are mortal!" and thus he would regain self-control as he was taught like [186] that. "To what end do you push (in yourself) this delusion, Philip? Why were you scared? Do not hide yourself and do not believe that you will remain immortal, since the Athenians who were knavish and sick and moved against you through the plan of a terrible sophist rather than through power and courage, cannot confront you. Yet, my Emperor has your features from the old days and he also has the features of your son, Alexander, who surpassed you in all respects and conquered all that which not even in a dream you would have thought. For what came into your hands from the lands beyond the Ionian? What about those in Libya? Nevertheless, he knows to be moderate since he is one of the rulers. And the mindful child recoiled."

31. In addition to these (O justice and laws and virtue of the Emperor), I desire to see the cub near the lion. I strive to also have the good eagle and the eaglet flying towards it. Yet did you think that I care for the lion and the eagle? Look for an imperial male child,

swift and noble like you, a successor of a truly great might, an image of truly great virtues. Do not delay a marriage, O Emperor!⁷¹ I stand as a common ambassador of the entire *oikoumene*. I set before you this universal supplication for a common benefaction. Bring the empress, become the bridegroom, I will arrange the nuptial hymn. Beget the Emperor, I will take care of the birthday speech. Perhaps as your son grows up and sees your achievements, he will believe and say those words of Alexander. Likely he will be distressed and will say to his fellows: “the father will take everything, nothing great and glorious will be left for me to show off with you.” They will cry aloud bitterly and perhaps will imitate those frogs from the fables.⁷² Just as those broke into a mournful wailing when they heard that the sun is about to beget, the sun which without sons burned to ashes their lagoons and lakes, in the same way the viewers hid when they looked at the arms. Yet I do not care at all about the matter regarding the barbarians, let them be consumed by fire under greater suns, but to your son and our Emperor after you who surpass the other emperors it will only suffice as a consolation to carry the father’s second prize and to overpass the other emperors.

32. If such things will happen and you bring to birth [a son], anoint the Emperor and leave a graceful image of your virtues, then this speech of mine, even if it is presented to you, [p. 187] not equipped for the more graceful, nor endowed with the glorious crown from the meadow of wisdom, and even if this had to fly under the most glorious Emperor . . .⁷³ Therefore, allow us to speak from the tribune, O Emperor, and open the palace to us, give space for speech to an unpaid rhetorician, and do not prohibit a grateful speech. As you pile up the monuments, add the writers as well. As you cease from gaining trophies, do not dismiss the rhetoricians. You have hands, and we have a tongue. You want to be brave, the rhetoricians demand to celebrate that in their speeches. Add us to this circle around you, for we sing praises to you before you include us there. In this way you will be included, O Emperor, to the order formed around the heavenly Emperor after a long life lived in this way.

Commentary

1. Malakes probably refers to Manuel's campaigns in Cilicia and Antioch from the end of the 1150s; see A. Kazhdan, *ODB*, vol. 2, "Manuel I Komnenos."
2. Malakes alludes here to the fact that he had just entered the court service. See Text and Context, above.
3. *Theatra* as places of literary performance re-emerged in the Komnenian period and continued to flourish until the Palaiologan period.⁴⁴
4. The first paragraph and the ensuing one allude to the military and diplomatic campaigns of the 1150s in which the Sultan Kilij Arslan II had also been involved.
5. Reference to one of Heracles' twelve labours when he cleaned the Augean stables.
6. See n. 3 above.
7. Sir. 27:5.
8. His first wife Bertha-Eirene of Sulzbach died in 1159.
9. The inhabited places of the earth, an allusion to Byzantium's universalist ambitions.
10. Meaning his speech.
11. Here Malakes refers to the suffering (*pathos*) caused by the recent death of Eirene (Bertha of Sulzbach), the wife of Emperor Manuel I.
12. Byzantine authors of panegyrics often included remarks on the nature of their speeches and referred to the so-called "νόμος ἐγκωμίων."
13. Epithets used in connection with Hermes. Cf. Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 91; Sophocles, *Ajax* 832; Euripides, *Medea* 759.
14. οὐράνιος, "who dwells in the sky," allusion to Hermes' profile of the divine messenger who moves between the sky and the earth.
15. Cf. Plato, *Cratylus* 403a.
16. Πέδιλα πτερόεντα, Hesiod, *Shield of Heracles*, 220.⁴⁵
17. This was an allusion to Demosthenes' highly elaborate speeches which were said to smell of a lamp used by the orator at night.
18. Magdalino, *Manuel*, 413–88.
19. The comparison with Alexander the Great was another *topos* of Byzantine encomia.⁴⁶
20. Karla 2008: 669–79.
21. Mt. 12:41–42, Lk. 11:31.
22. King Poros who allegedly was defeated by Alexander the Great in the Battle of Hydaspes (326 BCE) and subsequently became a client ruler. Cf. Arrian 5,16,2.
23. Malakes alludes here to the adoption of the Sultan by Emperor Manuel. Like marriages, adoptions sealed political alliances. In Kilij's case this move followed the previous adoption of Yaghibasan, the Danishmendid Emir of Sivas.⁴⁷
24. Papadopoulos-Kerameus notes the use of a similar phrase by Tornikes.⁴⁸

44 Gaul 2011: 18–52; see Stone 2010: 55–65.

45 Cf. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 165.

46 Dennis 1997: 134–39.

47 Magdalino, *Manuel*, 77.

48 Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 167.

25. The term “archontes” signifies officials who possessed power and enjoyed connections with the emperor.
26. 2Paral. 32:28.
27. δουρὸς ἀκωκῆ cf. Il. 10.373; 11.253; 16.323; 17.295; 20.260.
28. The sultan father, Mesud I (d.1155), also came for protection to the Byzantine emperor.
29. This suggests the negotiations with the crusaders.
30. Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*, 1:2.2.
31. Mt. 2:1-12 and Lk. 2:7.
32. Malakes refers here to Kilij Arslan’s attack on Manuel I’s armies returning from Ikonion. See Magdalino, *Manuel*, 76–78.
33. Ps. Callisthenes 2:20, ed. Müller, p. 77.
34. 1Reg. 3:15, 8:63–64, 9:25.
35. Eth. Eud. 1249b.
36. Ps. 7(7):14.
37. A golden plane tree was placed in the imperial palace near the emperor’s throne. Mechanical birds were perched on it and was flanked by two golden lions.⁴⁹
38. Malakes appears to be referring here to a sculptor.
39. Plutarch (*Life of Alexander*) records that Stesikrates proposed to Alexander the Great to carve Mount Athos for a monumental sculpture.
40. The Nemean, Olympian, and Pythian festivals were three of the Panhellenic Games which took place every two or four years in Antiquity. They were dedicated to the pagan deities Apollo (Pythian Games), Zeus (Nemean Games), and Poseidon (Isthmian Games).
41. Strait of Gibraltar.
42. Allusion to the towers that Alexander the Great raised during the siege of Tyre in 332 BCE.
43. The Paeonians, Dacians, Getae, Triballi, Dalmatians, and Paristriians were ancient peoples inhabiting the Balkan Peninsula and the territories north of Danube. Most of them were tribes of Thracian origin.
44. Gorgon, the female creature of the ancient mythology, was said to transform into stone anyone who looked at her.
45. Malakes refers to the campaign of the Achaemenid King, Darius I, against the Scythians in 513 BCE when he invaded the territories north of Danube.
46. Il. 21.302–09.
47. Il. 3.363.
48. Il. 21.328–55.
49. Il. 18.371.
50. On personified rivers see Ostrowski 1991; Maguire 1999; Keiko 2001.

⁴⁹ See Politis 1917–18.

51. In 1147–49 Manuel was forced to confront Roger II of Sicily who had captured Corfu, Thebes, Euboea, and Corinth.⁵⁰
52. Is. 42:2.
53. Ez. 27:26.
54. Cf. Mt. 5:14.
55. Ps. 15(16):5.
56. Ps. 15(16):4.
57. Malakes refers here to the 1158–59 campaign in Cilicia when Manuel marched through the province at the head of a huge army.⁵¹
58. Cf. Lk. 23:30.
59. Lacunae in the text.
60. Dan. 3:1–33.
61. Around 1156 Raynald of Antioch (r.1153–60) attacked Cyprus together with Thoros II (r.1145–68), prince of Armenian Cilicia.
62. This is an allusion to the protection which Manuel offered to Antioch. On the emperor's relations with Antioch see Magdalino, *Manuel*, 72–74.
63. Malakes originated from a wealthy Theban family and was related to the Tornikioi.
64. Cf. Mt. 21:1–11; Mk. 11:1–11; Jn. 12:1–15.
65. Mt. 21:15–16.
66. Malakes refers here to the previous expedition of 1158–59 in Cilicia and Syria. Cf. Jud. 7:15ff.
67. Jacob's uncle and father in law.
68. Allusion to Aesop's story about the wolves and the sheep (C. Halm, 268).
69. Lacunae in the text.
70. Is. 2:4.
71. Manuel was to remarry in the same year (1161) with Maria of Antioch with whom he had Alexios II Komnenos.
72. Allusion to Aesop's fable on the frogs who wished for a king
73. Lacunae in the text.

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⁵⁰ Magdalino, *Manuel*, 51.

⁵¹ Magdalino, *Manuel*, 67.

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I.7.4 *Anthologia Marciana, Sylloge C*

A Monumental Cross in Hungary (1166)

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: Spingou, *Poetry for the Komnenoi*, C23 (no. 376); other editions: S. Lambros, “Ο Μαρκανός κώδιξ 524,” no. 337, 178–79; repr. in G. Moravcsik, “Σημειώσεις εἰς τὰ καλλιτεχνικά μνημεῖα τῶν Οὐγγροβυζαντινῶν σχέσεων,” in *Χαριστήριον εἰς Ἀναστάσιον Κ. Ὀρλάνδον* (Athens, 1965), 28 and 29, vv. 17–22

MS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 524 (s. XIII ex.), ff. 181v–182r

Other Translations: None

Significance

Works of later Byzantine monumental art are primarily attested in texts like the one included in this chapter. The composition of the poem from *Sylloge C* is related to the erection of a monumental cross in Hungary following a Byzantine victory in 1166. The text is remarkable for the references to memory created by monuments and for its witness to the practicalities of the creation of monumental art in Byzantium.

The Author

See F. Spingou, I.3.3 in this volume.

Text and Context

In the year 1166, Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80) waged a war of retaliation against Hungary. The previous year, a Hungarian noble had violated an armistice agreed between Hungary and Byzantium. In contrast to previous Byzantino-Hungarian wars, Manuel was not present on the battlefield, but he had sent military instructions to the Byzantine army, ordering them to take the Hungarians by surprise. Manuel dispatched a three-point attack, which inflicted great losses on the Hungarian troops. The assault, which was the most decisive for the war’s outcome, came from the eastern border of Hungary and it was led by the sebastos and *great heteriarch* John Doukas, a prominent member of the Komnenian court.² The victory was marked by the erection of a (probably copper) cross that had a poetic inscription on it. Two surviving poetic texts may be connected

¹ Consulted.

² See the Commentary, n. 4.

with that cross. One – which is discussed in this contribution – survives unattributed in the *Anthologia Marciana*. The other is attested by the twelfth-century historian, John Kinnamos, in his description of the relevant events. Kinnamos' passage reads:³

[p. 260] ὁ δὲ καὶ δευτέραν ἐπιθεῖναι σφίσι θέλων πληγὴν στρατεύματα καὶ πάλιν ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἔπεμψεν ἐπιστείλας ἄνωθ' ἐκ τοῦ προσοικοῦντος τὴν Ταυροσκυθικὴν ἐμβαλεῖν Οὐννοὺς, ἡγοῦντό τε τοῦ στρατεύματος τούτου Ἄνδρονικός τε ὁ Λαμπαρδάς καὶ Νικηφόρος ὁ Πετραλοΐφας ἄλλοι τε ἱκανοί. πᾶσι μὲντοι ἐφίστατο Ἰωάννης, οὗ πολλάκις ἤδη ἐμνήσθη, ὁ Δούκας· οἱ καὶ οὐκ [p. 261] εἰς μακρὰν δολιχοῦς τινὰς καὶ δυσεμβόλους διαμείψαντες χώρους ἀνθρώπων τε παντάπασιν ἔρημον διελθόντες γῆν ἐμβάλλουσι τῇ Οὐννικῇ, κώμας τε πολυανθρωποτάτας ἄγαν ἐντετυχηκότας πολλὰς μέγα τέ τι λαφύρων περιεβάλλοντο χρῆμα καὶ ἀνθρώπων πολλοὺς ἔκτειναν, πλείστους δὲ καὶ ἠνδραποδίσαντο. μέλλοντές τε ἤδη ἐκέιθεν ἀπαίρειν σταυρὸν χαλκοῦ πεπιοιμένον ἐνταῦθα ἀναστήσαντες τοιάδε τινὰ ἔγραψαν.

Ἐνθάδε Παννονίης ποτὲ ἄκριτα φύλα γενέθλης
δεινὸς Ἄρης καὶ χεῖρ ἔκτανεν Αὔσονίων
Ῥώμης ὀππότε κλεινῆς δῖος ἄνασσε Μανουήλ
Κομνηνῶν κρατόρων εὖχος ἀριστονόων.

[p. 260] *Because he [Manuel] wished to inflict a second blow upon them, he yet again sent an army against them from the mounds,⁴ ordering it to attack the Hungarians who live near Russia. Commanders of his force were Andronikos Lampardas and Nikephoros Petraliphas and a sufficient number of others; yet the oft-mentioned John Doukas was in charge of all. Soon, after they [p. 261] had passed through some wearisome and rugged regions and had gone through a land entirely bereft of men, they burst into Hungary; encountering many extremely populous villages, they collected a great quantity of booty and slew many men, but took captive many more. When they were about to set out from there, they erected a cross made of copper and inscribed on it the following:*

*Here, countless tribes of Pannonian birth
the terrible Ares and the hand of the Ausonians slew,
[this happened] when noble Manuel ruled renowned Rome,
the pride of the wise Komnenian Emperors.*

Kinnamos organizes his narrative into a climax that builds from the orders given by the emperor to the final success of this part of the campaign. The narrative follows the sequence of the events: Manuel plans the attack, appoints the commander and the general-in-chief, the expedition begins, and it captures and pillages the lands of Transylvania. The success of the campaign is then marked by the erection of a monumental cross that had

3 Kinnamos, *Deeds*, 261 (bk. 6.3), transl. Brand, 196, with adaptations.

4 The mounds of the Carpathian mountains see Moravcsik 1965: 29.

an epigram in archaizing language, according to Kinnamos, inscribed on it. The epigram cited by the historian complements the rhetorical elaboration of the narrative, providing the rhetorical climax for this story.

The attentive reader of Kinnamos' history would find that the bellicose character of the expedition is indicated by verbs starting with the preposition ἐπί, that shows (hostile) motion (see ἐπιθεῖναι, ἐπιστείλας).⁵ The skillful and independent management of the army is denoted by conspicuous verbs that address leadership (ἡγοῦντο, ἐφίστατο). The long route that the troops had to advance is indicated by verbs starting with the preposition διά, mean., "through" (διαμείψαντες, διελθόντες). The arrival in Hungary and the extended area encompassed by the expedition is noted by verbs starting with the prepositions ἐν and περί (ἐμβάλλουσι, ἐντετυχηκότες, περιεβάλλοντο). The results of the expedition are highlighted by verbs showing punishment (ἐκτειναν, ἡδραποδίσαντο). Finally, the passage emphasizes that the expedition ought to be remembered in the future (μέλλοντες, first word of the last sentence before the epigram) and so they inscribed the cross (ἔγραψαν, last word of the same sentence). The epigram concludes this highly rhetorical passage by stating that the events occurred in the lands marked by the cross, hence the first words of epigram: ἐνθάδε Παννονίης.⁶ The poetic text completes the narrative of the Hungarian expedition, which has led the reader from a statement about the wish of the emperor to demonstrate the military power of Byzantium to the Hungarians to the erection of a cross with an epigram in an obscure language that shows the cultural superiority of the Eastern Roman Empire.⁷

The citation of the epigram by Kinnamos stands out, as no other similar text is embedded in his historical account. The source from which the historian drew the poetic text remains uncertain. It is hardly believable that he had himself composed the epigram or at least that he amended it to suit his narrative – as he had done with other texts.⁸ Kinnamos is not known as a poet and the composition of the particular epigram requires a great dexterity in the use of verse.⁹ Also, he could not have seen the inscription *in situ*, since Manuel I and Kinnamos, his secretary, were not present for that Hungarian expedition.¹⁰ Furthermore, the highly rhetorical character of the passage and the poem probably excludes an oral transmission, given that their subtle stylistic traits would have been

5 The verb ἔπεμψεν can also be added to the list as it duplicates the sound ἐπ-, although the epsilon is of the verbal augment and the pi comes from the root "πεμπ-." The effect is intensified with the use of ἐμβάλλειν.

6 The caesura after Παννονίης momentarily creates an impression to the reader that the word "land" (χώρα) would follow the national adjective in the genitive case.

7 ... βασιλεὺς ἐσφάδαξε μὲν διὰ ταῦτα καὶ ἤθελεν αὐτὸς καὶ πάλιν ἐπὶ Οὐννικῆς ἰέναι, ἐπίδειξιν δὲ μᾶλλον τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἰσχύος ποιῆσθαι θέλων αὐτοῖς, τοιάδε τινὰ ἐννόει, "but the emperor was aroused thereat and desired to attack Hungary himself again, because he rather wished make a display of the Romans' might to them, so he planned the following": Kinnamos, *Deeds*, p. 259, 23–260, 3, transl. Brand 195 [amended].

8 See Karpozelos, *Βυζαντινοὶ ἱστορικοὶ καὶ χρονολογοὶ* III, 636–37.

9 Kinnamos had a sturdy rhetorical education: he was familiar with texts of Classical and Late Antique authors taught at school, and texts by great, ancient, and his contemporary rhetors, such a Libanius and Basilakes. For the former see Karpozelos, *Βυζαντινοὶ ἱστορικοὶ καὶ χρονολογοὶ* III, 633–35; for the latter see A. Walker in I.5.12 and K. Warcaba, II.3.1 in this volume.

10 On Kinnamos as an eyewitness see Brand 1976: 5–6.

difficult to remember. Most likely, the source was a military report or a letter sent to the Constantinopolitan court to announce the latest developments in the Hungarian expedition. The beginning of the epigram, with an adverb pointing to this particular place and an adjective with the name of the place, would be most relevant to a Constantinopolitan audience, rather than for a monument built in Hungary.

If the epigram attested by Kinnamos has indeed been drawn from a written source and is thus unclear as to whether it was ever meant to become a verse inscription. It remains equally uncertain as to whether the epigram from the *Anthologia Marciana* was also a potentially inscribed text. Finding the epigram in a poetic anthology compiled from other collections cannot corroborate either use. The poems in such collections were not copied in situ, but derive from authors' draftbooks and other records. Certainly, some of them indicate an intended inscriptional use. The length of the epigram does not offer an obstacle for suggesting an inscriptional use, given that long texts are known to have served as inscriptions in the Komnenian era.¹¹ Nonetheless, a number of internal references further corroborate a potential inscriptional use: the direct reference to a monumental stele for an *aristeia*,¹² the pompous and rather epic-sounding vocabulary,¹³ the repetitive specification of the enemies and land in which the war had been taking place,¹⁴ and most importantly the reference to the cross and the place at which it was erected would have been appropriate for a monumental inscription. However, it cannot be fully excluded that the poet penned the epigram in the *Anthologia Marciana* as a rhetorical exercise, perhaps inspired by the same source as Kinnamos. The references to the Emperor in a manner that is appropriate for imperial propaganda, the numerous rare or unique words in the poem,¹⁵ and other literary devices employed to favor the rhetorical character of the text, can advocate for either hypothesis.¹⁶

Besides its practical use, the epigram in the *Anthologia Marciana* is exceptional for the direct references to memory and memorials that it contains. The poet refers to the monument as being raised "for the sake of memory," such that later generations would know about the war.¹⁷ Indeed, the epigram registers an unusual number of events and historical details. No other epigram dated to the reign of Manuel I Komnenos refers to such a number of personal names, toponyms, and facts as this one on the Cross in Hungary.

11 See, e.g., the *Conciliar Edict of 1166*.

12 C23, 7. Cf. 23, 24 that also refers to an *aristeia*.

13 This is created mainly with the use of compounds (e.g. ὀρκολύτης [v. 14], τάφος αὐτόρυκτος [v. 13], δορυάλωτος [v. 33], and ψαμμομέτρητος [v. 25]) and vivid imagery about the action in battlefield (vv. 16–25).

14 "Παίονες" see C23, 4, 12, 21.

15 See v. 1, ἀστερόγραφος (only in Choroisphaktes, *Chiliostichos Theologia*, 22.16), v. 14 ὀρκολύτης (hapax), v. 19 ἀρχιφαλλαγάρχης (hapax), v. 25. ψαμμομέτρητος (hapax).

16 See, e.g., alliteration in vv. 7 (-ον) and 16–19 (-ας); agnomination: v. 8 (προῆρξε–προῆξεν); *polyptoton*: vv. 3 (ἀκράτω κράτει) and 16 (δράμα–δράσας). Note also the antithesis created in v. 8 by words starting with the preposition προ- (before) and by words meaning advancement, and the final word of the verse that means "end" (τέλος); see also Commentary note 8.

17 See vv. 4–5.

Yet, the epigram on the Cross is not composed on behalf of an invisible “Palace,”¹⁸ but rather on behalf of a prominent member of the Constantinopolitan court and the general-in-chief of the expedition, John Doukas.¹⁹ The poem, despite being a private commission, is written on or about a public monument and it communicates the events in a way appropriate for contemporary imperial propaganda. It complies with the customary *topoi* employed in texts in praise of the emperor: Manuel is the “Ruler of the Ausonians” (αὐσονοκράτωρ), is “the purple-blooming” (πορφυροθαλής), and “the great emperor” (ἄναξ μέγας), he is fearsome for the barbarians,²⁰ and, above all, as with most Byzantine emperors, he is a new Constantine.²¹ Moreover, the anonymous poet repeatedly attributes full credit for the victory to Manuel Komnenos, who conceived the plan, decided to appoint John Doukas as a general, and brought events to their conclusion,²² while giving John Doukas only a complementary role in this success. The prominent role of the emperor in the military victory is in line with the “official” imperial image and the importance that was attributed to it. In the same year the monument was created (that is, 1166) and the victory over the Hungarians was won, Manuel also demonstrated his power in church issues, as he put up a conciliar edict in Hagia Sophia regulating a dogmatic matter.²³ The name of the emperor in the latter is followed by twenty-six (!) honorary titles, among which for the very first (and only) time Manuel is named “Emperor of the Hungarians” (οὐγγρικός).²⁴

18 Meaning the Emperor.

19 See v. 6–7 and 28; on John Doukas, see the Commentary, n. 4.

20 See vv. 11–14.

21 The poet emphasizes this point by using the rhetorical effect of circle: in the first verses he refers to the sign of Cross that was revealed to Constantine the Great as a tool for victory, and in the last to the same sign that was placed in Hungary as a symbol of Manuel’s power (see vv. 1–3 and 26–29). The effect because more evident with the use of the same word (τύπος) at the end of the first and the last line of the poem. On Byzantine emperors as “New Constantines” see, e.g., Magdalino, *Manuel*.

22 See vv. 8, 16 and 19–20. The word “alone” at the beginning of v. 16 and the emphasis on the sound “δρα-” (reminding of the verb “δράω”) makes the importance of the active disposition of the emperor more emphatic.

23 On the relevant events see Mango 1963: 320.

24 *Conciliar Edict of 1166*, p. 324, 3.

Text

Ἐπίγραμμα γεγονός ἐπὶ τῷ ἐμπαγέντι μέσον τῆς Οὐγγρικής χώρας Τιμίῳ Σταυρῷ.

Ὅν πρὶν κατιδῶν ἀστερόγραφον τύπον,
 ὁ γῆς μονάρχης καὶ μέγας Κωνσταντῖνος,
 νίκας κατ' ἐχθρῶν ἔσχεν ἀκράτῳ κράτει,
 ἐνταῦθα τοῦτον Παιόνων γῆς ἐν μέσῳ
 5 μνήμης χάριν ἔστησε τοῖς ὀψιγόνοις
 Δούκας σεβαστὸς εὐκλεῆς Ἰωάννης,
 στηλογραφῶν ἄριστον ἔργον καὶ ξένον,
 οὗ καὶ προῆρξε καὶ προῆξεν εἰς τέλος
 ὁ πᾶσιν ἀσύγκριτος Αὐσονοκράτωρ,
 10 πορφυροθαλῆς Μανουήλ, ἄναξ μέγας,
 ὃς μυριαχῶς συντριβᾶς δούς ποικίλας
 τῇ Παιόνων γῇ καὶ τὸν Ἴστρον τὸν μέγαν
 εἰς τάφον αὐτοῖς αὐτόρυκτον εὐρύνας
 ὡς ὀρκολύταις, ὡς Θεοῦ παραβάταις,
 15 ταύτην ἀπάσαις προστιθεῖ δριμυτέραν
 μόνος τὸ δρᾶμα καὶ νικήσας καὶ δράσας·
 καὶ γὰρ στρατηγούς γεννάδας ἐπικρίνας
 καὶ παμμιγεῖς φάλαγγας ἐντάξας τόσας,
 ἀρχιφαλαγγάρχην δε τὸν Δούκαν κρίνας,
 20 Ἴστρον διελθεῖν ἐκ Βιδίνης προτρέπει,
 κἀκεῖθεν εἰς γῆν εἰσβαλόντας Παιόνων
 πληθύν δορυάλωτον αὐτῶν ἑλκύσαι,
 ὃ καὶ καθὼς κέκριτο κατορθωκότες
 πλήρεις ἀναστρέφουσιν ἀριστευμάτων
 25 σὺν αἰχμαλώτων ψαμμομετρήτῳ στίφει.
 σήμαντρον οὐκοῦν τῆς τόσης εὐβουλίας
 τοῦ πορφυρανθοῦς αὐτάνακτος Αὐσόνων
 πήγνυσιν ὧδε Γολγοθᾶν ὡς εἰς νέον,
 τοῦ νικοποιοῦ σταυρικοῦ ξύλου τύπον.

Translation

Epigram made on the Holy Cross that has been erected in the heart of the Hungarian land.

The sign made of stars,
 the sovereign ruler of the Earth and Great Constantine once saw
 and he gained victories against his enemies with his irresistible power;¹
 here, in the middle of the land of Paionians,²
 5 the glorious sebastos John Doukas, erected this
 as a memorial for later generations,
 inscribing a noble and wondrous deed;
 this [deed] was initiated and completed
 by the purple-born Manuel, the great emperor,
 10 the absolutely incomparable Ruler of the Ausonians,
 who, having already gained many victories in manifold ways
 in the country of the Paionians and having turned the great River Danube
 into a self-dug tomb for them,
 as perjurers and breakers of God's law,
 15 added to these victories, [a victory] more bitter than all the rest
 because he won and achieved this feat all by himself:
 for, he selected noble commanders,
 he enrolled a great many troops of mixed origins,³
 and he appointed Doukas as the general of the troops,⁴
 20 then he urged him to cross the River Danube at Vidina,⁵
 to invade the land of the Paionians from there
 and to capture many of them by force.⁶
 And when they had accomplished this in the way they had been foretold,
 they returned teeming with bravery
 25 and with a countless crowd of captives.⁷
 So, a symbol of the great prudence,
 of the purple-blooming emperor of the Ausonians
 he [John Doukas] erects here as at Golgotha;
 [that symbol is] the sign of the victorious cross.⁸

Commentary

1. According to the legend, when Constantine saw the battalions of his enemy Maxentius he fell into despair. But he (Constantine) then observed the shape of the cross miraculously formed by the stars in the night sky, with the inscription ἐν τούτῳ νίκη (‘‘with this [sign] you will win’’) next to it. Using the sign of the cross as his standard, Constantine managed to gain victory.²⁵
2. Paionians is the archaizing appellation for Hungarians that was very popular in twelfth-century texts of high rhetorical elaboration.²⁶
3. Cf. Kinnamos, 260.21–23.
4. Cf. Kinnamos 260.21. John Doukas, *sebastos* and *megas heteriarch*, participated in the embassy to Frederick Barbarossa in 1155/6, the expedition to Dalmatia in 1164, and the embassy to William of Tyre in 1177.²⁷ He also led the eastern army of the three sent against Hungary in the year 1166.
5. The army crossed the River Danube around modern Viřina (near the Romanian–Bulgarian border) and then passed to Transylvania through the passes of the South Carpathian mountains.²⁸
6. Cf. Kinnamos, 260.4–5.
7. Cf. Kinnamos, 260.25.
8. With this last verse the poem comes full circle: the sign of the cross, that had been seen by Constantine the Great (who was considered the first Christian emperor of the Romans), is now erected on the site of the victory by Manuel I.

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²⁵ E.g. *Syn. CP*, September 14, §1.

²⁶ See Kaldellis 2013: 112.

²⁷ See Karlin–Hayter 1972: 262–63; Stone 1999 Pol. 99.

²⁸ Moravcsik 1965: 27–29; see also Rác 1941: 12.

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I.7.5 George Pachymeres (1242–c.1310)

Description of the Column of Michael VIII with St. Michael

ALICE-MARY TALBOT

Ed.: A. Failler, *Georges Pachymères: Relations historiques*, vol. 3, CFHB 24/3 (Paris, 1999), IX.15, 259.20–261.5

MS.:¹ See Failler, as above, xiv–xvii

Other Translations: Mango, *Art*, 245–46 (English); Failler, as above, 260–62 (French)

Significance

The following passage is one of the two surviving references to the erection *ex novo* of a bronze statue in late Byzantine Constantinople, although the practice of making large-scale sculptures in the capital had been abandoned since the early seventh century.

The Author

George Pachymeres was an official at the patriarchate in Constantinople during the reigns of Michael VIII (r.1258–82) and Andronikos II Palaiologos (r.1282–1328). He was thus well placed to write a history covering the period 1260–1308. His history has a particular focus on ecclesiastical affairs and, on the whole, it is written in a reliable and objective manner. Any criticism is particularly addressed to Emperor Michael VIII and the patriarch Athanasios I (1289–93, 1303–09). Pachymeres was a scholar of wide-ranging interests, but he was particularly concerned with rhetoric. His spectacular rhetorical training is reflected in his complex and obscure archaizing literary style.

Text and Context

Probably toward the end of his reign Michael VIII commissioned a large bronze statue of the archangel Michael. The statue stood on a column in front of the main door of the church of the Holy Apostles. At the angel's feet, the kneeling figure of the emperor offering to him a model of the city of Constantinople was placed. No trace of its structure survives today, and so our only information comes from the texts of Pachymeres and a slightly later historian, Nikephoros Gregoras.² The column and the statue can also be discerned in an early fifteenth-century drawing of Constantinople by the Florentine

¹ Not consulted.

² Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantine History*, 202.8–13.

priest Cristoforo Buondelmonti.³ Manuel Chrysoloras in one of his famous *Letters on the Comparison of Old and New Rome* refers to the column alone.⁴ As described in the passage by Pachymeres below, shortly after their erection the statues tumbled to the ground in the earthquake of 1296.

The installation of the statuary group in a prominent location in the capital marks the revival of a long-abandoned artistic form, apparently the first new work of large-scale sculpture to adorn Constantinople since the early seventh century.⁵

3 Cristoforo Buondelmonti, *Liber Insularum archipelagi*, MS Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Lat. XIV.25 = 4595, f. 123. It has been estimated that the column had c. 25 m height; see Barry 2010: 11 n. 12.; see Hilsdale 2014: 112–13, figs. 2.5, 2.6.

4 Mango, *Art*, 251 n. 30.

5 On the political significance of the statue see Hilsdale 2014: 88–151.

Text

[p. 259] Τοῦ γοῦν πρώτου σεισμοῦ καὶ καθ' ἡμᾶς μεγάλου ἐνσκήψαντος, πολλὰ μὲν ἀναστήματα τῶν κατὰ τὴν πόλιν κατέπιπτον, ἐκ παλαιοῦ τὸν ἐδρασμὸν ἔχοντα, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ τῶν νέων οἰκιῶν κατηρείποντο. τοὺς δὲ γε τῶν αὐλαίων θριγκοῦς, οἱ καὶ ἐκ ξηρῶν συνίσταντο λίθων, κατὰ σωρείαν ἕκαστον εἶδέ τις κείμενον, ὅμοιον ὡς ἂν ἐπισωρευθέντων ἄλλοθεν, ὁ τεχνίτης τοὺς τοίχους ἔμελλε συνιστᾶν. δύο δ' ἔργα τῶν μεγάλων πεσόντα τὴν βίαν ἐσήμηνε τοῦ κινήματος. ὁ γὰρ τῶν Ἀγίων Ἀπάντων ναός, ἐς τότε συνεστηκῶς καὶ μηδενὸς τῶν ἀναγκαίων λειπόμενος, ἔλειπεν θραύσιν πάσχει καὶ πτώσιν τῆς ὀροφῆς, ὅση τε περὶ τὸ βῆμα καὶ ὅση περὶ μέσον ἀνωκοδόμητο· καὶ ὁ ἐκεῖσε χαλκοῦς ἀνδριάς τοῦ Ἀρχιστρατήγου, ὁ ἐπὶ [p. 261] κιονώδους μὲν ἐρηρισμένος τοῦ ἀναστήματος, ἐς πόδας δ' ἔχων τὸν ἀνακτα Μιχαήλ, τὴν πόλιν φέροντα κἀκείνῳ προσανατιθέντα καὶ τὴν ταύτης φυλακὴν ἐπιτρέποντα, ὁ τοιοῦτος οὖν ἀνδριάς καὶ ἡ ἀνά χεῖρας τῷ βασιλεῖ πόλις, ὁ μὲν τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀφαιρεῖται, ἡ δὲ τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ κρατοῦντος ἐξολισθαίνει, καὶ πρὸς γῆν ἄμφω πίπτουσι.

Translation

[p. 259] When the first great earthquake¹ struck us as well, many structures in the city which had been erected long ago collapsed, and many of the new buildings were also destroyed. And one could see each of the courtyard walls, which were made of unmortared stones, lying in a heap, as if the mason was about to erect walls from stones assembled from another location. Two important structures which collapsed indicated the force of the earthquake. For the church of All Saints,² which had stood to that time and lacked none of its essentials, suffered a pitiful destruction and the collapse of its roof, both that built over the sanctuary and that over the middle of the church. As for the bronze statue of the Archistrategos (St. Michael), fixed atop a columnar structure, who had at his feet the ruler Michael (VIII), holding <a replica of> the city and dedicating and entrusting to him its protection, the statue lost its head, and <the replica of> the city held by the emperor slipped out of the ruler's hands, and they both fell to the ground.

Commentary

1. The earthquake took place on June 1, 1296 and its aftershocks continued until July 17. The initial quake caused considerable damage in the capital.⁶
2. The church of All Saints was located next to the church of the Holy Apostles.⁷

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⁶ Evangelatou-Notara 1993: 36–40.

⁷ See Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 389–90.

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I.7.6 Theodore Prodromos (c.1100–1156/58)

Dionysos on a Cup: An Excerpt from *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*

ELIZABETH JEFFREYS

Ed.: M. Marcovich, *Theodori Prodromi de Rhodanthes et Dosiclis amoribus libri IX* (Leipzig, 1992), 68, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, 4.365–377; other edition: F. Conca, *I romanzo bizantino del XII secolo* (Turin, 1994), 63–303

MSS.:¹ Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 121 (s. XIII), ff. 22r–29v

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Significance

A vignette with both visual and literary resonances.² Dionysos and his entourage are depicted in various media, notably on ivory or bone boxes, engaged in a variety of activities,³ while parallels to the humorous elements in this scene can be seen, for example, on the Veroli casket.⁴ The textual antecedents come from the vintage scene at the beginning of the second book of Longos' *Daphnis and Chloe*.

The Author

Theodore Prodromos was one of the most versatile of the men of letters who attempted to support themselves by teaching and literary commissions in the first half of the twelfth century. Little is known of his family background and the details of his career are still unclear. He seems initially to have relied on support from the dowager empress Eirene Doukaina but on her death (in 1123?) turned to the emperor John, becoming virtually the court poet for the Komnenian dynasty. In the 1140s commissions dried up and he suffered a debilitating illness although commissions were still forthcoming from the emperor Manuel as well as prominent aristocrats. He eventually took refuge in the *gerontokomeion*

1 Not consulted. On the manuscript tradition, with further references see Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 10.

2 Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 285–86.

3 Weitzmann 1951: 179–83 and figs. 228–37, 242–45; see also Maguire and Maguire, *Other Icons*.

4 Cutler 1984/85: 44–46.

(old people's home) attached to the Orphanotropeion (orphanage) and the church of Sts. Peter and Paul. The fullest list of his writings remains that in Hörandner 1974: 37–67. The most recent discussion of his verse is to be found in Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*. Theodore's prodigious output, in prose and verse, covered encomia, theological and philosophical commentaries, satire, religious epigrams, and a novel in the late antique manner.

Text and Context

This passage quoted here comes from Theodore's novel, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, written in dodecasyllables. Dedicated to the Caesar Nikephoros Bryennios (d.1138), this pastiche of a genre not practiced in Byzantium since the fifth century can be viewed as a demonstration of rhetorical techniques. This brief example is taken from an ekphrasis of Gobryas' elaborately carved cup which was shattered by a drunken banqueter. The ekphrasis' antecedents stretch back to Homer's Shield of Achilles (*Iliad* 18.478–608) as well as to Glaukos' cup in Achilles Tatius' *Leukippe and Kleitophon* (2.3). A good visual parallel would be the late antique Lycurgus cup now in the British Museum.

Text

365 Διόνυσος δέ, τοῦ τρύγους ὁ προστάτης
πίθου νεαροῦ προσκαθιζήσας στόμα,
Βάκχαις σὺν αὐταῖς καὶ μετ' αὐτῶν Σατύρων
ἔπαιζεν, ὥσπερ τὰ πρέποντα τῷ τρύγει.
ράγας γὰρ ἔκσπῶν ἔκ τινος τῶν βοτρύων
370 τοὺς Σατύρους ἔπληττεν ἀπαλῶ βέλει·
οὔτοι δὲ κατέπιπτον ὡς βεβλημένοι,
ὁ μὲν κρατῶν τὴν χεῖρα τμηθεῖσαν τάχα,
τῷ πτυέλῳ τε τὴν τομὴν περιχρίων,
ὡς ἂν δι' αὐτοῦ τὴν συνούλωσιν λάβη,
375 ὁ δὲ προσουρῶν τοῦ ποδὸς τῷ δακτύλῳ,
ᾧ τῆς ραγὸς τὸ κροῦμα φλεγμονὴν ἔδω·
γέλως δ' ἔπ' αὐτοῖς τῷ Διονύσῳ μέγας.

Translation

365 Dionysos, the leader of the harvesters,
sitting by the mouth of a new storage jar,
jested with the Bacchae themselves and the Satyrs too,¹
as is fitting at a grape-harvest.
Tearing grapes from a cluster,
370 he pelted the Satyrs with the soft missile.
They fell down as though wounded,
one clasping his arm as if it had been sliced into,
smearing the cut with saliva²
to complete its cicatrization,
375 another urinating on his toe,
which the blow from the grape had inflamed.
Dionysos roared with laughter at them.

Commentary

1. Dionysos, god of wine in Greek mythology, was traditionally escorted by raving women (Bacchae or Maenads) and lusty Satyrs (half-man and half-goat); the classic literary presentation is in Euripides' *Bacchae*.
2. The practicalities of saliva and urine were recognized in the medical manuals; cf. Galen, *De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis* 30.15.⁵ Prodromos also shows medical knowledge in *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, 9.464–83.

⁵ Galen ed. Kühn 1826: 286.

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I.7.7 Theodore Balsamon (c.1130/40–after 1195)

Epigrams on a Golden Cup and a Letter about These Verses

ANDREAS RHOBY

Ed.:

a. K. Horna, “Die Epigramme des Theodoros Balsamon,” *WS* 25 (1903) no. XVIII, 185

b. Horna, as above, no. VII, 214

MSS.: a. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 524 (s. XIII ex.), f. 90v¹

b. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, XI.22 (s. XIII ex.), ff. 181r–v²

Other Translations: None

Significance

Equipping objects with verses was a very common praxis in Byzantium. The corpus of preserved portable objects that have an epigram in Byzantine Greek attached to them is only the tip of the iceberg of what would have been an enormous production.³ Such epigrams offer insights into topics like patronage and the socio-cultural impact of inscribed texts. Epigrams surviving only in manuscripts are detached from the objects they have been written for, but may find parallels with preserved ancient objects.

The following epigrams are accompanied by a letter explaining why they were produced. Epigrams and letters testify to the well-known author–patron relationship in Byzantium: the commissioner wanted to be praised by the verses inscribed, and the author was searching for his favors. The epigrams’ title in the manuscript as well as the verses themselves also offer some ekphrastic details which give some idea about what the depictions or engravings on the cup might have shown.⁴

The Author

See A. Walker, I.3.13 in this volume.

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1 Consulted.

2 Not consulted. This manuscript was used in the *editio princeps* of Balsamon’s epistles by Miller 1884; Horna 1903 also consulted it. Further manuscripts containing Balsamon’s epistles are listed at <http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/> (s. v. Balsamon, Theodore – epistulae).

3 For examples see Rhoby, *BEIÜ* 2.

4 Cf. Galli Calderini 1996: 183.

Text and Context

The three epigrams are transmitted as part of Balsamon's poetry in the *Anthologia Marciana* and bear the long title "On a small golden drinking vessel with depictions of the three goddesses, Aphrodite, Hera, Athena, and Alexander who gives the apple."⁵ They are variants of equal length of an epigram that was commissioned to be inscribed on a golden cup. The lengthy title informs us that the famous scene of the Judgment of Paris (who offered the golden apple to Aphrodite, while Hera and Athena had to come away empty-handed) was depicted on the cup. The second version of the epigram identifies the commissioner with Andronikos Kontostephanos, who was the son of Anna Komnene, second daughter of the emperor John II Komnenos, and Stephen Kontostephanos. Andronikos probably lived between c.1132/33 and c.1195. In 1166/67 he became *Megas Dux* (as mentioned in the epigram's second version),⁶ i.e. commander of the imperial fleet, an office which was dominated by the Kontostephanoi family in the twelfth century.⁷ Since Andronikos Kontostephanos' name is only mentioned once it is perhaps the epigram's second version that he chose to be inscribed on the golden cup. The mention of his name might have served his self-fashioning ambitions⁸ best.

The creation of several versions of verses on the same topic is not without parallel: in Balsamon's epigrammatic oeuvre this also applies for nos. 20A+B, which refer to a depiction of the archangel Michael and have fifteen verses each, and 24A+B, which refer to an icon of Theodore Stratelates and have seventeen verses each. A further example has already been discussed by Henry Maguire: the cod. Athon. Meg. Laur. Ω 126 transmits eight short dedicatory epigrams devoted to a silver bowl that was commissioned by Constantine Dalassenos, the governor of Antioch after 1025. According to Maguire the epigrams were trial pieces, from which the patron was supposed to choose one.⁹ Furthermore, there is another striking example which is the closest to Balsamon's cup series: four anonymous epigrams, also preserved in Sylloge B of the *Anthologia Marciana* (ff. 109v–110r), refer to a (golden) cup, which also had the Virtues depicted.¹⁰ The commissioner of the epigrams in the *AM* seems to have been Eirene Dokeiane Komnene (c.1110–c.1143); she is also attested as the commissioner of other epigrams in the miscellaneous codex.¹¹ A still extant golden beaker on which an epigram of four verses is inscribed is kept in a museum in Skopje (Republic of North Macedonia). It is to be dated to the twelfth century and was commissioned by a certain Adrianos Palteas.¹²

5 On the *Anthologia Marciana* see F. Spingou, I.3.3. in this volume.

6 Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 135 (vol. 2, 249–93); for Anna Komnene see Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 77 (vol. 1, 380–90). Theodore and Manganeios Prodomos have also written epigrams for Anna.

7 A. Kazhdan, *ODB*, s.v. "Megas Doux."

8 On this subject see Greenblatt 2005.

9 Maguire, *Image and Imagination*, 8–9.

10 "Εἰς κωθῶνιον ἔχον εἰκονισμένας τὰς ἀρετὰς." *AM*, B73, Lambros, "Ὁ Μαρκιανὸς κῶδιξ 524" nos. 236–39, p. 153; cf. Spingou, *Words and Artworks*, 134.

11 Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 61 (vol. 1, 301–03).

12 *BEIÜ* 2: Me11.

Theodore Balsamon also mentions his verses for the golden cup in a letter addressed to his patron, the Megas Dux Andronikos Kontostephanos; this letter might have accompanied the delivery of the epigrams.¹³ At its end Balsamon asks his patron Andronikos Kontostephanos for συμπόθεια, i.e. “benevolence.”¹⁴

¹³ Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 43.

¹⁴ Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 43.

Text

A. Εἰς χρυσοῦν κωθώνιον ἔχον ἱστορημένας τρεῖς θεάς, τὴν Ἀφροδίτην, τὴν Ἥραν, τὴν Ἀθήνην, καὶ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον διδοῦντα μῆλον

Ὡς μῆλον ἐκ Πάριδος ἢ Κύπρις, λάβε
 τὸν σφαιροειδῆ χρύσειον τοῦτον σκύφον
 καὶ πίνε¹ κόνδου γνωστικῆς θυμηδίας·
 οὐ γὰρ μυθικοῖς ἀποσεμνύνη λόγοις,
 5 πραγματικῶς δε τὴν προτίμησιν φέρεις
 ἔρωτομανοῦς δίχα τινὸς κακίας.

Εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ

Τὸ σφαιροειδὲς χρύσειον μῆλον τόδε
 πορφυροειδὲς ὠδίνησε κεντρίον²
 καὶ κλάδος ἐσφαίρωσε Κοντοστεφάνων
 κλεινὸς μέγας δούξ, Ἀνδρόνικος τοῦνομα.
 5 λαβοῦσα τοῦτο τοιγαροῦν, Ἀφροδίτη,
 τῷ δόντι σοι δὸς εὐχαριστίας χάριν.

[Εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ]

Σφαίρωμα χρυσοῦν καὶ θεάς χρυσᾶς βλέπων,
 λαβεῖν νομίσαις καὶ ψεκάδας χρυσίου.
 ἀλλ' ἤμβροτες³ ζώνη γὰρ ἐστίν⁴ ἐσχάτη
 Ἀφροδίτην λαχοῦσα σὺν Ὑδροχόῳ.
 5 λάβοις τολοιπὸν ἀπὸ χρυσέου σκύφου
 δίψης παρηγόρημα καὶ χρέους λύσιν.

B. Τῷ μεγάλῳ δουκί

Οὔτε πέπλα βασιλικά αἰγὸς θριξί στημονίζετ⁵ οὔτε κόνδου βασιλικὸν χερσὶν ἀνίπτοις ἀπορρυπαίνεται,⁶ ἵνα μὴ ὁ μὲν ταπεινωθῆ διὰ τὴν εὐτέλειαν, τὸ δὲ ἀχρειωθῆ διὰ τὴν εἰδέχθειαν. ἔπει οὖν καὶ ὁ τῆς ἀντιλήψεως σου σκύφος ἐστὶ τῷ ὄντι βασιλικός, τὸ μὲν διὰ τὴν τῆς ὕλης ποιότητα, τὸ δὲ διὰ τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸν τῶν μελιρρῦτων χειλέων σου οἰκειότητα, μὴ φαυλίσσης τοὺς ῥύπους τῶν κατ' ἐπιτροπῆν⁷ σου γραφέντων στιχιδίων⁸ χάριν αὐτῶν, ἀλλὰ τῇ τῆς καλοκαγαθίας σου μέλιτι τὴν πικρίαν τῆς ἀμαθίας μου καταγλύκανον καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀμουσίας μου δυσειδέστατον τῷ καλάμῳ τῆς συμπαθείας σου καλλιγράφησον.

Translation

A. On a small golden drinking vessel⁹ with depictions of the three goddesses, Aphrodite, Hera, Athena, and Alexander,¹⁰ who gives an apple.

Like the apple which Cypris¹¹ received from Paris,¹² take
 this globular golden jar
 and drink a cup of enlightening joy!
 For, you take no pride in mythical stories,
 5 but carry indeed the exquisite honor¹³
 without any Bacchic vice.¹⁴

On the same

This globular golden apple¹⁵
 was made with a purple chisel/scrapper tool.¹⁶
 And it (the apple) was made globe-like by the branch of Kontostephanos,
 the renowned Megas Doux, named Andronikos.
 5 Receive this benevolently, Aphrodite,
 and give pleasure to the donor.

[On the same]

Upon seeing a golden globe and goddesses in gold
 you might think that you take even grains of gold.
 But you failed. The girdle,¹⁷
 which is apportioned to Aphrodite together with Aquarius,¹⁸ is the last.
 5 You may therefore receive from the golden jar
 the relief of thirst and the end of distress.

B. To the *Megas Dux*

Neither imperial coats are woven using goat's hairs, nor an imperial cup should be stained with unwashed hands, so that he [i.e. the emperor] is not disgraced by the object's inferiority, nor the cup rendered useless because of its ugliness.

Since the jar of your benevolence is indeed also imperial (on the one hand, because of the quality of the material, on the other, thanks to the conformity of your lips, which flow with honey), do not consider the filth of the small verses¹⁹ which were written at your command cheap in their own right, but sweeten the bitterness of my ignorance with the honey of your nobleness, and write beautifully the very ugliness of my rudeness with the reed pen of your sympathy.

Commentary

1. The ms. reads πίνε, which Horna corrected to πῖνε. However, this change is not necessary, since the version with the acute is widely attested, cf. *TLG*.
2. κεντρίον is a rare word with different meanings (cf. *LBG*) and is attested both as κέντριον and κεντρίον (cf. *TLG*).
3. ἤμβροτες is an epic form used by Homer, *Il.* (5.287, 22.279). In Byzantine times, it is mainly attested in scholia and lexica, from which Balsamon might have drawn the word. He also may have chosen it because it serves well the metrical demands of the text: a different form of ἀμαρτάνω would not have applied to the prosodic rules of the dodecasyllable.
4. The ms. reads γάρ ἐστιν, while Horna – unnecessarily – corrected the text γαρ ἐστιν.
5. στημονίζω is a very rare word as well, cf. *LBG*. It is also used in one of Balsamon's letters (no. 3, p. 213, 7 Horna), however, metaphorically in the sense of "to weave" = "to compose."
6. ἀπορρυπαίνω is attested twice: in a fragment of Sophocles (fr. 314, 159) and this letter. Balsamon might have intentionally used this expression by Sophocles who also wrote ἀπορρυπαίνεται, or the word was created in the same linguistical awareness.
7. The term ἐπιτροπή with the meaning of "commission" or "order" is attested only in vernacular Greek, cf. Kriaras.
8. The diminutive of στίχος is a rare word but it is attested in Antiquity, late Antiquity, and Byzantium, cf. *LBG*.
9. Balsamon, in his attempt of a *variatio delectat*, uses three different terms to denote a "cup": κωθώνιον (in the title), σκύφος (in epigrams no. 1 and no. 3 and in the letter), and κόνδυ (in epigram no. 1 and in the letter).
10. The second name of Paris, who was Priam of Troy's son, which was occasionally used more often than the first name; already attested in Homer, *Il.* (3, 16.30.87, etc.).
11. Poetical name of Aphrodite, who was born in the sea and then first went on shore on the island of Kythera before going to Cyprus (Hesiod, *Theogonia*, 176–200).
12. This passage refers to the famous myth of the Judgment of Paris: Paris gave the apple (which was presented by the goddess of discord, Eris, at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis) to Aphrodite, because she had offered him as a reward the most beautiful woman in the world, Helen. The other two candidates, who were eager to receive Eris' apple from Paris, were Hera and Athena – as is also mentioned in the title of the epigram.
13. This implies the addressee's title of *Megas Dux*.
14. The addressee, the *Megas Dux* Andronikos Kontostephanos, of course, surpasses Paris, because he is not driven by the *erotomania* (Bacchic-rave) that had affected the Trojan. Surpassing persons and events from Antiquity is a very common *topos* in Byzantine literature.
15. The form of the cup is compared to Aphrodite's apple.

16. κεντρίον (see also n. 2) is the term for a nail; here it indicates the artistic tool (of purple color) used to engrave the scenes on the cup. *LBG* s.v. κέντριον lists only one attestation with the meaning “Nagel”/“Stift”; this one is to be added.
 17. The famous girdle of Aphrodite (Il. 14, 214–20).
 18. In Eratosthenes’ *Katasterismoi* (Cat. 26) the divine Trojan hero Ganymede, the cup-bearer on Mount Olympus, is identified with the constellation of Ὑδροχόος, Aquarius.
 19. The term στιχίδια (cf. *LBG*) may refer to the short length of the poem. The diminutive may also indicate that the verses are insignificant according to the author’s modest view.
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I.7.8 Giordano da Pisa (c.1260–1311)

Remarks on the Authority of Icons from Greece (1306)

JOHN LANSDOWNE

Ed.: Italian text transcribed in *Prediche inedite del b. Giordano da Rivalto dell'ordine de' predicatori: recitate in Firenze dal 1302 al 1305*, vol. 16, *Collezione di opere inedite o rare dei primi tre secoli della lingua*, ed. E. Narducci (Bologna, 1867), 170–71

MS.: Florence, Private Collection, MS. C, car. 68^v

Other Translations: J. Lubbock, *Storytelling in Christian Art from Giotto to Donatello* (New Haven, Conn. and London, 2006), 8–9; key selections transl. in J. Larner, *Culture and Society in Italy, 1290–1420* (London, 1971), 48; N. Zchomelidse, “The Aura of the Numinous and Its Reproduction: Medieval Paintings of the Savior in Rome and Latium,” in *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 55 (2010), 236–37

Significance

This passage, excerpted from a sermon delivered by Giordano da Pisa, speaks to the authority perceived in Byzantine icons by viewers in late medieval Italy. The author, a Dominican friar, praises “ancient images that come from Greece” as a reliable font of historical information about the saints and self-evident proof of their lives and works. Giordano validates the role of the artist as a primary witness to the events and peoples he sees and represents. The documentary potential of eyewitness authorship was, in the early fourteenth century, still a rather novel concept. Embedded in Giordano’s argument are comments about origins and geography that imply that there is a positive correlation linking the foreignness of an object with its antiquity – and, thereby, its authenticity. This passage illustrates the role of art and myth in reinforcing that assumption.

The Author

Giordano da Pisa (also da Rivalto or Rivoalto) was a Dominican theologian and itinerant preacher active in central Italy and France at the turn of the Trecento.² He is best known for the *reportationes* of his sermons,³ some of the earliest known surviving texts written in

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¹ Not consulted.

² For basic biography and bibliographical summary see Delcorno 2000: 243–51.

³ *Reportationes* are written versions of a spoken sermon, sketched out by members of the audience. Frequently, these loose transcriptions were later clarified and circulated, ostensibly with the preacher’s approval. Giordano left behind no model sermons nor are there any extant writings of any kind made by his own hand: Hanska 2002: 296–99; Blair 2008: 43–45; Corbari 2013: 22–25.

vernacular Italian.⁴ Born c.1260 in the small Tuscan village of Rivalto, Giordano began his novitiate with the Dominicans in 1279. By 1280, he had entered into the Convento di Santa Caterina d'Alessandria in Pisa, an institution with which he would remain affiliated for most of his life.⁵ Giordano studied Theology at the universities of Bologna and Paris and, after several years on the move in Italy, in 1303 became principal lector at the Convento di Santa Maria Novella in Florence, one of the largest friaries in Europe.⁶ He would hold this post for the next three years. Nearly 400 sermons are datable to the Florentine chapter in his career (including those whose excerpts are translated here).⁷ A talented and erudite scholar who knew Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and possibly Arabic,⁸ Giordano was particularly well versed in Scripture and Dominican theology, having memorized entire books of the Bible and Aquinas' *Summa* by heart.⁹ Preaching in the Tuscan dialect, he was known to deliver multiple sermons in a single day, relocating from site to site within the city and building on his chosen themes – a range of topics encompassing both spiritual life and contemporary secular society – as he went.¹⁰ Fra Giordano died in Piacenza on August 19, 1311 en route to taking up a university position in Paris. His body is enshrined beneath the high altar of Santa Caterina in Pisa within a Roman sarcophagus that bears his likeness, re-carved into the surface of the stone.¹¹



Fig. I.7.8 Tomb of Giordano da Pisa [re-carved third-century Roman sarcophagus], c. 1311, High Altar, Convento di Santa Caterina d'Alessandria, Pisa
© J. Lansdowne

4 See Corbari 2013: 25–28; while sermons in the vernacular had become standard by around the thirteenth century, the *reportationes* of those sermons were usually written in Latin.

5 The *Chronica antiqua conventus Sanctae Catharinae de Pisis*, the annals of the monastery, dated to the mid fourteenth century, is the standard primary source on Giordano's life and work.

6 For detailed information on the Dominican community at Santa Maria Novella see Lesnick 1989: 65–85.

7 Much of Giordano's surviving work – a corpus comprising 46 manuscripts, two incunabula, and 726 sermons – remains unedited.

8 Delcorno 2000: 247; Corbari 2013: 43–44.

9 Corbari 2013: 44.

10 See the English transl. of Giordano's sermon in Jansen 2009.

11 Cannon 2013: 103–05. The strigilated sarcophagus dates to the third century CE; Giordano's face appears in the clypeus, with a cross incised at the center of his forehead. For the iconography of "Beato" Giordano see Corbari 2013: 45–47.

Text and Context

The selection included here is derived from the *reportatio* of a sermon delivered by Giordano at the monastic church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6, 1306.¹² Appropriate for the festivities of the day, the subject of this sermon is the Three Magi – who they were, why they came, and the consequences of their journey from the East.

To answer these questions, Giordano constructs a style of argument typical of the so-called *sermo modernus* (“modern” or “popular” sermon), the dominant late medieval mode of preaching. Whereas the old style (*modus antiquus*) required the preacher to explicate the entirety of the day’s liturgical readings, the *sermo modernus* elaborated on a specific *thema*, a single line of text drawn from the Gospel that encapsulated the day’s major topic of discussion.¹³ The *thema* for this sermon is the famous introduction of the Magi in Mt. 2:1–2.¹⁴

Especially favored by the Dominican order, the new style of preaching was built on logic and transparent displays of proof.¹⁵ In setting out to prove his proposition that the Magi were “great men,” the central evidence (*testimonia*) Giordano produces is visual: “the first paintings of them that came out of Greece.”¹⁶ The paintings to which he refers are mythical representations of the Magi supposedly made by Christ’s disciples, copied and distributed over time. What he had in mind, however, were Byzantine icons.

From what can be gathered from the preacher’s tone, the unique documentary value of the *prime dipinture* lay in having been taken *primamente* – “from the source.” This is to say that these specific representations were “true-to-life” portraits, made by living artists working from living models.¹⁷ The Gospels describe Christ’s first disciples as “those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word.”¹⁸ Stories about paintings made of and by these first saints appear in texts dating from as far back as the second century.¹⁹

Nonetheless, the notion that proof might be found in portraiture was still rather new in Florence at the start of the Trecento. The emergence of the concept owes much to the very tales that Giordano describes, of miraculous icons painted in foreign places by

12 This sermon is often dated to 1305 on account of some confusion with the medieval Florentine calendar, in which the year began on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25.

13 Jansen 2009: 123–24.

14 See the Commentary, n. 1.

15 For the *sermo modernus* and its structure see Lesnick 1989: 98–103; see also Connell 2015: 1595–603.

16 This particular section of the text is well known and frequently cited; see Larner 1971: 48; Belting 1990: 22 n. 30; Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 305, 332; Lubbock 2006: 7–10; Zchomelidse 2010: 236–37; Cannon 2013: 63–4, 71.

17 For the shifting discourse on likeness and portraiture before 1300, see Perkinson 2009: 27–84; see also the broader discussion on the authority of the eyewitness and the development of different understandings of the concept of “truth-to-nature” in Parshall 1993; Bugslag 2001.

18 Lk. 1:2, transl. in the New King James Version.

19 For example, see the story of Lycomedes and the portrait of St. John from the *Apocryphal Acts of John* in Elliott 2005: 313–14; see further commentary in Perkinson 2009: 39–41.

artist-saints.²⁰ Most of these stories involve the “Greek” saint Luke the Evangelist.²¹ As Michele Bacci and others have shown, the Lukan legends originated in eleventh-century Byzantium and soon thereafter migrated to Italy. Sure enough, Giordano justifies his choice of evidence by referencing two images apparently well known to his audience: an unknown image of the Crucifixion allegedly painted by Nicodemus;²² and what is probably the *Salus Populi Romani*, an early medieval icon of the Virgin and Child said to have been painted by St. Luke.²³ Unlike *acheiropoieta*, the elite category of sacred images “not made by [human] hands,” the famous paintings Giordano describes were of value precisely on account of having been authored, albeit by the hands of the very first saints.²⁴ These creation myths, which gave credence to eyewitness testimony and the emergent role of the artist, circulated in tandem with the trends toward naturalistic representation characteristic of renaissance Italian art.

Pope Gregory the Great thought of images as “books for the illiterate” and promoted their use in devotional instruction.²⁵ Echoing Gregory, Giordano pushes the analogy even further, asserting that the authority of images as historical documents is “as great as that which one draws from books.”²⁶ This belief has some precedence in Byzantium. A plea in the defence of images written in 836 to the iconoclastic Emperor Theophilus stated that the first disciples had “adorned the holy Church with painted pictures and mosaics ... before they had written the God-inspired Gospels.”²⁷

It is unclear whether Giordano was alluding to specific, known icons of the Magi or if, during the sermon, he utilized actual images as props.²⁸ Regardless, the venerable icons he had in mind were not actually made in first-century Greece. More likely, they were recent acquisitions from eastern Christian territories or more local works that might be interpreted as Greek by virtue of a plausible myth or convincing foreign “look.” “Greece,” so far as it pertained to Giordano’s icons, was less a geographical location than it was a style (*maniera greca*). Style, in turn, had potential to unhinge an object from both its origins and its place in time.

Time was clearly of consequence to Giordano, who emphasized that the paintings under consideration were made in Greece “anticamente.” Christopher Wood and Alexander

20 According to Belting it was a common belief that the Magi, wanting to record the event of the Adoration, brought their own artist along with them on their westward journey: Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 4; Lubbock 2006: 9, 299 n. 31.

21 Zchomelidse 2010: 236; for the legend of St. Luke see Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 47–77; Bacci 1998.

22 The most famous work in Italy attributed to Nicodemus is the *Volto Santo* of Lucca, a wooden statue of Christ crucified wearing a distinctive crown and kingly robes: see Ferrari 2000; on the authenticity of its portrait, Bacci 2003.

23 Icon of the Virgin and Child (*Salus Populi Romani*), seventh century, repainted in around the thirteenth century, Cappella Borghese, Basilica Papale di Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome; see Belting 1994: 312–16.

24 Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 215–24; on the connection between authorship and authenticity see Wood and Nagel 2010: 122–33.

25 See Chazelle 1990: 145–8; Lubbock 2006: 6–7, 9.

26 On the documentary function of images in the early modern period, see Parshall 1993.

27 Quoted in Mango 1986: 176–77; Lubbock 2006: 9.

28 For a fourteenth-century miniature painting of Fra Giordano *in oratio*, see Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, MS Riccardiano 1268, fol. 118r, reproduced in Lesnick 1989.

Nagel have argued that, for Renaissance viewers, the value of the Byzantine icon lay in its “overestimated antiquity.”²⁹ On the one hand, the perceived age of an object might be willfully backdated to match the identity of the artist-saint with whom it had become associated. Thus, the *Salus Populi Romani* icon, purportedly painted by Luke the Evangelist, logically was believed to have been made in the earliest of Christian times. Yet the sheer frequency with which icons brought to Italy were attributed to much earlier points in history is itself evidence to suggest that there was an enduring assumption that foreign objects, particularly those from Byzantium, were, *de facto*, considered to be old.³⁰ This assumption crossed over into the secular antiquarian sphere. For example, in his inventory of the collection of Cardinal Pietro Barbo, the future Pope Paul II (1464–71), the humanist Jacopo Ammanati (1422–79) recorded “images of saints of very old workmanship taken from Greece, which they call icons.”³¹

In the Florence of Fra Giordano da Pisa, the Early Christian past was a foreign country filtered through one of a few choice, markedly familiar and imported foreign styles. Distinct East Christian lands, essentialized into umbrella terms like “Greece” or “the East,” were perceived monolithically, and any painting deemed to have been made in the *maniera greca* was validated on the basis of this reductive system. Fittingly, given the subject of this passage, it was often in representations of the Magi – their costume, their wares, the color of their skin – that medieval and early modern European notions of otherness were most glaringly visualized.³²

²⁹ Wood and Nagel 2010: 96, fig. 10.1, 105–07; see also the classic comparison of competing values in historical monuments in Riegl 1996 (originally pub. 1903).

³⁰ Nagel 2013: 8–14.

³¹ “Generatim autem recensuit haec, ymagines sanctorum operis antiqui ex Graecia allatas, quas illi iconas vocant.” Müntz 1879: 132; see also Cutler 1995: 251; Duits 2009, 160–61; Wood and Nagel 2010: 101, 391 n. 8.

³² These notions are demonstrated in Andrea Mantegna’s dramatic close-up of the *Adoration of the Magi* at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles; see Nagel 2013: 4–14, 30–34. For specific discussion of the ethnicity of the kings see Koerner 2010; Nagel 2013: 25–33. It has been suggested that the exotic costumes of the Magi in various Florentine paintings were modeled from those worn by eastern Christian visitors to the city during the Council of Florence in 1439; see Ševčenko 1955: 291, 312 n. 3b.

Text

Cum natus esset Jesus in Bethleem Iuda, in diebus Herodis regis, ecce Magi ab Oriente venerunt Hierosolymam, dicentes: ubi est qui natus Rex Iudaeorum?¹

In questo giorno si fa memoria in tutto 'l popolo Cristiano di tre grandissime cose, c'addivengono in questo giorno in diversi anni ... Ma la festa tutta e tutto l'ufficio non è, se non pur dell'adorazione de' Magi: è propria di ciò la solennità.² Di questi Magi fanno i santi molte quistioni;³ chè fanno quistione e domandano, che fu quello che gli mosse a venire; fanno quistione chi fuoro questi Magi, e onde fuoro, e che condizione fu la loro, e quanti furono, e in quanto tempo vennero.⁴ Tutte queste quistioni fanno i santi, perocchè 'l Vangelo nol dice; ma perchè 'l Vangelo nol dica, è si truovano altre storie per altri libri, per li quali queste cose si sanno buonamente ... Se domandassi onde questi Magi fuoro, dico che fuoro d'Oriente, avvegnachè Iesusalem è bene appo noi nel levante, ma quelli erano di più oltre verso il levante, d'India, d'Arabia, di quelle contrade. Fanno ancora i santi quistione, che condizione fu la loro. Questo si può comprendere pur per lo nome, che sono detti Magi. Magi è a dire in quella lingua uomini savissimi e filosofi, e in altra lingua è a dire grandi signori di gente o re o grandi baroni. E questo si truova bene per altre storie, che furono e l'uno e l'altro, grandi signori e grandi savii. Avvene ancora un'altra grande testimonia, cioè le prime dipinture che vennero di Grecia di loro: onde le dipinture sono libro de' laici, ed eziandio d'ogne gente;⁴ perocchè le dipinture vennero tutte da' santi primamente: acciocchè se ne potesse avere più compiuta conoscenza, si faceano le figure de' santi prima come erano e nella figura, e nella condizione e nel modo. Onde si truova che Nicodemo dipinse Cristo in croce in una bella tavola, primamente a quella figura e modo che Cristo fu, che chi vedea la tavola, si vedea quasi tutto 'l fatto pienamente, tanto era ben ritratta secondo il modo e la figura; chè Nicodemo fu alla Croce di Cristo, quando vi fu posto e quando ne fu levato: e quella è la tavola onde uscì poi quel bello miracolo, onde si fa la festa del santo Salvatore. Così altresì troviamo che santo Luca dipinse la Donna nostra in su una tavola ritratta, tutto appunto com' era, la quale tavola è oggi in Roma, e serbasi con grande divozione. Faceano i santi quelle dipinture per dare più chiara notizia alle genti del fatto; sicchè queste dipinture, e specialmente l'antiche, che vennero di Grecia anticamente, sono di troppo grande autoritate; perocchè là entro conversaro molti santi che ritrassero le dette cose, e diederne copia al mondo, delle quali si trae autorità grande, siccome si trae di libri. Onde per quelle dipinture che vennero di Grecia sapemo certamente che fuoro grandi signori; perocchè sono dipinti con corone di re in capo; e quindi altresì si può sapere quanti fuoro, che fuoro tre, e così sono dipinti tre insieme. Se dicesse: che mosse questi Magi? Fu grande fede e grande divozione. Fede gli mosse che Cristo fosse nato, e però vennero; divozione gli mosse, chè credettono che non fosse re terreno, ma celestiale ...

Translation

“When Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea during the reign of King Herod, behold to Jerusalem there came Magi from the East saying: ‘Where is he who is born the King of the Jews?’”¹

On this day [January 6], among all Christian people, memory is made of three very grand things that happened on this day in different years ... But the feast as a whole and the whole of the service would not be were it not for the adoration of the Magi: and by that I mean the solemnity.² The holy [fathers] have many questions about these Magi;³ indeed they debate and they ask what it was that drove [the Magi] to come; they wonder who these Magi were, and where they were from, and at what time they came.⁴ All these questions the holy [fathers] have, because the Gospel says nothing. Yet because the Gospel says nothing, and [because] other stories are found in other books, these things are known well about [the Magi] ... If one were to ask where these Magi were from, I say they were from the East. While Jerusalem is fairly near to us in the Levant, [the Magi] were from even further beyond the Levant – from India, from Arabia, from those lands.⁵ The holy [fathers] also debate their rank or status. This one can glean from their name alone: the very fact that they are called “magi.” To speak of the Magi in one tongue is to speak of enlightened men and philosophers; but in another tongue, it is to speak of illustrious gentlemen or kings or grand barons. And one finds this [notion] well attested in the various histories: that they were both the one and the other: great sirs and great sages. Yet there is another important source of evidence – namely, the first paintings of [the Magi] that came from Greece: such paintings are like books for the laymen, and indeed for all people.⁶ For these paintings all issued in first order from the holy [disciples]: so that one could have the most complete knowledge of them, the images of the first saints were depicted as they had been in the first place – and in the [same] shape, and in the [same] condition, and in the [same] style. Hence one finds that Nicodemus painted Christ on the cross in a lovely panel; exactly faithful to that shape and that type that Christ had been, such that he who sees the panel may see almost the entire episode in full – so well was he depicted according to the style and shape [of Christ] – that Nicodemus had been [present] at the cross of Christ, both when [Christ] had been placed there and when he had been lifted from it.⁷ And this is the panel from which came forth that wonderful miracle, that which the feast of the Holy Savior marks. Likewise, we find that St. Luke depicted Our Lady herself in a portrait panel, [with] everything exactly as it was; that panel is today in Rome, and it is retained with great devotion (see fig. I.7).⁸ The [first] saints made [these] paintings so as to grant people the most precise information about what had been done. And so these paintings, especially the very old ones that came from Greece long ago, are of the absolute greatest authority, because therein live many: a saint who portrayed the aforementioned things, and [who] bequeathed a copy of them to the world; from these [paintings] one draws great authority, as great as that which one draws from books. Thus, from those paintings that came from Greece we know for certain that [the Magi] were great men, since they are depicted with the crowns of kings on their heads.⁹ And hence, in addition, one can know how many there were – that there were three – and thus the three are depicted together. If one were to ask: “What drove these Magi?” It was faith and great devotion. Faith drove them [to realize] that Christ had been born, and lo they came! Devotion drove them such that they deemed him a king not of earth, but of heaven ...

Commentary

1. Mt. 2:1–2. This passage serves as the sermon's *thema*.³³
2. Solemnity is the term used to describe the ceremonies and observances celebrated in commemoration of a specific feast day recognized by the Church.
3. The intended meaning of the term “santi” – “saints” – is subtle. Exactly which category of holy figures Giordano is referring to changes over the course of the sermon. In this instance, *santi* means the holy [Fathers], learned men, often bishops, from Early Christian times whose scriptural exegeses and other theological texts were highly influential to writers in the later Middle Ages. Giordano uses the present tense when describing the long-dead holy Fathers because he means to invoke the debates that live on in the comparative reading of their texts.
4. The New Testament gives little information about the three Magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. Most of what is said about them in the later Middle Ages was the product of cult traditions in the Latin West, where the Magi were (and still are) venerated as saints.³⁴ The cult of the Magi has an especially strong following in Florence, where the Compagnia de' Magi, a confraternity taken over by Cosimo de' Medici in the 1430s, was an important cultural force. While the heyday of the Compagnia was in the Quattrocento, its beginnings date to the time of Giordano.³⁵
5. Though Giordano does mention several geographical regions, the exact origin of the Magi is, by definition, non-specific. Derived from the Latin verb *orior* (“to rise”), “Orient” infers generativity and directionality more so than it does a traceable physical location. As Alexander Nagel has suggested, “it is where things come from.”³⁶
6. Giordano echoes the attitude toward images promoted by Pope Gregory I in a letter to Serenus of Marseilles written in July 599: “For a picture is displayed in churches on this account, in order that those who do not know letters may at least read by seeing on the walls what they are unable to read in books.”³⁷
7. It is unclear which specific image of Christ painted by Nicodemus the text is referencing here. There are many extant representations of the *Volto Santo* di Lucca in wall frescoes and manuscript miniatures. Judging from Giordano's description, however, the image is clearly a panel painting of a classic Crucifixion scene.
8. The icon of the *Salus Populi Romani* at Santa Maria Maggiore was only one of several Marian icons in Rome attributed to St. Luke. Though nearly all were produced locally, by the thirteenth century, each had become attached with a malleable legend that re-located its provenance to the Greek East.³⁸

33 The Vulgate version of the text is slightly different from that which appears here, though the meaning is essentially the same: “Cum ergo natus esset Iesus in Bethleem Iudaeae in diebus Herodis regis ecce magi ab oriente venerunt Hierosolymam [2] dicentes ubi est qui natus est rex Iudaeorum . . .”

34 On the cult of the Magi, see Trexler 1997.

35 For the Compagnia and its Medici patronage, see Hatfield 1970; Trexler 1980: 421–52.

36 Nagel 2011: 233–34; see also Nagel 2013: 14–16, Koerner 2010: 11–13.

37 “Icricco enim pictura in ecclesiis adhibetur, ut hi qui litteras nesciunt saltem in parietibus vivendo legant, quae legere in codicibus non valent”; translation and text cited in Chazelle 1990: 139.

38 Bacci 1998: 235–50.

9. Significantly, Giordano's concept of proof is, in the end, founded on physical evidence. In his view, the figures of the Magi represented in the icons served to validate his grandiose statements about them. The icons, meanwhile, were validated by their presumed origin, which was imparted implicitly through their patent "Greek" style. This is to say that the evidence proceeded from formal elements inherent in the icons themselves. Giordano's reliance on eyewitness verification and his assurance that objects as primary sources are further demonstrated in a different sermon, delivered the same day and on a similar *thema*, in which he relates his encounter with the Magi's relics. "And in Cologne are shown the most blessed bodies [of the Magi]. Not meaning the entire bodies, but the heads: three beautiful heads, and they are of the grandest devotion. And, said Fra Giordano, I have seen them."³⁹

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³⁹ "E in Cologna si mostrano quei corpi beatissimi. Non intendete i corpi interi, ma i capi: tre bellissimi capi, e sono di grandissima divozione; e, disse fra Giordano, io gli ho veduti." Italian text in *Prediche inedite del b. Giordano da Rivalto dell'ordine de' predicatori: recitate in Firenze dal 1302 al 1305*, ed. E. Narducci 1867: 183. The Shrine of the Three Kings, now in the cathedral in Cologne, was built by Nicholas de Verdun and completed c.1225; for summary information on the relics, see Trexler 1997: 75.

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I.8 Beauty

Introduction

FOTEINI SPINGOU

The discourse on beauty (κάλλος) was central to Byzantine learned culture.¹ From Late Antiquity to the early eleventh century, discussions about this topic drew upon the Neoplatonic concept of beauty as an intelligible attribute and a transcendent quality. The most influential proponent of this understanding was Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite,² who shaped a Byzantine parallel to Dostoyevsky's famous phrase that "beauty will save the world." For Pseudo-Dionysius, God is beauty; and as such, He bequeathed that to the universe that He had created. Humanity can be saved when it tries to achieve that beauty.³ Yet, in the twelfth century, the idea of beauty as a sensible attribute that bears sensible aesthetic qualities per se develops and overtakes previous views that had emphasized the immateriality of the attribute.⁴ The human body now becomes beautiful, because it is simply beautiful. For example, an anonymous twelfth-century author did not shy away from this idea in a Pseudo-Lucianic dialog⁵ with the telling title *Charidemus or On Beauty*. He writes about beauty in this way:

σχεδὸν δ' ὡς εἶπεῖν πάντων τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις πραγμάτων ὡσπερ κοινὸν παράδειγμα τὸ κάλλος ἐστί, καὶ οὔτε στρατηγοῖς εἰς κάλλος ἡμέληται τὰ στρατεύματα συντάττειν οὔτε ῥήτορσι τοὺς λόγους συντιθέναι οὔτε μὴν γραφεῦσι τὰς εἰκόνας γεγραμένα. . . ὧν γὰρ εἰς χρεῖαν ἤκομεν ἀναγκαίως,

1 A book on the history of beauty in Byzantium remains still to be written. Recent contributions have widened our knowledge on the subject see Hatzaki, *Beauty*; Mariev and Stock 2013; Barber and Papaioannou 2017, with an account of the earlier bibliography on visual aesthetics on p. 247 n. 2.

2 Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite is a late fifth-/early sixth-century Christian neoplatonist author, who adopted the ancient persona of Dionysius the Areopagite; for further details see Corrigan and Harrington 2015.

3 *On the Divine Names*, ch. 4.8.

4 On this point see, e.g., Hatzaki, *Beauty*, 46–48. This is also in line with Kazhdan and Epstein's observations on the increasing interest on naturalism and the ordinary after the eleventh century: Kazhdan and Epstein, *Change*, 206–20.

5 This ancient literary genre came to the main again in the later eleventh century, following its latest peak in late antiquity. Using either/and Lucian and Plato, the intellectuals of the time adopted this mode wishing to pour scorn on their literary opponents, to report their doings should they serve as envoys, or to expound argumentation on pressing issues. Scholarly interested has only recently started to explore this literary form. See the Introduction, p. xlv, and the contributions by F. Spingou, A. Bucossi, E. Cullhed, N. Gaul, and D. Manolova, in Cameron and Gaul 2017. See also Cameron 2016 and Marciniak 2016, both with further bibliography.

Scribes attributed the dialog to Lucian (this also explains why the dialog was first edited among Lucian's works), but such an attribution was doubted even by the text's first editors in the seventeenth century: Anastasi 1971: 9.

οὐκ ἔλλείπομεν οὐδὲν σπουδῆς εἰς ὅσον ἔξεστι κάλλιστα κατασκευάζειν· τῷ τε γὰρ Μενέλεω οὐ τοσοῦτον ἐμέλησε τῆς χρείας τῶν οἴκων, ἢ ὅσον τοὺς εἰσερχομένους ἐκπλήττειν, καὶ διὰ τοῦθ' οὕτω πολυτελεστάτους ἅμα κατεσκεύασε καὶ καλλίστους, καὶ τῆς γνώμης οὐχ ἤμαρτε.

Beauty is, as it were, the universal ideal in nearly every human activity; beauty is considered by generals in arraying their armies, by orators in composing their speeches, and moreover by artists in painting their portraits ... In constructing the things which we have come to find indispensable, we show the greatest zeal for making them as beautiful as possible. For Menelaus [the mythical king of Troy] was not so much concerned with using his palace as with astonishing his visitors; that is why he lavished such wealth on its construction, and made it so beautiful.⁶

For that anonymous author, beauty has always been highly regarded and to prove this he quotes mythological examples and ancient stories throughout the dialog.⁷ In what follows, he even argues that beauty is the highest virtue:

τοσοῦτον δὲ τὸ κάλλος τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων ὑπερέχειν δοκεῖ ὥστε τῶν μὲν ἢ δικαιοσύνης ἢ σοφίας ἢ ἀνδρείας μετεχόντων πολλά τις ἂν εὖροι τιμώμενα μᾶλλον, τῶν δὲ ταύτης τῆς ιδέας κεκοινωνηκότων βέλτιόν ἐστιν εὐρεῖν οὐδέν, ὥσπερ δὴ καὶ τῶν μὴ μετεσχηκότων ἀτιμότερον οὐδέν· μόνους γοῦν τοὺς μὴ καλοὺς ὀνομάζομεν αἰσχροὺς, ὡς οὐδὲν ὄν, εἴ τί τις ἔχων τύχοι πλεονέκτημα τῶν ἄλλων κάλλους ἐστερημένους.

Beauty is thought so superior to everything else that, though one could find many things more honored than those that partake of justice or wisdom or courage, nothing can be found better than the things informed with beauty, just as indeed nothing is held in less honor than the things without beauty. At any rate, it's only those lacking beauty that we call ugly, since we regard any other advantage possessed by a man as nought if he be without beauty.⁸

A response to *Charidemus* was written in c. 1320 by another anonymous author.⁹ This different account of the same subject is in the dialog *Hermodotos or On Beauty* and is indicative of changing ideas and a different hierarchy of qualities among intellectuals. As in *Charidemus*, the narrative in *Hermodotos* is set in an imaginary landscape, and mythological examples are quoted to support the arguments.¹⁰ But the positions proposed

6 *Charidemus or On Beauty*, par. 25, transl. Macleod, p. 499.

7 *Charidemus* in particular is evidently influenced by Isocrates' *Helena*; the sources of *Charidemus* are discussed extensively in the commentary of Anastasi 1971.

8 *Charidemus or On Beauty*, par. 26, transl. Macleod, p. 501.

9 The dialog is attributed in the manuscripts to a certain "John Katrares." Modern scholars have tentatively, but not convincingly, tried to attribute it to the pen of Nikephoros Gregoras; see Schönberger and Schönberger 2010: 9–10, 12; Manolova 2017: 204, with further references.

10 For the sources of *Hermodotos* see the commentary by Schönberger and Schönberger 2010: 91–100.



Fig. I.8 Fresco depicting a woman, twelfth to fifteenth centuries, 37.4 x 27 cm.
 Museum of Fine Arts Boston, inv. no. 51.1620
 © Museum of Fine Arts Boston

are very different. The author of *Charidemus* praised the beauty in the appearance of a person, without being concerned about the character. The author of *Hermodotos* on the other hand argued fiercely that the beauty of the soul is the only true form of beauty. In the 1320s, beauty is the expression of beautiful souls (instead of bodies), and when manifest in other places it can spoil, seduce, and corrupt those who have it or see it.¹¹ The anonymous author thus distances himself from the Homeric idea that goodness in character results in external beauty,¹² finding instead that external beauty does not affect the soul.¹³

The discourse on beauty was not limited to that of the body alone. Aesthetic appreciation was brought to bear on all manner of objects of perception and judgments can be found in all kinds of texts. The vocabulary is often formulaic,¹⁴ but can become as personal as the manner of appreciation permits. In what follows, there is a small sampling of passages that speak of beauty perceived by the faculty of sight. The texts are arranged in four groups according to the different qualities of beauty: a. the built environment (references to cities and buildings), b. nature (references to the natural landscape), c. the human body, and finally, d. art objects. This is not an exhaustive listing of primary sources

¹¹ *Hermodotos*, esp. 532–942.

¹² Hatzaki, *Beauty*, 37–42 has noted that already in the twelfth century a beautiful person can also be evil.

¹³ *Hermodotos*, esp. 1111–1201.

¹⁴ See Hatzaki, *Beauty*, 10–12.

concerning the subject of beauty. In fact, this discourse is arguably relevant to any passage included in this volume. Admittedly absent from this collection of texts are passages referring to human beauty from the *Alexias*, written by the daughter of Emperor Alexios Komnenos, Anna Komnene. Myrto Hatzaki has successfully demonstrated the importance of such references to the work of the Komnenian princess and the other historians.¹⁵ Similarly, the *ekphrasis* by Theodore Hyrtakenos on the Garden of St. Anna, a particularly visual author of the thirteenth century, is a further exquisite source on views of beauty, but is not included here as it was recently translated into English and discussed in detail.¹⁶ Responses to different forms of beauty can be found in the numerous *ekphraseis* included in the twelfth-century *Brief Chronicle* by Constantine Manasses.¹⁷ As these examples suggest, beauty, in all its different forms, was a pervasive concern in the texts of this era.

a. Everyday Beauty (I.8.1–I.8.7 in this volume)

Great appreciation for the built environment is expressed in *ekphraseis* that either stand alone as independent literary genres or are embedded in wider narratives.¹⁸ Ioannis Polemis offers an excerpt from the remarkable description of Constantinople, *Byzantios*, by Theodore Metochites (I.8.1 in this volume). That work influenced his close friend Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos, who embedded an *ekphrasis of Constantinople* in his *Logos* on the Miracles of the Zoodochos Pege, still extant in the Balıklı quarter of modern Istanbul. Alexander Alexakis (I.8.2 in this volume) edits and translates that excerpt from Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos' *Logos*, together with a further two ekphrastic passages: one on Hagia Sophia (with valuable details on its structure and architectural form) and one on the shrine of the Zoodochos Pege itself. The two letters with *ekphraseis* introduce the aesthetic perception of the cities visited by Byzantines. Theodore Laskaris, in I.8.3 in this volume, admires the beauty of the ruins of the ancient city of Pergamon (translated and discussed by Dimiter Angelov). The displeasure felt by Basil Padiadites for the city of Corfu comes as a complete contrast to Laskaris' melancholic appreciation (Foteini Spingou, I.8.4 in this volume). Apokaukos is ready to praise the beauties of the city of Nafpaktos and his episcopal palace notably drawing attention to sound as well as vision (Foteini Spingou, I.8.5 in this volume). A remarkable and most moving *ekphrasis*, presented by Mircea Duluş, offers an evocation of Sicily, a place where cultures met and mixed (I.8.6 in this volume). Finally, the epigrams on the imperial images at the gates of

15 Hatzaki, *Beauty*.

16 See Hyrtakenos, *Ekphrasis of the garden of St. Anna*; for an example of Hyrtakenos writing on aspects of the visual culture see the comparison of the beauty of Michael IX to works of ancient masters, ed. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca*, vol. I, p. 264, 14–266, 6.

17 See the discussion and translation of some of the *ekphraseis* in Nilsson 2005; Nilsson 2006: 25; see also the *Ekphrasis on the Earth*. Cf. Manuel Melissenos, published in Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Vat. 1, ed. Miller II, 267–68, but repub. with corrections in L. Sternbach, “Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte,” *Jahreshefte des Österr. arch. Instituts* 5 (1902), cols. 80–81. For a full discussion of its connection to the *Ekphrasis on the Earth* by Sternbach, as above, cols. 80–83; see also Vasseou-Varava 1994.

18 On *ekphrasis* see I. Nilsson, Introduction, II.2 in this volume.

the provincial city of Medeia show how the man-built environment was manipulated to serve official propaganda (Marina Bazzani, I.8.7 in this volume).

b. Natural Beauty (I.8.8–I.8.13 in this volume)

For the Byzantines, natural beauty was the work of God, and so it was to be admired and preserved. Different reactions to the idea of natural beauty emerge from the texts in this part of the volume. A series of remarkable laws on the protection of views, translated by Daphne Penna, demands access to natural vistas for all citizens (I.8.8 in this volume). Theodore Metochites wrote a most lyrical description of the beauty of earth and heaven, that is translated here for the first time by Ioannis Polemis (I.8.9 in this volume). The excerpt from the “Dialogue of Panagiotes with an Azymite” translated by Vasileios Marinis brings us as close as possible to a popular understanding of the natural environment and how this influenced Byzantine iconography in its last phase (I.8.10 in this volume). An *ekphrasis* from Niketas Eugenianos’ *Drossila and Charikles* re-interprets its Hellenistic model in order to make the garden a symbol of the heroine’s virginity (Elizabeth Jeffreys, I.8.11 in this volume). The *ekphrasis* of a bath-house in an imaginary garden from the romance of *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* presents the ideal relationship between a built and a natural environment (Kirsty Stewart, I.8.12 in this volume). In a poem by Euthymios Malakes, the viewer of an extant bath in a garden is reminded of the transience of earthly possessions (Peter Van Deun, I.8.13 in this volume).

c. Human Beauty (I.8.14–I.8.18 in this volume)

The third part of this chapter is about the idealized human beauty found in literature. The first two texts describe the beauty of imaginary heroes found in literary accounts of palatine settings: brave Digenis Akrites is described in his twelfth-century epic (Elizabeth Jeffreys, I.8.14 in this volume); the astounding Drosilla features in a twelfth-century romance (Elizabeth Jeffreys, I.8.15 in this volume); the beautiful Chrysorrhoe is found in a novel composed in the fourteenth century (Kirsty Stewart, I.8.16 in this volume). The final two texts offer descriptions of the beauty of the reigning emperor as this was rendered in portraits (Elizabeth Jeffreys and Michael Jeffreys, I.8.17 and I.8.18 in this volume).

e. Artistic Beauty (I.8.19–I.8.23 in this volume)

The final part of this chapter is about artistic beauty. An epigram from the pen of Apokaukos reveals what a “torturous thing” it is to render beauty by material means (Foteini Spingou, I.8.19 in this volume). The second text, an exceptional *ekphrasis* written by Philagathos of Cerami, brings forth beauty in the rendering of the emotions in Byzantium (Mircea Duluş, I.8.20 in this volume). A set of epigrams about a lion depicted on a floor mosaic demonstrates the attention paid to and the appreciation of artworks that surrounded the Byzantine viewer (Maria Mavroudi, with additions by Foteini Spingou, I.8.21 in this volume). A letter of Nikephoros Choumnos translated by Alexander Riehle,

(I.8.22 in this volume), is a rare attestation of the Byzantine interest in the beauty of handwriting. The final text, a commentary in Armenian on Canon Tables, translated by James R. Russell and discussed by Christina Maranci (I.8.23 in this volume), reveals the appreciation of manuscript illumination. Most importantly, the Armenian author makes a point about the therapeutic qualities of artistic beauty.

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I.8.1 Theodore Metochites (1270–1332)

Theodore Metochites on Constantinople
(Excerpts from *Byzantios*)

IOANNIS POLEMIS

Ed.: I. Polemis and E. Kaltsogianni, *Theodorus Metochites Orationes*, Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana 2031 (Berlin and Boston, Mass., 2019), p. 447–53

MS.:¹ Vienna, ÖNB, Philologicus Graecus 95 (s. XIV), ff. 238r–v

Other Translations: I. Polemis, *Θεόδωρος Μετοχίτης: Βυζάντιος ἢ περὶ τῆς βασιλίδος μεγαλοπόλεως. Κοσμολογία καὶ ῥητορικὴ κατὰ τὸν ΙΔ΄ αἰῶνα*, Βυζαντινοὶ Συγγραφεῖς (Thessaloniki, [2013]), 165–84 (Modern Greek)

Significance

The text of Metochites offers an idealized description of the capital of the Byzantine empire in the early fourteenth century. Metochites does not give us any details about the monuments, the buildings, or the churches of Constantinople, which are mentioned only vaguely and elusively. What Metochites tries to stress is the universal significance of Constantinople: the city is a reflection of the whole universe, and the capital is the heart of the Roman empire. In spite of its lack of particular details concerning Byzantine art, *Byzantios* is an important testimony to the way Byzantine intellectuals tended to idealize the real world surrounding them, seeing it not exactly as it was, but as it should have been. It is noteworthy that in the passage we translate below Metochites considers the artist as a man who violates nature, following his own laws, in order to create his works.

The Author

Theodore Metochites was born in Constantinople in 1270.² He was the son of George Metochites, a close collaborator of the pro-unionist patriarch John Bekkos. The young Theodore followed his father into exile in Asia Minor around 1283. Despite his personal difficulties, Theodore, clearly being a gifted child, successfully completed the Byzantine *enkyklios paideusis*, i.e. the secondary level of education. The fortunes of the young Theodore took a turn for the better in the year 1291, when he became acquainted with the emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (r.1282–1328). Andronikos, who had come to

¹ Consulted.

² The best introduction to Metochites' life remains that of Ševčenko 1962: 3–50.

Nicaea on an inspection tour of the fortifications of the Byzantine lands of Asia Minor, was impressed by the intellectual qualities of the young Metochites and so he took him to Constantinople. In 1305/6, Metochites was entrusted with the court title of *logothetes tou genikou*. At the same time, he became the closest imperial advisor and collaborator of the emperor. The high point of Metochites' career came in the year 1321 when he became *meGas logothetes*, the equivalent of a modern-day prime minister. However, in the year 1328 his protector, the emperor Andronikos II, was deposed and Metochites was exiled to Didymoteichon; he was permitted to come back to Constantinople only in the year 1330. Then, a ruined man, he took up residence in the Chora monastery, which he had himself rebuilt earlier and where he died in the year 1332.

Metochites was a prolific author.³ He wrote a *paraphrasis* of Aristotle's *Physics*, and of some minor works of the same author, and composed a lengthy introduction to Astronomy on the basis of Theon and Claudius Ptolemaeus, the main part of which remains unpublished.⁴ Two long works in praise of the emperor Andronikos II, a praise of Nicaea, and a praise of Constantinople (*Byzantios*), his two pamphlets against Nikephoros Choumnos, his funeral orations for Theodora, the mother of Andronikos II, and for his friends Joseph the philosopher and Lukas, abbot of the Chora monastery, a comparison of Demosthenes and Aelius Aristides, his most famous protreptic to *paideia*, entitled *Ethikos*, and several hagiographical encomia are some of his prose works. He wrote twenty extensive poems in Homeric verse and he also composed a long collection of short essays, the so-called *Semeioseis gnomikai*, on various subjects.

Text and Context

Byzantios is one of the most extensive prose works by Theodore Metochites and is devoted to a description of Constantinople. It is a rhetorical description (*ekphrasis*) of the capital of the empire;⁵ however, Metochites takes the opportunity to interpret his subject philosophically. Constantinople is depicted as a mirror of the world, as a small world reflecting the movements of the greater world and offering the opportunity to all who visit and see it to be initiated into the mysteries of philosophy. The date of this oration is uncertain. It seems to have been composed before the elevation of Metochites to the dignity of *meGas logothetes* in 1321.

The text follows a tripartite scheme of composition. Metochites describes the relations of Constantinople with its natural environment, with the Roman state, and with God. The passage we translate below comes from the first part of the speech describing Constantinople as the center of the natural elements that surround it. Metochites gives free rein to his literary pathos, composing a complex and highly rhetorical description of the seas surrounding Constantinople (the Black Sea, Bosphorus, and Propontis).

3 A useful list of Metochites' writings is offered by De Vries-Van der Velden 1987: 259–64; her datings are tentative, in some cases at least.

4 Bydén 2003: 35–36.

5 On *ekphrasis* see I. Nilsson, Introduction, II.2 in this volume.

Text

7. Καίτοι τί λέγω; Μάλιστα μὲν ἐκ τούτων τῆς πόλεως ἂν οὕτω, ταύτης τιθεῖ τις τὰ μέσα. Ἡ τί γὰρ οὐ τοῦτο μᾶλλον τῇ πόλει νικᾷ, καὶ τῇ κατ' αὐτὴν ἀστειότητι καὶ εὐκληρίᾳ καὶ ἀρετῇ τῆς ἀττικῆς αὐχμηρίας καὶ ἰσχυρότητος ἢ τῶν ἐν Δελφοῖς πετρῶν; Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ καθορᾶν ἕξεστιν ὡς ἅπαντα περὶ αὐτὴν ὅσα τῆς οἰκουμένης κάλλιστα καὶ μυρίας ταῦτα τῆς φήμης καὶ λόγων ἄξια καὶ πάντων ὀνομαστότερα. Καὶ τὰ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῆς ἐστὶν ἐξ αὐτῆς αὐτίκα καθάπερ ἀπὸ τινος ἀμέλει, κοινοῦ σημείου πρὸς ἕω φέρειν, τὰ δὲ πρὸς δυσμάς, καὶ τὰ μὲν ἔνθεν ἀπ' αὐτῆς αὐτίκα ἐξῆς ὡς ἄρα ἀπὸ τινος κορυφῆς χωρεῖ τῶν Ἑλλήνων τὰ πράγματα, τὰ δὲ ἔνθεν τὰ τῶν ἄλλων γενῶν ἐπώνυμα, καὶ ὅσα πρὸς τὴν Ἑλλάδα διαστέλλεται τῶν καθ' ἕω παραχρῆμα τῆς πόλεως, ἀντίπρωρα ταύτης ἐξ ὑπογυίου καὶ οὐ μακρὰν ἀλλ' ὅσον ἐκ τῶν τῆδε πορθμῶν [f. 244v] στενοτάτων εἶργεσθαι, μὴ συνάπτειν μὲν, ἀλλ' ὡς εἰπεῖν αὐτῆς ὅμως ἔγγιστα καὶ τάχιστα ἠρτῆσθαι, καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐκ τῶν κατ' αὐτὴν θαλαττίων διαλέπτων αὐλῶν, καὶ ὡσπερὶ κοινῶν συνδέσμων τῆς ἀπάσης ἀπανταχοῦ θαλάττης καταρρέοντα μέχρι πρὸς Αἴγυπτον καὶ Λιβύην αὐτῇ πρόσοικον καὶ μὴν πρὸς ἐκάτερα τεμνόμενα λοιπὸν ἔνθεν εἰς ἑῶν τε πέρατα Κιλικίων τε κόλπους καὶ Φοινίκων λιμένας· καὶ αὖθις Γαδείρων ἐς αὐτοῦς ὄρους ἐπὶ θάτερα καὶ τὰς Ὠκεανοῦ διεξόδους τε καὶ πηγὰς, καὶ τὰ γε μὴν ἔτ' αὖθις ἄνωθεν ἐκ θατέρου προσορᾶν εἰς αὐτὴν ἦκοντα τῶν ἐκ Μαιώτιδος ἀρχῶν καὶ πελαγῶν Εὐξείνου, στενούμενά τε καὶ περαίνοντα προδήλως αὐτῇ τῆς τοσαύτης πολυρροίας ἀπλέτου τε καὶ παμμήκους, εἰρηνικὰ προσιοῦσης καὶ κλειομένης ἔπειτ' ἐνθάδε καθάπερ ἐν σωλῆνι τῷ Βοσπόρῳ καὶ δεσμουμένης μικρὸν πρὸ τῆς πόλεως καὶ ταπεινῶ μεταβαλλούσης φρονήματι καὶ σχήματι τῇ πόλει συνάπτειν ἀτεχνῶς ὡσπερ ὑπὸ χεῖρα γιγνομένης δεσπότη, κἀντεῦθεν λοιπὸν ἐξῆς ἔπειτα τὸν ἀδυνάστευτον δρόμον καὶ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἀπολαμβάνουσης αὖθις τὸ κάλλιστόν τε καὶ ἥδιστον θέαμα καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς θαῦμα παντὶ τῷ προσορῶντι, καὶ μόνης αἰσθήσεως, ἀλλ' οὐ λόγου καθιστορεῖν ὅστις ἄρα δυστυχεῖ, μὴ προστυχῶν τοσαύτη, καινότητι πράγματος, σὺν ὥρα τοσαύτη καὶ φύσεως ἀήθει παντάπασιν ἔργῳ, καθάπερ ἀμέλει καὶ ἄνθρωποι χειροποίητα καλλιτεχνήματα πρὸς ἠντιναοῦν δραματουροῦνται χάριν, ἐνίοτε τυραννοῦντες κατὰ τῆς φύσεως καὶ μετατιθέντες αὐτῆς, ὅρια ἢ νοῦς ἀναπλάττει μόνος ἕξουσία τινι καὶ κράτει καθάπαξ ἀνευθύνω δημιουργῶν ἐν ἑαυτῷ κατὰ χώραν ῥᾶστα τὸ προστυχὸν ἢ ζωγράφος, [f. 245] ἀλαζῶν ἴσως καὶ κατὰ τῶν ὄντων ὕβριστῆς ἔτοιμος κατ' αὐτῶν τὴν χεῖρα κινῶν καὶ καινοποιῶν ἔκτοπος καὶ ὡσπερὶ τις αὐτοκράτωρ καὶ δυνάστης τῆς φύσεως καὶ τῶν τῆς φύσεως ἢ μᾶλλον εἰπεῖν αὐτοκράτωρ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ χειρῶν ἑαυτοῦ καὶ χρωμάτων καὶ ὄλως τῆς τέχνης ἐν γράμμασι ποιεῖν καὶ μεταποιεῖν ταχὺς ἀξιῶν ἃ βούλοισι' ἂν καὶ ἃ μὴ πέφυκεν. Οὕτω τεράστια μὲν ἐνταῦθα φύσεως ἔργα, νικᾷ δ' οὐ τῇ καινότητι μᾶλλον θαυμάζειν, ἢ τῇ μετ' αὐτῆς ἠδεσθαι καλλονῇ τοσαύτη καὶ τὰ μέγιστα καὶ φοβερώτατα τῆς πόλεως ἐκατέρωθεν πελάγη ὡσπερ ὀμφαλῶ τινι ταύτη ξυνάπτει, εἰ δὲ μὴ, καθάπερ τις κλεῖς ἢ πόλις ἀμφοῖν ἐν μέσῳ κοινὸς γίγνεται καὶ καθεῖργνυσι καὶ ξυνδεῖ τὰς τοσαύτας εὐρύτητας ἀμφοτέρωθεν ἐπικυζούσας, στενουμένη τὰς ἀορίστους ὡς εἰπεῖν πεδιάδας τοσαύτας τῶν ἐκχύσεων καὶ ἀδοκήτους ἐλεῖν μετ' εἰρήνης ἐς τὸ κομιδῆ βραχύτατον. Εἰκάσαις ἂν ὀρῶν γραμμικὸν αὐχένα λοιπὸν εἶναι τὸ χρῆμα Βοσπόρου καὶ ζυγοῦ τινος μιμεῖσθαι τὴν πόλιν δεσμόν, ἐξ ἑνὸς μὲν τοῦ μέρους τὸν Εὐξείνου ἐξαρτῶσαν τοῦ Βοσπόρου, θατέρου δὲ τὸν Αἰγαῖον αὐτὸν καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ πελάγη τῶν ἐλλησποντειῶν στενῶν καὶ νέμειν οὕτω δῆτ' αὐτὴν ἔχουσιν, ἅπασαν ἰσότητα καὶ γαλήνην καὶ σταθμὸν αὐτοῖς γίγνεσθαι

Translation

7. But what am I saying? It is on the basis of these particular places of the city that one may find the center of this [earth and sea]. Is this not a triumph of the city and of its nobleness, good fortune and virtue, [if we compare it] with the dryness and thinness of the land of Attica¹ and with the rocks of Delphi?² One may see that all the beautiful places of the earth, which are most renowned, important, and celebrated, are to be found around this city. It is possible [to draw a line] from this city as if from a common center [of an imaginary circle] towards the east and another one towards the west; on the other hand, all the affairs of the Greeks and of all the other nations, which are renowned, proceed out of it as if it were their peak.³ Those areas that approach Greece are divided from the areas east of the city. [The areas of the east] are in front of our city, very near and not far away from it, so that they are divided only by that very narrow channel: [f. 244v] they do not touch each other, but they approach the city and almost hang upon it, closely and quickly. These very thin sea-channels,⁴ which resemble some common bonds of the seas⁵ all over the world, rush down towards Egypt and Africa, its neighbor; at this point [these roads] fork towards the eastern limits, the gulf of Cilicia and the ports of Phoenicia, and towards the west, the boundaries of Gadeira⁶ and the outlets and springs of the Ocean.⁷ From the other side one may see [the sea paths] that have Maiotis⁸ and the Black Sea⁹ as their starting point coming down towards the city: they become narrower as they approach the city, being obviously reduced to a small limit from their initial overflow, which was boundless and immense; that flood approaches the city in a peaceful manner, being caught by the Bosphorus as if by a tube; it is put in chains a short distance before reaching the city and it is subordinated, changing both its arrogance and its shape, so as to come near the city like a vassal before his lord; afterwards, it regains its freedom, taking its path again without being constrained [by anybody]. [This is] a most beautiful and pleasant spectacle,¹⁰ really astonishing to all those who look at it. Only vision can appreciate such a spectacle, words are not enough to describe it, if somebody is so unfortunate not to have come across such a strange thing, combined with such beauty and the creative force of nature, which is so unaccustomed. In the same way men create hand-made works of art in a beautiful manner, sometimes resorting to violence against nature and transposing its frontiers. Sometimes [our] mind molds something offhand inside itself easily, using its power and its authority, free from any liability. Or even a boastful painter,¹¹ [f. 245] insulting real things, may turn his hands against them most willingly, inventing novelties in an extraordinary way, acting like an absolute ruler and a lord of nature and of all natural things, or rather like an absolute monarch of himself, of his hands, of his colors, and of his art; he claims to create with his paintings whatever he wishes, even those things that do not exist, and to transform them quickly.

These amazing things of nature [can be seen here]. The sentiment that prevails is not so much the amazement because of their novelty, but the pleasure because of their great beauty. Two of the greatest and most frightening seas are linked together through the city which resembles a knob [in the middle of a shield],¹² or rather the city becomes like a common key between the two, confining and binding together these extensive seas

δικαιοπραγίας εἰς τὴν κοινὴν τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου κατάστασιν καὶ θεωρίαν καὶ τὸν τῆς ὄλης φύσεως τῶν ὄντων διάκοσμον· καὶ τοσοῦτος ὁ πόντος ἄνωθεν ἐπιβρέμων καὶ χαλεπὸς ἐπι-κρεμάμενος καὶ κατιέναι δοκῶν πάντων πραγμάτων ἀήττητός τε καὶ ἄσχετος, ὁ δὲ λοιπὸν ἐνταῦθα θαυμαστῶς ὅπως ξυνέχεται καὶ ταπεινὰ πράττει καὶ τῇ πόλει διὰ τῶν στενοτάτων ὅτι μάλισθ' ὑποκύπτων πρόσεισιν ἐκ τοσαύτης τῆς δυναστείας καὶ τοῦ θράσους ὁμαλῶ καὶ [f. 245v] ἀλύπῳ ρέυματι χειροήθης, πᾶσαν τὴν ὄργην ἀφείς, ἀσπάζεται τε ξὺν ὥρᾳ καὶ περιχεῖται τὴν πόλιν, πᾶσαν σχεδὸν κύκλῳ κάλλιστα περίρρυτον καὶ ζυμπλέκεται μέχρι καὶ εἰς πόδας ὑποπίπτων, οὐ κατὰ πάροδον, ὡς ἂν τις εἴποι, ἀμηγέπη συνάπτων καὶ κοινωνῶν οἱ παρήκοι τῶν αὐτῆς ἐρώτων ἀνεπίστροφος.

Τέως μὲν γε κομιδῇ καταρρέων ὁ Βόσπορος ὀλίγος καὶ παραπλήσιος ἐφ' ἑκάτερα, ἐνταῦθα λοιπὸν ἔπειτὰ γε δοκεῖ τι πλεόν καὶ κολποῦται μεθ' ὅ,τι πλειστής τῇ πόλει χάριτος, χωρῶν καὶ συμπαρατείνων εἴσω, καὶ ὅλον αὐτῇ δίδωσιν ἑαυτόν, λιμένας ταῖς ἀγκάλαις εἰσφέρων τῇ φιλότῃ καὶ δημιουργῶν, τοσοῦτος ἐκκλίνων ἀμέλει καὶ τὸν πρότερον αὐτῇ δίαυλον παρῖεις καὶ προσάγων ἡδύς εἴσω, ὅσον ζύμμετρος εἶναι τῷ τῆς πόλεως μόνῳ μεγέθει καὶ παρισυῖσθαι, περαιτέρω καταμηδὲν ὄτιοῦν καὶ τοῦλάχιστον προχωρεῖν ἀξίων, ἀλλ' ὡς ἀληθῶς ἔοικεν εὖ μάλα καὶ δηλὸς ἐστὶ τῇ πόλει μεθαρμοζόμενος καὶ προσέχων αὐτῇ τὸν νοῦν καὶ ταπεινὸς ἐπιμένων καὶ τοῖς παιδικοῖς σχολάζων, κάλλιστον, οἶμαι, χρῆμα προσορᾶν καὶ ἥδιστον, καὶ οὐκ οἶδ' ὡς εἶ τι ἄλλο τῶν ἀλλή-πῃ θαυμαστῶν καὶ κοσμίων, αὐτὸ τὸ τερπινότατον, παντάπασι κατ' ἀμφοτέρα βραχύς, εὖρος τὲ καὶ μήκος, κολπούμενος μόνῃ τῇ πόλει καὶ ὠθούμενος ἄνωθεν ἀπὸ τοσοῦτου καὶ συνίσχων ἑαυτόν, ὡς ἂν εἴπῃς, ἐκὼν γε εἶναι, πρὸς τοὺς τῆς πόλεως ἔρωτας, ὡς ἄρα κέρδος τιθέμενος, καὶ ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν μέγιστον, πάντα τρόπον, ὡς οἶόν τέ ἐστι, συμπλέκειν αὐτῇ.

Τοῦντεῦθεν δὲ ἤδη πομπεῦει χρώμενος λοιπὸν ἑαυτῷ σὺν ἐλευθερίᾳ καὶ ῥαστώνῃ καὶ κράτει τῆς φύσεως καὶ μέγας μεγαλοπρεπῶς ἀνοίγων ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς τῇ φιλότῃ πόλει θέατρον καὶ κατευρύνων ἑαυτόν, ὡς ἂν μάλιστα καθ' ἡδονὴν εὐσύνοπτα [f. 246] καὶ πελαγίζων ἄλλοτ' ἄλλη καὶ πάντα στρεφόμενος καὶ πᾶς γιγνόμενος καὶ μυρίαν καθιστορῶν ὥσπερ ἐν σκηνῇ τινὶ καὶ δράματι μορφήν τοῖς προθύροις αὐτοῖς τῆς πόλεως. Νησίδια μὲν γε μικρὸν πρὸ τῆς πόλεως ταῦτα συχνὰ καὶ προσάλληλα καὶ πᾶσαν ἀρετὴν ἐπαφρόδιτα καὶ κάλλος θαυμάσιον οἶον, δοκεῖ μὲν πως φιλανθρωπίας ἐρωτικῆς προσεστάναι τῇ πόλει σύμβολα καὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ καταστόλοις ἔγγιστα χρήσιμα καὶ χάριτες καὶ σωτηρίας καὶ παραμυθίας ἐχέγγυα καὶ πάντων ἀνιαρῶν ἀλεξίκακα καὶ τῆς χρείας λιμένες, ἵνα δὴ μὴ κατὰ γῆν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ κατὰ θάλατταν πᾶσα προαυλίων ἡδονὴ τε καὶ ἀστειότης εἴη τῇ πάντα μεγίστῃ καὶ θαυμαστῇ πόλει, καὶ πάντων πάντοθεν ἐπιδημούντων ἢ πανταχοῦ παριόντων ὑποδοχαί τε καὶ καταγῶγια μὴ πρὸς χρείαν μόνην, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσαν ἀβρότητα καὶ καλλονῆς ἐπίδειξιν. Δοκεῖ δ' ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τρόπον γέ τινα λίαν ἐρωτικῶς ἀποτεμῆσθαι καὶ διεσπᾶσθαι τῆς φίλης γῆς καὶ πως ἐγκόλπια συνοικεῖν αὐτῷ καὶ τεθησαυρισθαι, καθάπερ ἐρωτικά τινα δῆγματα ἢ τῆς φιλίας ὑπομνήματα δεδομένα τῶν παιδικῶν, ὥσπερ οἱ ποθοῦντες εἰώθασι διιστάμενοι φέρεσθαι τινὰς ἀλλήλων οὐ μᾶλλον μνήμης ἢ ψυχαγωγίας ἀφορμάς, ἅττ' ἂν ξυλλάχοι σφίσι, ἐξ ὧν συνίσασι χρωμένοις ὅπως οὖν τοῖς φίλοις, καὶ γένοιτ' ἂν αὐτοῖς ἐν καιρῷ τῆς χρείας καὶ σπούδασμα ἐπέραστον κομιδῇ, ζῶνῃ τις ἢ δακτύλιος ἢ καὶ τριχῶν τομῇ

overflowing from both sides; it narrows, so to speak, those boundless flat areas of outflow, that give the impression of being unconquerable, and serenely confines them in a very small area. If you observe the Bosphorus, you will compare it with a narrow linear neck;¹³ the city imitates a yoke that binds two things: the city hangs upon the Bosphorus, the Black Sea on one side and the Aegean sea and the seas next to it, that of the straits of the Hellespont,¹⁴ on the other; [you may imagine] that the city gives to them equality and calmness, being for them a standard of just behavior, contributing to the settled order and the contemplation of the whole world¹⁵ and the adornment of all natural beings. That great [Black] Sea seems to come from above, making a roar,¹⁶ hanging over [the city] threatening her, invincible and ungovernable, but he is caught in an amazing way, being subordinated, and yielding to the city through those very narrow [straits]; although he was formerly so powerful and impudent, he approaches [Constantinople] with a gentle stream [f. 245v] that causes no grief and becomes manageable. It abandons all his wrath and kisses the city in a gracious manner, embracing her almost from all sides, forming a beautiful circle of water around her. He is locked together with the city, going as far as falling on his knees. He does not come into contact with the city cursorily so to speak and taking a share of her passing by, without falling victim to her charms.

At the beginning, the Bosphorus coming down from above is very small and equally [narrow] on both sides,¹⁷ but [as he comes] here, he gives the impression of becoming bigger: he creates a bay in front of the city in a beautiful⁶ manner, penetrating into Constantinople and stretching alongside her; he surrenders himself to the city, and embracing her, he creates havens¹⁸ and offers them to the mistress, embracing her. Being sizeable, he bends out of his regular line, abandoning the road he had formerly taken for the sake of the city. The Bosphorus penetrates Constantinople in a happy manner so as to be commensurate only with the magnitude of the city, becoming equal to her. He does not dare to move further on, even to cover a very short distance. Truly it is evident that Bosphorus adapts himself to the city, paying attention to her. He remains in the city in a humble way, devoting his time to his love. I think that it is a very beautiful and pleasant spectacle [for all] to see. I do not know if there is such a wonderful and well-ordered thing anywhere else. Bosphorus is most pleasant. Both his breadth and length are very small. He takes the shape of a gulf only through the city. He is confined into a small strait, although he was [initially] so big. Bosphorus, so to speak, contains himself willingly because of his love for the city, believing that it is a profit for him to embrace [Constantinople] in every way, and a very great profit indeed in my view.

Thereafter, Bosphorus parades ostentatiously, behaving [in a new manner and enjoying] his freedom, his relaxation and the power of his nature. He [becomes] big and in a magnificent way he creates a theater in front of the eyes of his beloved city, becoming wider, so as to be seen easily in a pleasant manner. [f. 246] He forms small seas here and there; he takes many turns, becoming everything, and he transforms himself, taking all sorts of shapes before the doors of the city itself [like an actor] in the scene of a play. There are

6 I always translate *χάρις* and its cognates as “beauty,” “beautiful,” etc.

καὶ ζημία τῆς κεφαλῆς, κέρδος μέγιστον τῷ λαμβάνοντι ἢ χρῆμα ὅτιοῦν καὶ τῶν τέως, φαυλοτάτων δοκούντων.

Θαυμάζω δ' ἔγωγε νῦν τῶν τὰς Πλαγκτὰς καὶ Κυανέας ἐνταῦθα πέτρας ἐπικτυπούντων τὲ καὶ προσαρρασσόντων καὶ καταμυθευομένων τῆς πόλεως, ποῦ γῆς ἢ [f. 246v] θαλάττης ἐξωρισμένοι, τοσαῦτα κατὰ τῶν ἀξιολογωτάτων καὶ πᾶσι δήλων καὶ μάλιστα περιόπτων διὰ τὸ κλέος ἀναιδεῖς εἰσι καὶ καταψεύδονται καὶ καθάπερ ἀπὸ μηχανῆς τινος τραγικῆς ἀντανιστῶσι τῇ πόλει τοιαυτὰ τινὰ φάσματά τε καὶ δράματα καὶ τοὺς ἀκροωμένους ὡσπερὶ δεδίπτονται, κακοὶ κακῶς τε καὶ ἀμαθῶς παραληροῦντες οὕτω παντάπασιν, οὐ μόνον ἔκτοπα τῆς ἀληθείας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς πόλεως. Ἦς τὰ μὲν ἄνω χαλεπῶς πόρρωθεν ἐξ Ὑπερβοραίων, ἴν' οὕτως εἴποιμι, καὶ τῶν Σκυθικῶν χειμώνων καὶ Μαιώτιδος κατιῶν Εὐξείνους δυσάντητος καὶ αὐθάδης καὶ δυσχερῆς χρῆσθαι καθάπαξ, ἔπειτ' ἐνταῦθα τοῖς τοῦ Βοσπόρου στενοῖς εἴργεται καὶ δουλεῖε θαυμάσιον οἶον τῇ πόλει ξυνάπτων, οὐχ ἑαυτοῦ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάσης ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν θαλάσσης προσηνέστατος καὶ πᾶν ἀμείλικτον καὶ ἀγριωπὸν ἀποθέμενος, ἐπὶ θάτερα δὲ Προποντίς, κατολίγον εὐρυνομένη, κάλλιστόν ἐστι καὶ ἡμερώτατον ἀπάντων θέαμα καὶ φιλανθρωπώτατον ὄραν τε καὶ χρῆσθαι, τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ οἷς ἀναδίδωσιν ἄλλοις ἄλλη συχνοῖς ἐκάστοτε νησιδίοις καὶ καταποικίλλεται τερπνότατα, καθάπερ ταῖς στικταῖς ἐλάφοις ἢ ταῖς παρδάλεσιν, ἠδονὴν φέρει καὶ καλλονὴν τοῖς ὄρωσιν ἢ κατὰ τῆς δορᾶς αὐταῖς σκηνὴ καὶ ὁ κόσμος τῶν βαφῶν, ὡσπερ ἐν λειμῶσι τὰ ἄνθη.

Καὶ τοίνυν ἔξεστιν ἐπ' ἀμφοτέρα μάλιστα πειρᾶσθαι καὶ θαυμάζειν. Ἄν μὲν γὰρ ἐκ τῆς πόλεως εἰς αὐτὴν ὄρᾳς τὴν Προποντίδα ὡσπερ αὐλῆς τινος ἠσκημένης, εὔ κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτικά κεχυμένης, ὄραν δόξαις ἂν, ἔρκος ἢ λειμῶνος τινὸς χάριν εὐσύνοπτα πάντη κύκλω περαίνουσαν, ἠδονὰς τε πάσας καὶ δρόμους καὶ περιόδους καὶ καταπαύσεις ἀπάσης ῥαστώνης καὶ λιμένας ταῖς ὄψεσι προσχεῖν [f. 247] καὶ ἀνακλίσεις ὑφαπλοῦσαν ἔστιν ἄς ἐκ νήσων, ἔστιν ἄς ἐξ ἀντιθέτων ἠπείρων, ἀντικρυς ἀλλήλαις τε καὶ τοῖς σοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς καὶ τῇ πόλει καὶ κάλλη κατὰ γῆς οὐράνια καὶ καθάπερ ἀμέλει κάτοπτρον αὐτὴν οὔσαν, τῆδε τὴν θάλασσαν οὐρανοῦ κάτωθεν ἀπομαπτομένην, ὑποδέχεσθαι, τὴν ἐκείνου μορφήν καὶ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῆς ἐκείθεν αἴγλης ἀστράπτειν τὲ ἐντεῦθεν καὶ ἀνατείνειν καὶ καθιστορεῖν ἐφ' ἑαυτῆς καὶ ἀναδεικνῦναι κατ' ἀντανάκλασιν τὴν ἄνω πανήγυριν τῆς ἀπάσης λαμπρότητος καὶ τῶν ἀστέρων ἔδρας καὶ διαστάσεις καὶ πάντα φαιδρὰ μίμημα γιγνομένην ἀτεχνῶς, αὐτῆς τῆς κατ' οὐρανὸν εὐγενείας καὶ ὥρας, καὶ θέαμα γαληνὸν μὲν καὶ ἄλυπον κατ' ἐκείνον, ἀλλὰ κεκραμένον ὄγκῳ, καὶ ἥδιστον μὲν ὀφθαλμοῖς ὄραν καὶ τερπνότατον, ἀλλὰ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ θάμβος ἐμποιοῦν, ὡς τὸν ἐπόπτην νοῦν εὔ μάλα συνάγειν, αὐτῷ προσέχειν μετὰ τῆς τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἑορτῆς, καὶ ὅλως τὸ χάριεν οὐκ ἔξω θαύματος ἢ μᾶλλον ἀξιώματος πλείστου. Τὸν μὲν γε στίχον τῶν ἀστρῶν καὶ τὸν χορὸν καὶ τὰ μέτρα τῶν σταθμῶν καὶ τὴν εὐρυθμίαν, ἃ δὴ ταῦτα τὴν ἄνω περιοῦσαν ὄψιν ξενίζει προσηνῶς, ὡς ἥδιστα δόξαις ἂν ἀντανισοῦν διὰ πάντων, ἴσως εἰκάζων ταῖς κατ' αὐτὴν δὴ νήσοις, ἃς ἐν μέσῳ σὺν ἀρμονίᾳ κατὰ διαστάσεις ἀνίσχει καὶ σκηνοποιεῖ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς περιουσίᾳ χάριτος.

Καὶ τοῦτο μὲν οὕτω. Ἄταρ εἰ μικρὸν γ' ἐπὶ θάτερα πρὸ τῆς πόλεως αὐθις αὐτῆς ἔξω τῶν τῆς πόλεως ἀσφαλισμάτων, τῶν τοῦ Βοσπόρου λέγω προέλθοις στενῶν καὶ πυλῶν ὡς εἰπεῖν καὶ τοῖς Εὐξείνου θαύμασι δοίης σαυτὸν ἀναγόμενος, θάμβος τὸ πᾶν ἐνταῦθα

many small islands¹⁹ one near the other just a short distance from the city. They are fascinating, filled with every grace. Their beauty is amazing. They give the impression of being symbols of the sentiment of love [of the city], standing in front of it. They are very useful for those ships that come into the city and travel out of it. It is a favor for them, giving a guarantee of their safety and comfort, protecting them from all adverse circumstances. They function as ports in their hour of need, as such that great and marvelous city may possess all sorts of pleasant and beautiful things not only in land but at sea as well, in front of its doors, and all those who come into the city from all places or travel out of it to all destinations [may find] a welcome and a resting-place, which [will not only cover] their needs but [will offer them] all sorts of luxuries and a display of beauty. One has the impression that [Bosporus] has detached and torn off [those islands] from the land he loves because of his love for the city; those islands are kept in Bosporus' bosom like treasures and live with him; they resemble some pieces cut by the lover with his teeth, or with some gifts given to him as a reminiscence of his love; the lovers are accustomed to exchange as gifts whatever they happen to possess at the time of their separation, not so much in order to keep their memories but in order to find some comfort [from those objects], which they know were used in a certain manner by those they love. At the time of their need those objects may become a beloved occupation for them; I refer to a girdle, or to a ring or to a lock of hair, which means damage for the head of their lover, but a great profit for the one who gets it, even though it is something entirely trivial.²⁰

Now I am wondering to which place of the earth or [f. 246v] the sea those who invent the tales about the Dark-rocks²¹ and the Wanderings rocks, attaching them to our city and noisily dashing them against it, have been banished. They are impudent and say all sorts of lies about those most important things which are evident and conspicuous because of their glory. As if through a theatrical device they create those imaginary,²² dramatic things in our city and scare those who listen to them, talking absolute nonsense, being so bad and ignorant; these [tales] are not only far from the truth, but from our city as well. From high up, the places of the Hyperboreans,²³ the area of the Scythian winters and lake Maiotis, in a frightful way the Black Sea comes down, hard to withstand, stubborn and hard to cope with in any way, but later on he is imprisoned in the straits of Bosporus and becomes a slave of our city in a marvelous way, attaching himself to it. He becomes calmer than before and even smoother than all other seas so to speak, abandoning all roughness and fierceness. From the other side of the city Propontis, which gradually widens, is a most beautiful spectacle, more humane than everything to look at and enjoy; this is due to many other reasons and to the numerous small islands that spring forth here and there; thus its decoration is diversified in a gracious manner; it resembles the skin of fallow deer²⁴ or leopards which, resembling a scene decorated with various colors like the flowers in the meadows, brings joy and gives beauty to those who behold them. So there is a possibility of having an experience [of that] from both sides and admiring it. If you look at Propontis from the city, you may get the impression that it is the well-made fence of a yard or of a meadow, which [appears] very broad to our eyes, because it creates a limit like a circle which can be easily seen; Propontis spreads various roads, passages, and resting

καὶ δέος καὶ χρῆμα τι τοῦτ' ἔνταῦθα, ἀμίμητον, ἢ μᾶλλον εἰπεῖν, ἀμύθητον [f. 247v] καὶ ἀπέραντον, ὡς ὄρω χρῆσθαι καὶ τελευτᾶν ὀπηροῦν καὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐπὶ λιμένος ἰστᾶν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι περιόντα διὰ τῆς ἐποπτείας εἰρήνην ἄγειν καὶ καταπαύειν ἀμηγέπη καὶ τυγχάνειν φιλανθρωπίας, πάντη χρώμενον καὶ στρεφόμενον, ἀλλὰ τὸ ξύμπαν ἄγριον καὶ κατάπληξιν εἶναι καὶ σεισμόν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀπαντᾶν καὶ τὸν νοῦν οὐκ ἔστι λοιπὸν, οἶμαι, ῥᾶστα χωρεῖν, ἀλλὰ πολὺς ἴλιγγος καὶ πάντοθεν ζάλη καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ βουλῆς καὶ εὐλαβείας ἀνάγκη καὶ πόθος ἀναχωρεῖν. Καὶ τίς ἂν λόγος ἐφίκοιτο, ὡς οὐδὲν μᾶλλον οὐδέσιν ἀκίνδυνα τάνθάδε τοῖς χρωμένοις πᾶσιν, οὐδ' ὥστε καὶ περιγενέσθαι καὶ τοῦ σκοποῦ καθάπαξ ἀδεῶς τυχεῖν, οὐ τοῖς πλέουσιν· οὐ τοῖς ἐφορῶσιν, οὐ τοῖς καθιστοροῦσιν ἐν λόγοις;

areas, which are very pleasant and offer a relief, ports, which are revealed to the eyes, [f. 247] places like benches, created by the islands and the continents, which lie opposite one another, under your own eyes and the city, and heavenly beauties, that are found on this earth. The sea of Propontis looks like a mirror of the sky: it reflects the image of heaven, receiving a part of its glamor; from that [the sea] reflects the light of heaven and exhibits on its own surface the feast of the upper [sky] which is full of brightness, the places of the stars, their intervals, and all other beautiful things. [The sea] becomes an imitation of the nobility and beauty of the sky: resembling [the sky], [that sea] is a calm spectacle, which causes no pain; however, it is combined with magnificence; it is both delightful and pleasant for the eyes, but at the same time it generates awe, which pulls together our inspecting mind in order to contemplate it during the feast of the eyes.²⁵ Beauty is not deprived of a certain wonder, or rather of great dignity. Making a comparison, you may get the impression that the sea, in rivalry to the line and the dance of the stars, their distances and their orderly movement, which entertain our eyes that look high up in a mild way, sets up the islands that rise up in its midst in a harmonious manner at certain intervals, making a beautiful theatrical display for the sake of our eyes.

This is so. But if you depart a short distance from the city, coming out of its fortresses from both sides, I mean the straits and gates of Bosphorus, so to speak, and you surrender yourself to the wonderful things of Bosphorus, as you put out to sea, everything is full of wonder, full of awe, and the whole thing is inimitable, or rather ineffable [f. 247v] and boundless; we cannot discover their limit in order to find rest and a safe haven for our eyes. It is not possible for a beholder who wanders inspecting [everything] to find peace, to stop somewhere and to comfort himself, because he examines and is engaged with everything round about; there is fierceness everywhere, creating great amazement and an earthquake in one's eyes. In my view, our mind cannot proceed forward easily, but rather becomes dizzy, and is wholly bewildered. There is need for prudence, deliberation, and caution as well as a wish to detach [one's attention from these]. What discourse can possibly describe [this]? There is no way for all those who are involved, whether those who travel on the sea, or those who look at the spectacle or those who describe them in discourse to avoid the danger, so as to win [the contest] and reach their goal without any fear at all.

Commentary

1. A traditional adjective applied to the land of Attica already by Thucydides, *Wars*, I, 2.
2. Cf. Libanius, *In Praise of Antioch*, 15.
3. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panathenaic Oration* 197.10, ed. Dindorf I, 320; see also Himerius, *Oration* 62.23–26, ed. Colonna 225.
4. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *The Isthmian Oration: Regarding Poseidon*, 21, ed. Keil 369.1.
5. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos*, 7, ed. Keil 126.12–13.
6. Modern Cadiz, an ancient Phoenician settlement near Gibraltar.
7. Hesiod, *Theogony*, 282.
8. The Sea of Azov, joined to the Black Sea by the straits of Kerch.
9. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos*, 6, ed. Keil 126.24–25.
10. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *The Isthmian Oration: Regarding Poseidon*, 17, ed. Keil 367.1–3 and *ibid.*, 21, ed. Keil 368.17–369.4.
11. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *On the Incidental Remark*, 89, ed. Keil 170.12–13.
12. Cf. n. 5.⁷
13. Herodotus, *Persian Wars*, 4.118.
14. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos*, 6, ed. Keil 126, 12–13; see also Himerius, *Oration* 62, 26–29, ed. Colonna 225.
15. The same sentence is to be found in a text of Origenes in which Chrysippus' Stoic theory is echoed.⁸
16. Cf. Hesiod, *Works and Days* 677.
17. Cf. Himerius, *Oration* 62, 26–29, ed. Colonna 225.
18. Cf. Menander, *Regarding Epideictic Orations* I, 351, 22–23, eds. Russell and Wilson 42.⁹
19. Reference to the Prince Islands.
20. Cf. Plato, *Phaedo* 73d.
21. Cf. Himerius, *Oration* 62, 30–31, ed. Colonna 225.
22. Cf. Metochites, *Poem* 15, 101–02 = Polemis 263.
23. Legendary nation living in the far north. According to the Greek poets (e.g. Pindar), they worshipped Apollo.
24. Aelius, Aristides, *Regarding the Aegean Sea*, 13, ed. Keil 350, 16.
25. Cf. Polemis 2002: 45* n. 87.

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7 See also Menander the Rhetor, *Regarding Epideictic Orations* I.349.9–11, ed. Russell and Wilson, 38; see also Pernot 1993: 205. Cf. Fenster 1968: 40; Rhoby 2012: 92 and n. 90, with further bibliography.

8 Fragm. 989, ed. I. ab Armin, 289, 39.

9 See also Pernot 1993: 193–94. Cf. Saradi 2012: 27; Saradi 2006: 55–57; about Aelius Aristides see Yatromanolakis 2004: 278–82.

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I.8.2

Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos
(before 1256?–c.1335?)

Ekphraseis of Constantinople, Hagia Sophia, and the
Shrine of Pege

ALEXANDER ALEXAKIS

Ed.: Alexander Alexakis. Under preparation based on the manuscripts listed below; previous edition: A. Pamperis, *Λόγος διαλαμβάνων τὰ περὶ τῆς συστάσεως τοῦ σεβασμίου οἴκου τῆς ὑπεραγίας Δεσποίνης ἡμῶν Θεοτόκου τῆς ἀειζώου πηγῆς· ἔτι δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ τελεσθέντων ὑπερφυῶς θαυμάτων κατὰ μέρος διήγησιν, ἀφ' οὔ συνέστη μέχρι τῆς σήμερον, συγγραφεῖς παρὰ Νικηφόρου Καλλίστου τοῦ Ξανθοπούλου* (Leipzig, 1802). It is based either on a so far unknown manuscript or on a tacit combination of readings from both B and W; on account of its numerous misprints and misreadings it will be ignored

- MSS.:**¹
- A** Athens, EBE, Graecus 2123 (s. XVIII), ff. 165r–228v
 - B** Bucharest, Bibliothecae Academiae Romanae, 0181 (Litzica 632, a. 1707), ff. 102r–162v
 - V** Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 698 (olim 630) (s. XIV/XV), ff. 156r–200v
 - W** Vienna, ÖNB, Historicus gr. 103 (s. XIV), ff. 17r–144v
 - W1** Vienna, ÖNB, Historicus gr. 8 (a. 1320), ff. 426r–428v

Other Translations: None

Significance

These three *ekphraseis* constitute a small *dossier* that reflects the literary and visual predilections of the early fourteenth-century Constantinopolitan intellectual elite. The first is characteristic in its conciseness and creative reliance on much earlier sources that deal with Constantinople as an object of aesthetic appreciation. The same can also be said for the other two *ekphraseis*, with the added benefit that the last one provides some architectural details on the Shrine of Pege, unknown from other sources.

The Author

Xanthopoulos was an ecclesiastical writer and priest at the cathedral of Hagia Sophia; he thus had access to the patriarchal library and the library of Hagia Sophia.² His primary

¹ Consulted in digital form.

² See Xanthopoulos, *Ecclesiastical History*, PG 145: 609C.

work was the enormous *Ecclesiastical History*, of which eighteen books survive, covering the period from the time of Christ to the year 610. For the earlier period, he utilized the Ecclesiastical histories of Eusebius, Socrates Scholasticus, Sozomenus, Theodoret of Cyrrihus, and Evagrius. Five additional books, which extended the history to the year 911, are not preserved or were not written, although a list of their contents is included in the textual corpus of the work.³ He also wrote theological commentaries, epigrams, and a number of hagiographies, among which was the revision of an earlier *Life of Euphrosyne the Younger*.⁴

He was intensely devoted to the healing shrine of the Lifegiving Source (Zoodochos Pege) and compiled a lengthy collection of the miraculous cures performed there. The majority of this account, composed before his *Ecclesiastical History*,⁵ is a rewriting of a tenth-century anonymous miracle collection,⁶ providing much additional information on the patients who were cured, the symptoms of their afflictions, and the method of their healing. The final section of his account describes the miracles that occurred during part of the reign of Andronikos II (r.1282–1328), after the revival of the shrine following the recovery of Constantinople by the Byzantines in 1261. This provides fascinating information on pilgrims to the shrine in the Palaiologan period and illustrates Xanthopoulos' intense interest in medicine and the aetiology of disease.

The three *ekphraseis* come near the beginning of his treatise; the most important is that on the church of the Pege, a church originally built under Justinian and restored by subsequent emperors. It was destroyed in the Ottoman period, so this text is our only evidence for its appearance. Miracle 11, on the miraculous rescue of construction workers during the reign of Basil the Macedonian (r.867–86), is an elaboration of the original account of the anonymous tenth-century compiler (see I.2.4).

3 The text is preserved by MS Vienna, ÖNB, *Historicus Graecus* 8, perhaps the presentation copy offered to Emperor Andronikos II by Nikephoros himself, and is published in PG 145: 557–1332; PG 146: 9–1274, PG 147: 9–448. For more see Karpozilos 2015: 99–120; for the last (not preserved or never written?) books see *ibid.*, 100.

4 For this particular work (*BHG* 627) see AASS Nov. III: 861–77; some other works of Xanthopoulos are also in PG 147: 449–633.

5 It is evidenced by a reference in it: see PG 147: 77B.

6 Edition and transl. with comments into English in Talbot, *Anonymous Miracles of the Pege*.

Text A | *Ekphrasis* of Constantinople

Significance

This is a very concise *ekphrasis* of Constantinople that focuses on its privileged status both in material and spiritual terms. It is deeply rooted in the rhetorical tradition of Atticism that draws extensively on the work of Aelius Aristides and by extension on Isocrates.⁷ In terms of style it seems to have been written in order to cater to the literary aesthetics of a circle of “Byzantine intellectuals, who combined a love of classical learning with a deep Christian faith and moved easily between their libraries of ancient authors and the medieval world of monks and miraculous healings.”⁸ This *ekphrasis* also revolves around a number of topics that were the subject matter of discussions among the members of the intellectual elite in Constantinople of the early fourteenth century. In fact, these discussions did also result, among many, in another much more extensive work which expands and elaborates on these very topics with infinitely wider implications and far-reaching philosophical and existential considerations, that is, the *Byzantios* (*Βυζάντιος ἡ περὶ τῆς βασιλίδος μεγαλοπόλεως*) written between 1305 and 1311/12⁹ by Theodoros Metochites,¹⁰ a close friend of Xanthopoulos. Establishing priority between these two works is rather unsafe, but if the *terminus ante* for *Byzantios* is 1312 and for Xanthopoulos’ *Logos* 1320, then it might have been Xanthopoulos who knew and utilized *Byzantios*,¹¹ as he also did with an earlier work of Metochites, that is, the *Nikaeus*.¹² Moreover, if the contents of two letters by Xanthopoulos addressed to Metochites are to be trusted,¹³ one might assume that Xanthopoulos wrote this brief *ekphrasis* for the additional purpose of demonstrating to Metochites what exactly he meant by criticizing him for “obscurity of style” and “unpolished phrasing.” This possible criticism notwithstanding, Xanthopoulos, like Metochites, drew on the *Panathenaic Oration* of Aelius Aristides and so ends up sharing with Metochites a vision of Constantinople as “Athens’ medieval duplicate.”¹⁴

Text and Context

Between 1308 and 1320¹⁵ Xanthopoulos composed at the behest of a monk, called Makarios, a very lengthy sermon (henceforth: *Logos*, in lieu of the title used as the heading of the present chapter) which, after the expected rhetorical introduction that indulged in one or another way the particularities of the *modesty topos*, proceeded with three *ekphraseis*: one of Constantinople itself as the wider *locus* of the subject matter of his narrative, one of the

7 For a more detailed approach to the early development of the *ekphraseis* and the *encomia* of cities and the relevant literature see ch. 2 in Saradi 2006: 49–68.

8 Talbot 2002: 615.

9 See the relevant discussion in Rhoby 2012: 84 and n. 26; Polemis (2013: 22) suggests a wider daterange (1305–20) but Rhoby’s arguments are convincing. See also I. Polemis, I.8.1 in this volume.

10 Transl. excerpts from *Byzantios* are included in this volume.

11 That Metochites had provided Xanthopoulos with many of his works, the *Byzantios* included, which (as Metochites put it) had met with the approval of the Church historian, can be deduced from verses 183ff. of poem 12: “Such are the works, which I have composed. Upon seeing them, you [i.e. Xanthopoulos] have always praised each one of them ...” see Cunningham *et al.* 1983: 114, Greek text, *ibid.*, 108.

12 See the Commentary, v. 10.

13 Featherstone 1998: 20–21; text of the letters *ibid.*, 22–23, 25–27; transl. into English *ibid.*, 27–28, 30–31.

14 See Saradi 2012: 30 and n. 104 for further bibliography.

15 Talbot 2002: 609 and n. 25; 615 n. 52.

church of Hagia Sophia as the religious monument of Christianity *par excellence*,¹⁶ and the third of the church of Pege proper. To these three *ekphraseis* he appended sixty-three miracles that were performed at the shrine of Pege or were related to it. The first forty-five constitute a rhetorical elaboration (paraphrase) and, usually, a modest expansion on the respective miracle narratives included in the above-mentioned tenth-century anonymous collection. Miracle number 46 dates from the reign of Isaac II Angelos (r.1185–95), while the last 17 occurred while the author was active. The author was either an eyewitness to these last ones or obtained information about them from third parties. He also saw representations of a few of these miracles in frescoes in the church of Pege.¹⁷ Another reason for the composition of this sermon, apart from the request of Makarios, might have been the renewal of the cult of the Virgin Mary at Pege and the reactivation of the healing powers of the water and the mud of the fountain at that shrine after the demise of emperor Michael VIII in whose reign (r.1261–82), as in the period of the Latin occupation of Constantinople (1204–61), the Source had lain dormant.¹⁸

In stylistic terms, the first *ekphrasis*, which is based almost line by line on the precepts of Menander's *Division of Epideictic Speeches*,¹⁹ is of significant rhetorical beauty, elevated in style, and at times elaborate, but in a measured way, with a plethora of figures of speech (rhetorical questions, hyperbata, alliterations, etymological figures) and some attempt at compactness and concision. Xanthopoulos does not shy from quoting a rather common Homeric phrase. He also cites from the works of Gregory of Nazianzos and the romance *Leukippe and Kleitophon* of Achilleas Tatius. Still, the greater influence in terms of vocabulary, phraseology, ideas and, perhaps, in the overall layout of the whole Pege collection,²⁰ is the *Panathenaic Oration* of the second century CE orator Aelius Aristides (117–181). In fact, the entire *ekphrasis* is a compilation of (usually paraphrased) bits and pieces from the first paragraphs of the *Panathenaic Oration*.²¹ In this respect, the *Logos* may be considered a typical example of Byzantine Atticism in the vein of Isocrates who, together with Plato and Demosthenes, was the model for Aristides.²² Careful, but not exhaustive examination of the parallels may show the dependence of Xanthopoulos on Aristides in examples such as the following ones:

A(ristid.), ed. Dindorf (Jebb), p. 96.1–3: πρώτη πρὸς ἥλιον ἀνίσχοντα, προμήκης εἰς τὸ πέλαγος, . . .

X(anthopoulos): Τέτραπται μὲν γὰρ εὐθύς πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα ἥλιον, προσσπαντῶσα δῆθεν αὐτῷ, καὶ προμήκης ἐξ ἠπείρου προθέει τῷ πελάγει συμμιγνυμένη . . .

16 An arrangement of material already present in the *Encomion to Andronikos II Palaiologos* by Nicholas Lampenos written before March of 1303; Polemis 1992: 6–8 and for the text, *ibid.*, 31–35.

17 For more see Efthymiadis 2006: 300–01; Talbot 2002: 609–10.

18 Talbot 2002: 609.

19 Xanthopoulos follows the instructions of the first Treatise and combines elements from the chapters on “How to praise a country,” “How to praise a city,” “How to praise harbors,” and very briefly from the chapter on “How to praise cities for accomplishments” see Russell and Wilson, 1981: 28–44, 60–62.

20 All these topics are treated in the Introduction to my forthcoming edition; here I give a summary of a few points.

21 Mainly from pars. 8–24 of the edition of Oliver: 1968: 152–54.

22 Oliver 1968: 19.

A, ed. Dindorf (Jebb), p. 96.11–17: ... παντοδαπούς δὲ ὄρμους καὶ λιμένας παρεχομένη κύκλω περὶ πᾶσαν ἑαυτήν, ἔτι δὲ ἀκτὰς ἄλλας κατ’ ἄλλα μέρη τῆς τε θαλάττης καὶ ἑαυτῆς, καὶ πορθμούς πρὸς τὰς ἐπικειμένας νήσους οὐ πλέον διαλείποντας ἢ ὅσον αἱ νῆσοι πρὸς ἀλλήλας· ὥστε καὶ παραπλεῖν καὶ περιπλεῖν καὶ περὶ πλεῖν καὶ ἔτι πελαγίους εἶναι διὰ τῆς Ἀττικῆς ...

X: ... Λιμένας τε καὶ ἀκτὰς ἐπὶ κύκλω πᾶσαν ἑαυτήν περιβάλλει ἐν ἀφθόνῳ δὴ τῇ θαλάττῃ κειμένη, ὡς ἐπίσης εἶναι δόξα καὶ νῆσον καὶ ἡπειρον· νῆσοι δὲ αὐτὴν ὑπεξίστανται, ...

A, ed. Dindorf (Jebb), p. 99.20–22: Ἄλλα μὴν τόν γε ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς ἀέρα καὶ τὴν τῶν ὠρῶν κρᾶσιν οὕτω σύμμετρον εἴληχεν ὥστε εἰ τῷ λόγῳ μετρίως εἰπεῖν ἦν, εὐκτόν ἄν ἦν.

A, ed. Dindorf (Jebb), p. 100.18–20: ... οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ὅστις τῶν περὶ γῆν ἀέρων τοσοῦτον ἀφέστηκε γῆς τῇ φύσει οὐδ’ αἰθέρι μᾶλλον εἰκασταί.

X: ... Οὕτω δ’ ἔλαχεν ἀέρος ἐν καλῷ κείσθαι, καὶ τοσαύτην ἔστι σύμμετρίαν τῷ ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς ἀέρι ταύτης εὐρεῖν, ὡς κεκρᾶσθαι μὲν ἄριστα, ἐμπνεῖσθαι δὲ ἡδιστα, καὶ τῶν περὶ γῆν ἀέρων τοσοῦτον ὑπερτερεῖ, ὡς ἀφέστηκε γῆς τῇ φύσει τῷ γε μὴν αἰθέρι μὴ παντάπασιν εἰοικέναι, καὶ τοῦ πολλοῦ τοσοῦτόν ἐστιν ἐξαιρέτος ὑπερέχων, ὡς ἐπικεικῶς συμβαίνει τούτου πάντας ἠτᾶσθαι.

Key words and shorter phrases from the entire *Panathenaic Oration* are also found in this brief *ekphrasis*. These terms express ideas shared by both (albeit in a different context: pagan, middle-Platonic in Aristides, Christian in Xanthopoulos), such as the concept expressed by the words κάλλος καὶ μέγεθος (translated by Oliver as “beauty and growth”) that forms the backbone of a major section of the *Panathenaic Oration* and becomes the point of contention between Constantinople and the heavens in the present *ekphrasis*,²³ or the charged phrase *καθηγεμόνι σοφίας ἀπάσης καὶ τέχνης* of Xanthopoulos that is a variation on the *ἡγεμόνες παιδείας καὶ σοφίας ἀπάσης γιγνόμενοι* of Aristides.²⁴ The passage of the *Panathenaic Oration* from which I culled the previous phrase may be highly relevant to the way Xanthopoulos envisioned the entire collection and added his *ekphraseis* to it and, I think, elucidates the wider plan of the Byzantine author. Here is its translation:

230. Formerly you used to save those of the Hellenes who took refuge with you. Now it is actually all men and all races whom with the fairest of benefactions you sustain, making yourselves leaders in all education and wisdom and purifying all men everywhere. For because of the initiation of the Eleusinian festival you have by the visiting pilgrims been called expounders of the sacred rites and introducers to mysteries, while throughout all time to all men you have stood as teachers and expounders

23 Second half of the *Panathenaic Oration*, section D, pars. 142–271, Oliver 1968: 21; the phrase is found *ibid.* 174 (par. 144).

24 Oliver 1968: 187 (par. 230).

of the sacred contributions for the common benefit. In return for these things you attract all with the incantations which become you, moving them not with a spell, but with the finest of enchantments, Discourse (Λόγος), precisely the gift which the gods gave to man alone, and which is worth all the other gifts.²⁵

These words are addressed to the Athenians, who still, according to Aristides, hold the power of *Logos* in order to continue saving humanity. Xanthopoulos equates Constantinople to Athens by granting it the status of the “Home of *Logoi*” and connecting it as such with piety and the presence in the city of holy temples and other splendid buildings.²⁶ What for Aristides was the salvific operation of the initiation (through *Logos*) into the Eleusinian mysteries in Athens, now becomes the presence of the grace of the Theotokos, as the mother of Λόγος, in Constantinople and more specifically at the shrine of Pege for the salvation of ailing humanity. And just as Aristides describes how the Athenians (as citizens of the city which was “first . . . in the forms of Discourse [Λόγος]”²⁷) protected Hellenism by their military exploits, an account that covers a significant segment of his *Panathenaic Oration* (pars. 77–138 and 149–271), and are understood as “the *Logos* fully visible,”²⁸ in the same way the Theotokos, the mother of God the Word (Λόγος), protects humanity through her miraculous exploits.

I do not know if the implicit association of Eleusis to Pege in the mind of Xanthopoulos was based on the understanding that each shrine was considered *extra muros* for Athens and Constantinople, respectively. However, if my assumption is correct this might be another indication of the programmatic dependence of the *Logos* of Xanthopoulos on the *Panathenaic Oration* of Aristides. Also very interesting as an example of the degree to which Xanthopoulos follows Aristides is the appropriation and adaptation of the passage in which Aristides speaks about the climate of Athens. Xanthopoulos uses almost the same description for the much harsher climate of Constantinople, practically subverting the content of his source.²⁹

The *ekphrasis* bears the title “praise of the city,”³⁰ a rather short title inscribed in the margin of the manuscripts that preserve it. It begins with a number of appellatives and rhetorical expressions that from the fourth century onwards were commonplace in descriptions of the City, such as the “eye of the *oikoumene*,” and briefly touches upon its geographic position, its relation to the sea around it, and its hinterland. The text then turns to the climate and cursorily mentions the mixed landscape consisting of plains and hills. It concludes with another brief reference to the City’s spiritual achievement (house/home of *Logoi*) and its identification with piety, manifest through the presence of sacred temples and other splendid buildings.

25 Transl. Oliver 1968: 83.

26 See transl. of the last sentences of the *ekphrasis*, p. 913–14.

27 Oliver 1968: 46 (par. 5).

28 Oliver 1968: 21.

29 See the last example of parallels on p. 909–10; for a relevant example see the Commentary, n. 19, p. 917.

30 “Praise of Constantinople” is the variant preserved by A, the most recent manuscript.

Text

Ἕπαινος τῆς Πόλεως (Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Α).

Τίς οὐκ οἶδε τὸν τῆς οἰκουμένης ὀφθαλμόν, τὴν Κωνσταντίνου φημί, τὸν ὀμφαλὸν τῆς γῆς, ἧ, μᾶλλον εἰπεῖν, τὴν καρδίαν ταύτης, τὸ καιριώτατον; ποιητῆς δ' ἂν εἶπε τὸ τῆς ἀρούρης οὕθαρ, τὸν κοινὸν ἑώσας καὶ ἑσπερίου λήξεως σύνδεσμον, ἧ σχεδὸν ἐρίζει μὲν περὶ κάλλους τῶ οὐρανῶ, ἀμιλλώμενα δ' ἔστιν ἐνταῦθα μόνον βλέπειν κάλλος ἅμα καὶ μέγεθος, ἐφ' ἧ συρρεῖ μὲν τὰ τῶν ἄκρων ὅσα χρηστά, αὐτὴ δὲ πάλιν ὡς ἀπὸ κέντρου ἢ τινος καρδίας ἀπανταχοῦ δίεισιν, ὅσα καὶ μήτηρ ταῖς ὑπ' αὐτὴν ἐπιχορηγοῦσα. ἧ θέσεως μὲν οὕτως ἔλαχεν εὐφυῶς καὶ τῆς γῆς ἐπικαίρως ἴδρυται, ὡς εὐθύς ἂν τις ἰδὼν ἐρεῖ, ὡς ἄρ' ἄξιον εἶναι καὶ τὴν πάντων ἀρχὴν ἀναζώσασθαι καὶ τὸ κράτος κατὰ πάσης ἔχειν προσήκον καὶ ὡς ἴδιον τὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς προσκληρώσασθαι. τέτραπται μὲν γὰρ εὐθύς πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα ἥλιον, προσαπαντῶσα δῆθεν αὐτῶ, καὶ προμήκης ἐξ ἠπείρου προθέει τῶ πελάγει συμμιγνυμένη, τὸ φιλάνθρωπον ὠσανεὶ ἐπιδεικνυμένη καὶ χεῖρα ὡσπερ τοῖς καταίρειν πρὸς αὐτὴν βουλομένοις ὀρέγουσα καὶ τοῖς κάλλεσιν αὐτοῦς ἐστιῶσα, ὅσα ὄραν ἐστι. λιμένας τε καὶ ἄκτας ἐπὶ κύκλῳ πᾶσαν ἑαυτὴν περιβάλλει ἐν ἀφθόνῳ δὴ τῇ θαλάττῃ κειμένη, ὡς ἐπίσης εἶναι δόξαι καὶ νῆσον καὶ ἠπειρον· νῆσοι δὲ αὐτὴν ὑπεξίστανται, καθάπερ δοῦλαι, τοῦ σύνεγγυς εἶναι βραχύ τι ἀναχωροῦσαι, καὶ τὰ παρ' ἑαυτῶν ἠρέμα εἰσφέρουσαι. κἀνταῦθα γῆ καὶ θάλαττα καὶ πελάγη δὴ τινα διὰ στενοῦ πρὸς αὐτὴν ξυνηλιβόμενα, τὴν καλὴν ἀμιλλαν ἀμιλλῶνται, ποτέρας μᾶλλον ἢ πόλις εἴη, καὶ αὐθις ἑτέραν, ποῖά ποτε πλείω τῶν παρ' ἑαυτῇ χρηστῶν τῇ βασιλίδι ὡσπερ δωροφορήσουσιν. ἀβρῶς οὖν αὕτη τῶν ἐν τούτοις καλῶν ἀπολαύουσα, ὅσα πρόσεστι, φεύγει τῶν λυπηρῶν. οὕτω δ' ἔλαχεν ἀέρος ἐν καλῶ κείσθαι καὶ τοσαύτην ἔστι συμμετρίαν τῶ ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς ἀέρι ταύτης εὐρεῖν, ὡς κεκρᾶσθαι μὲν ἄριστα, ἐμπνεῖσθαι δὲ ἥδιστα, καὶ τῶν περὶ γῆν ἀέρων τοσοῦτον ὑπερτερεῖ, ὡς ἀφέστηκε γῆς τῇ φύσει τῶ γε μὴν αἰθέρι μὴ παντάπασιν ἐοικέναι καὶ τοῦ πολλοῦ τοσοῦτόν ἐστιν ἐξαιρετος ὑπερέχων, ὡς ἐπιεικῶς συμβαίνει τούτου πάντας ἠττᾶσθαι. τίς δ' ἂν πεδίον καὶ ὀρέων χάριτας αὐτῆς καταλέγοι, ἧ ποταμῶν χύσεις ἀερίων καὶ ὑπογείων καὶ ὑδάτων ἄφθονα ρέυματα, τὸ τε πρὸς ἀπάσας καὶ παντοίας ἐρρῶσθαι γονάς καὶ τὸ μήτε ὄρειον εἶναι παντάπασι καὶ τὸ ὕπτιον ἐπίπαν ἐκτρέπεσθαι καὶ πρὸς ἅπασαν τοῦ κόσμου φύσιν συσχηματίζεσθαι; τί μὴ τὰ κρείττω λέγω, ὅτι καὶ λόγων ἔδαφος ταύτην ἕξεισι προσεπειεῖν, καὶ προσήκει γε τῶν ἀρίστων εἶναι ταύτη πατρίδα τε καὶ καθηγεμόνα σοφίας ἀπάσης καὶ τέχνης; καὶ γὰρ σοφίαν καὶ τῶν ὄντων τὴν γινῶσιν ἐντεῦθεν ἔστι πορίσασθαι, οἷς Θεὸν διαγέγονεν εὐφημοῦσα, ὡς ἐντεῦθεν μὲν προχεῖσθαι τὸ εὐσεβεῖν καὶ τᾶλλα τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀναβλύζειν· καὶ εἴ τις φαίη ταύτην εἶναι καὶ τῶν οἰωνδῆποτε¹ γῆς ἀγαθῶν χορηγόν, οὐκ ἂν αἰσχυνθείη. δέικνυται δὲ οἷς ἀνῆκε μὲν ναῶν τεμένη καὶ χάριτας, καὶ τᾶλλα τῶν οἰκοδομημάτων εἰς κάλλος καὶ μέγεθος ἀβρῶς ἐξησκημένα καὶ περιττῶς, φαιδρὰ φαιδρῶς ἀπανταχοῦ ταῖς ὄψεσιν ἀπαντῶντα καὶ συνανίσχοντα.

Translation

Praise of the City (Constantinople A).

Who does not know the “eye of the inhabited world,”² I mean, Constantinople, the navel³ or, what is most appropriate, the heart² of the earth? The poet [Homer] might have called it “the richest [and most beautiful] of lands,”⁴ [and it is] the common link of the eastern and western ends,⁵ which almost vies for beauty with the heavens,⁶ and only here is it possible to see a contest in both beauty and magnitude.⁷ From the four corners [of the earth] all goods stream together to it⁸ and, again, the city itself, as if from some central spot or from a heart, reaches out everywhere, and provides its [territories] with all the things a mother would proffer.⁹ In terms of location, it is so well situated and is founded in such an advantageous position,¹⁰ that anyone, upon seeing it, would immediately proclaim it worthy of assuming authority over all, and that it is appropriate for it to hold sway over all lands and take all power to itself as its own.¹¹ For it is directly oriented towards the rising sun, as if moving to meet it, and, rising out of the dry land, it expands surrounded by the sea,¹² and, somehow, displays its benevolence by offering, in a way, its hand to those wishing to put into [its ports],¹³ and feasting them on the beauties that are visible. Lying amidst bounteous seawater, it is thoroughly encircled by harbors and shores, and offers the impression that it is equally an island and a peninsula.¹⁴ Islands are located below it [i.e. to its south], like maidservants, a little farther from close proximity, and inconspicuously contribute their goods.¹⁵ Here also land, open sea, and some bays, channeled forcibly towards it through a narrow strait,¹⁶ contend the worthy contest, namely, which one would lay a firmer hold on the city, and then again, a second contest, what goods would each one ever offer as gifts to the Queen city¹⁷ in greater abundance than those [found] in the city itself.¹⁸ Therefore, the city gracefully enjoys the goods available through them and avoids distress.¹⁹ Besides, it has been allotted a position under such a fair atmosphere and such balance is present in the air overhead, that it, the air, becomes perfectly temperate, blows in the most sweet fashion, and is so much superior to all the air around the earth, as to be so unlike the earth in nature that it almost entirely resembles the upper air (*aether*).²⁰ Moreover, such is its excellence compared to most of [earth’s air], that all [people] are, of course, enamored with it.²¹ Then, who would list the graces of its fields and mountains,²² or the flow of both aerial [i.e. in aqueducts] and subterranean rivers²³ and the bountiful streams of water, or the fact that [the land] has grown strong in providing every different kind of produce²⁴ and that, although not entirely mountainous, it also avoids full flatness, forming itself in accordance with every natural variation of the world?²⁵ And why shouldn’t I mention the most significant, namely, that it is even possible to call it the home of *Logoi*²⁶ and, rightly, the best at that as the homeland and head of every wisdom and art?²⁷ For one might attain from it wisdom and the knowledge of beings,²⁸ through all the things with which the city continuously praises God, as from these ensues piety, and all the other goods gush forth.²⁹ And if someone were to say that the city is the provider of all goods of the earth, he wouldn’t be wrong.³⁰ The city also proves this by means of what it has put forth, namely, the precincts and delights of temples and other

splendid edifices elegantly and lavishly raised in beauty and magnitude,³¹ that joyfully meet and rise in their splendor together with the eyes [of the beholder] everywhere.³²

Commentary

1. όπουδήποτε VW (= everywhere).
2. Cf. Themistius, *Oratio VI* (*Φιλάδελφοι ἢ περὶ φιλανθρωπίας*), ed. Schenkl and Downey, p. 124.4–9³¹ and Gregory Nazianzenus, *Oration 42* (*Supremum vale*), ed. Bernardi, p. 72.8–10, (= PG 36: 469.31–35).³² See also Psellos, *Letter 193*, ed. Kurtz–Drexler, p. 219.23.³³ The tradition of viewing Constantinople as the “eye of the world” goes back already to the fourth century.³⁴ The metaphor was not understood only in passive terms suggested by the concept of a center receiving influences and objects from the periphery, but also in active ones as suggested by the ancient Greek theory of the “visual power” emitted by an active eye.³⁵ Accordingly, Dimitter Angelov points out that: “The characterization of Constantinople as the eye of the *oikoumene* ... conveyed the idea of the ability of the imperial city to maintain contact and interact with the civilized world.”³⁶
3. Navel (center) of the earth and heart of the earth are also common perceptions for Constantinople. Here one of the precedents can be traced back to the *Panathenaic Oration* of Aelius Aristides, who presents Athens and its Acropolis as the center of an elaborate structure of five zones like a shield with five circles.³⁷ For another more extensive view of Constantinople as the heart of the earth and its implications for human life, see Metochites’ *Byzantios*, 194.108–12, and 226.41–48.
4. Homer, *Il.*, 9.141. It seems that Xanthopoulos was the first to associate this expression with Constantinople. Given the context, Xanthopoulos’ understanding seems closer to the meaning “most beautiful” also conveyed by this expression in earlier scholiasts than to the idea of “most fertile.”³⁸
5. The entire phrase, from the beginning of this *ekphrasis* down to “ends” /σύνδεσμον is adapted from Gregory of Nazianzos’ *Oration 42*;³⁹ for the geographic

31 ... ἢ καθάπερ σώματος ἑνός, ὅλης τῆς γῆς δεύτερος ὀφθαλμός, μᾶλλον δὲ καρδία καὶ ὀμφαλὸς καὶ ὃ τι ἂν εἴποι τις τῶν μερῶν τὸ κυριώτατον;

32 Εἰ γὰρ τὸ πόλιν τῆς οἰκουμένης ὀφθαλμόν, γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης ὅτι κράτιστον, ἕως τε καὶ ἑσπερίου λήξεως οἶον σύνδεσμον, εἰς ἣν τὰ πανταχόθεν ἄκρα συντρέχει, καὶ ὅθεν ἄρχεται, ὡς ἀπὸ ἐμπορίου κοινοῦ τῆς πίστεως ...

33 ... ὀφθαλμός ἄρα τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐστὶ τὸ Βυζάντιον ... (Byzantium therefore is the eye of the world).

34 See also n. 35.

35 Magdalino 2005: 109–10, 115–16.

36 Angelov 2013: 54. For more on this in later authors (from Michael Psellos onwards) and the variations or particular expressions of this motif see Fenster 1968: 132–33. For the ideological and pragmatic content of this understanding of Constantinople and its subsequent development and correspondence with historical reality see Magdalino 2005.

37 Greek text Oliver 1968: 153, par. 15; transl., *ibid.* 47, par. 15; commentary *ibid.* 95; see also Fenster 1968: 60. A similar expression is also present in the *Chronicon* of George the Monk, where the terms are applied to Jerusalem see Georgius Monachus, *Chronicon*, ed. C. de Boor, p. 711.16–17: ἐν ἣ καὶ τὸ σωτήριον πάθος ὑπομείνας τὴν παγκόσμιον εἰργάσατο σωτηρίαν ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῆς, ὡς καὶ τινες τῶν ἐξηγητῶν ὀμφαλὸν τῆς γῆς αὐτὴν προσηγορεύκασιν. καὶ μέντοι γε καὶ Χριστὸς αὐτὸς καρδίαν αὐτὴν ἐκάλεσε φάσκων ...

38 See *Scholia in Iliadem* (*Scholia vetera*), ed. Heyne, 9.141: Οὐβάρ ἀρούρης: τὸ γονιμώτατον καὶ κάλλιστον τῆς γῆς.

39 Ed. Bernardi, p. 72.8–10 see the Commentary, n. 2.

understanding of Constantinople as the focal point of the geographic rather than the political or cultural distinction between East and West and its development in the course of centuries.⁴⁰

6. See Achilleus Tatius, *Leukippe and Kleitophon*, 89.7–8: τότε γὰρ εἶδον πόλιν ἐρίζουσιν περὶ κάλλους οὐρανῶ. The relevant passage in Tatius refers to Alexandria. As Saradi, citing Fenster, points out: “Constantinople is praised as the most beautiful city until the sixth century and the *topos* of the urban beauty appears rarely in the following centuries.”⁴¹ For “the beauty of antiquity” in later praises of Constantinople see Magdalino 2012.
7. See Achilleus Tatius, *Leukippe and Kleitophon*, 88.16–17.⁴² For the concept primarily of beauty (κάλλος) and, to a lesser extent, of size see Saradi 1995 and for the combination of κάλλος with μέγεθος in earlier texts see also Saradi 2006: 75–77. At any rate, beauty and size are already present in Menander’s *Division of Epideictic Speeches*.⁴³ However, in pragmatic terms, for μέγεθος (size, magnitude), as an indicator of concrete figures related to geographic area and population numbers, one might consult Magdalino who posits 400,000 inhabitants for Constantinople and for the period before 1204.⁴⁴ For a more thorough and multi-dimensional approach to the issue of the population in early Constantinople but with no definitive conclusion, see Dagrón.⁴⁵
8. In this short sentence, Xanthopoulos has altered the original phrasing of his source together with its meaning.⁴⁶ Constantinople was also considered the recipient of all sorts of goods from all over the world.⁴⁷
9. The same idea is expounded in a much lengthier passage in Metochites’ *Byzantios*, 194.102–198.143. However, the concept that Constantinople was a benefactor and provider of the *oikoumene* in material terms, as both Xanthopoulos here and Metochites claim, is rather optimistic viewed in the context of the diminished post-1300s Empire with its shrinking boundaries and its dwindling military and mercantile presence. As Magdalino points out, Constantinople and the Byzantine *oikoumene* no longer encompasses the rest of the Mediterranean and European world, but becomes actively engaged, primarily in spiritual terms and secondarily in financial ones, with a segment of the known world that covered the space between Egypt, the Balkans, and Moscow.⁴⁸
10. From this point on Xanthopoulos initiates application of Menander’s precepts: We estimate and judge the position of a country [or of a city] by its relation to land, sea,

40 See Angelov 2013: 44, 56–58, 64.

41 Saradi 1995: 48 and n. 230.

42 Εἶδον δὲ δύο καινὰ καὶ παράλογα, μεγέθους πρὸς κάλλος ἀμιλλαν.

43 See Russell and Wilson 1981: 44

44 Magdalino 2007, I: 61–67, 103–05; *idem* 2005: 114–15; also Laiou 2002: 51. For the period after the recovery from the Crusaders in 1261 and during the times of Xanthopoulos (around 100,000) see Laiou 2008: 811, based on a much earlier bibliographic reference.

45 Dagrón 1974: 518–42

46 Gregory of Nazianzos in n. 2, p. 914., εἰς ἣν τὰ πανταχόθεν ἄκρα συντρέχει.

47 See Magdalino 2005: 109–14; see also the articles by J. Durliat, P. Magdalino, J. Koder, and G. Dagrón in *Section I: The Land and its Products*, in Mango and Dagrón 1995: 19–76.

48 Magdalino 2005: 120–25.

- or sky ...⁴⁹ Xanthopoulos' phrase, however, seems to have been lifted almost *verbatim* from an earlier work of Metochites, the *Nikaeus* that was written around 1290.⁵⁰
11. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panathenaic Oration*, 96.1–2/4–6.⁵¹ Xanthopoulos seems to expand on the italicized phrase. For the idea that favorable location of the city of Constantinople *de facto* implies a claim to leadership and its implication see Angelov 2013: 53–54. A slightly more expanded version of the same idea is present in Metochites' *Byzantios*, p. 140.5.1–10.
 12. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panathenaic Oration*, p. 96.1–3.⁵² For the praising of the location of a city see Menander's *Division of Epideictic Speeches*.⁵³ See also a similar passage in Metochites, *Byzantios*, p. 156.61–69.
 13. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panathenaic Oration*, p. 96.6–11;⁵⁴ this line primarily borrows from Menander's *Division of Epideictic Speeches*.⁵⁵
 14. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panathenaic Oration*, p. 96.11–17;⁵⁶ cf. also *Byzantios*, p. 366.34.1–18 (much lengthier and more amplified than Xanthopoulos).
 15. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *ibid.*, p. 96.8–9/25.⁵⁷
 16. The reference in this passage is to the Bosphorus, but is very summary and alludes to all three major geographic components of the Constantinopolitan surroundings, that is the Black Sea, Propontis (not referred to by name but by the simple word *πελάγη τινά*), and the Bosphorus (*διὰ στενοῦ*). A similar passage in Metochites' *Byzantios* (p. 166.24–174.105) is lengthier and more detailed. The passage seems also to echo another line from the *Encomion to the Emperor Lord Michael Palaiologos and New Constantine* (ed. Boissonade, 318).⁵⁸
 17. On *βασιλῖς* see Fenster 1968: 33 ff.
Cf. Gregorius Nazianzos, *Oration* 33, ed. Moerschini, p. 170, PG 36: 224.6–9.⁵⁹ Xanthopoulos again paraphrases this particular sentence.

49 Θέσιν ... χώρας δοκιμάζομεν τε καὶ κρίνομεν ὅπως κείται πρὸς γῆν ἢ <πρὸς> θάλατταν ἢ πρὸς οὐρανόν: Russell and Wilson, 1981: 28/29.

50 Rhoby 2012: 83: Ὅτι δὲ θέσεως ἢ πόλις ἔλαχεν εὐφυῶς καὶ τῆς γῆς ἐπικαίρως ἴδρυται, τοῦτο καὶ πάρεστιν ὄραν ... ed. Sathas, 141.10–12. That the city has a fine situation and is seated advantageously on the earth, this is at hand to see ... Foss 1996: 168/169.

51 πρόκειται γὰρ ἀντ' ἄλλου φυλακτηρίου τῆς Ἑλλάδος ... καὶ μάλα ἐναργῆς συμβαλεῖν ὅτι τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἐστὶν ἔρμα ὑπὸ τῶν κρειττόνων πεποιημένον καὶ μόνη ταύτη κατὰ φύσιν ἔστιν ἠγέσθαι τοῦ γένους.

52 πρόκειται ... πρώτη πρὸς ἥλιον ἀνίσχοντα, προμήκης εἰς τὸ πέλαγος ...

53 Russell and Wilson 1981: 32/33 combined with 28/29.

54 Εἶτα καὶ τῆς φιλανθρωπίας ὥσπερ εἰ σύμβολον ἐκφέρει· προβαίνει γὰρ μέχρι πλείστου, τὴν θάλατταν ἡμεροῦσα, ... θεαμάτων ἥδιστον, ... πρώτη μὲν τοῖς ἐκ τοῦ πελάγους ὥσπερ εἰ χεῖρα προτείνουσα εἰς ὑποδοχὴν ...

55 Russell and Wilson 1981: 42 : ... ἐὰν δὲ πολλοὶ [sc. εἰσι λιμένες, φῆσεις] ὅτι ὑπὸ φιλανθρωπίας πολλὰς χεῖρας προτείνει τοῖς καταίρουσι ... cf. also *Byzantios*, p. 366.34.4–6 and n. 194; see also n. 56.

56 Παντοδαπούς δὲ ὄρους καὶ λιμένας παρεχομένη κύκλω περὶ πᾶσαν ἑαυτήν, ἔτι δὲ ἀκτὰς ἄλλας κατ' ἄλλα μέρη τῆς τε θαλάττης καὶ ἑαυτῆς, καὶ πορθμούς πρὸς τὰς ἐπικειμένας νήσους οὐ πλέον διαλείποντας ἢ ὅσον αἱ νῆσοι πρὸς ἀλλήλας, ὥστε καὶ παραπλεῖν καὶ περιπλεῖν καὶ πεζεύειν καὶ ἔτι πελαγίους εἶναι ...

57 ... καὶ ταῖς νήσοις ἐγκαταμίγνυται, θέαμα ἥδιστον ἠπειρος ἐν νήσοις ...

58 Μαιωτῆς τε θάλαττα καὶ ὁ Εὐξείνους διὰ στενοῦ εἰς αὐτὴν ἀποθλίβονται καὶ τὰ παρ' ἑαυτῶν ὡς εἰς δεσπότην τὴν Πόλιν χρεωστικῶς παραπέμπουσι.

59 ... καὶ γῆν καὶ θάλασσαν, ὥσπερ ἀμιλλωμένας, ποτέρας ἂν εἶη μᾶλλον ἢ πόλις, καὶ τοῖς παρ' ἑαυτῶν ἀγαθοῖς τὴν βασιλῖδα δεξιούμενας;

18. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panathenaic Oration*, p. 99.22–24.⁶⁰ Xanthopoulos simply borrows words to express an idea slightly different from that found in Aristides.
19. As I have indicated above, Xanthopoulos has rearranged the following lines from Aristides' *Panathenaic Oration*, p. 99.20–22,⁶¹ and *ibid.*, p. 100.18–20.⁶² For the understanding of *aether* present in Xanthopoulos' source see Oliver,⁶³ where he cites W. K. C. Guthrie: "The Greek word that approaches most nearly to the English 'heaven,' with all its associations is not *ouranos* but *aither*. A Greek of any period would agree that it was in the *aither* . . . , that the Gods dwelt, and that the *aither* itself was divine . . ." There is a related discussion in Metochites' *Byzantios*, p. 426.19–428.43. For the theoretical background to these lines see Menander' *Division of Epideictic Speeches*.⁶⁴
20. In this section (from "Besides . . ." onwards) the key word is air, but the meaning of this whole passage in Aristides and also the intended one of Xanthopoulos has to do with climate. The problem here is that Xanthopoulos assigns to the climate of Constantinople attributes found, according to Aelius Aristides, in the climate of Athens, which are far from applicable to the climate of Constantinople.
21. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panathenaic Oration*, p. 100.23–101.2.⁶⁵
22. This is a reference to the aqueduct of Valens, which was, ". . . not merely a bridge of arches in the capital, but an immense network which took upwards of thirty years to complete and is described by Gregory of Nazianzos . . ."⁶⁶ see Gregorius Nazianzus, *Oration* 33, ed. Moreschini, 170.15–16 (= PG 36: 221.42–43).⁶⁷ This aqueduct was also subterranean in part.⁶⁸ See also Metochites *Byzantios*, p. 290.23.15–16 and n. 137 for further references and bibliography.
23. The phrase is lifted directly from Aristides' *Panathenaic Oration*, p. 104.8;⁶⁹ see also the same phrase amplified in Metochites' *Byzantios*, p. 188.29–31 and n. 73, and similar expression in Metochites' *Nikaeus*, p. 143.11.⁷⁰
24. Another loan phrase from Aristides' *Panathenaic Oration*, p. 101.10–15.⁷¹ This time, however, Xanthopoulos has creatively abridged it. Metochites in his *Byzantios* draws

60 ... ἴσον γὰρ ἀπάντων ἀπέχει τῶν δυσχερῶν καὶ μετέχουσα τῶν ἀγαθῶν τῆς δυνάμεως ἐκάστης, ἃ λυπηρὰ πρόσεστιν ἐκάστη πέφευγε.

61 Ἀλλὰ μὴν τόν γε ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς ἀέρα καὶ τὴν τῶν ὠρῶν κρᾶσιν οὕτω σύμμετρον εἴληγεν ὥστε εἰ τῷ λόγῳ μετρίως εἰπεῖν ἦν, εὐκτόν ἄν ἦν . . .

62 ... οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ὅστις τῶν περὶ γῆν ἀέρων τοσοῦτον ἀφέστηκε γῆς τῆ φύσει οὐδ' αἰθέρι μᾶλλον εἴκασται.

63 Oliver 1968: 97.

64 Russell and Wilson 1981: 34.13–26.

65 Πεδίῳν τε κάλλη καὶ χάριτας . . . τοῖς ὄρεισι τοῖς περιέχουσιν . . . καὶ μὴν τὴν γε τῶν ὄρων φαιδρότητα καὶ χάριν τίς οὐκ ἄν ἀγασθεῖη;

66 Mango 1992: 14.

67 καὶ τὸ ἄπιστον τοῦτο ἔργον, ὁ ὑποχθόνιος καὶ ἀέριος ποταμός . . .

68 See also Janin, *Constantinople*, 199–200; Crow *et al.* 2008: 118–20, for the elevated part still extant in the modern city, and *passim* for the parts outside the walls (esp. ch. 3: 25 ff. for its line of supply from the hinterland).

69 ἔρρωτο μὲν ἡ γῆ πρὸς ἀπάσας γονάς . . .

70 ...[ἡπειρος]... ἔρρωται πρὸς παντοῖαν φορὰν . . .

71 ἐπέρχεται γὰρ μοι καὶ κατὰ μέρη τὴν ἐπιτηδειότητα ἀποφαίνειν τῆς χώρας, οἷον εὐθύς τὸ μήτε ὑπτίαν εἶναι διὰ πάσης μήτε ὄρειον παντελῶς, ἀλλ' ἐσχηματῖσθαι πρὸς τὴν ἐκατέρου χρεῖαν ἐν μέρει καὶ πεποικίλθαι, ὥστε πῶς οὐκ ἄν ὀρθῶς εἴποι τις εἶναι τελέας καὶ πάσης τῆς οἰκουμένης οἰονεῖ μίμημα σωζούσης;

- inspiration from the same phrase.⁷² Thus far, Xanthopoulos has praised Constantinople on the basis of its natural advantages.⁷³
25. λόγων ἕδραφος: Gregory of Nazianzos, *Oration* 43, p. 86. For further discussion see, Text and Context, p. 911.
 26. Another phrase adapted from Aristides' *Panathenaic Oration*, p. 189.26–28.⁷⁴
 27. These words recall John of Damascus' definition of philosophy.⁷⁵
 28. This section of the praise of the City (from "... And why ..." onwards) is based on Menander's precepts collected in the third book of the *Division of Epideictic Speeches* under the heading "How to praise cities for Accomplishments."⁷⁶ Xanthopoulos stresses learning – wisdom and arts (which in this context may be understood as "liberal"), but in the following sentence focuses on philosophy and piety.
 29. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos About the Temple*, p. 239.21–22.⁷⁷ An almost word-for-word repetition of Aristides' phrase except from ὥστε ... δημοσίων, which is changed to τῶν οἰωνδήποτε (όπουδήποτε VW) γῆς ἀγαθῶν; see also the Commentary, n. 1.
 30. See Aelius Aristides, *The Rhodian*, p. 540.8–11,⁷⁸ combined with Gregory of Nyssa, *Homilies on Ecclesiastes*, ed. Alexander, p. 323.7–8.⁷⁹ It is interesting to observe how Xanthopoulos changed the pagan τεμένη δὲ θεῶν of Aristides into the Christian ναῶν τεμένη.⁸⁰
 31. For the use of these summarily discussed buildings as a major token of civilization see also DeLaine 2002: 218–23, who reviews earlier Ancient Greek and Roman ideas on the subject and discusses their underlying "civilizing virtue" of euergetism (*magnificentia*, *μεγαλοπρέπεια*).

72 See *Byzantios*, ed. Polemis, p. 188.45–48 and n. 75, for further bibliography.

73 Ἀπὸ κεφαλαίων τῶν περὶ χώρας εἰρημένων/headings discussed in connection with countries, see Menander's *Division of Epideictic Speeches*: Russell and Wilson 1981: 32/33.

74 ἀπάντων γὰρ, ὡς ἔοικε, τῶν ἀρίστων αὐτῆ πατρὶς καὶ σοφίας πάσης καὶ τέχνης ἡγεμών ...

75 See Joannes Damascenus, *Dialectica sive Capita philosophica*, ed. Kotter, p. 56.2–3: Φιλοσοφία ἐστὶ γνῶσις τῶν ὄντων, ἣ ὄντα ἐστὶ, τουτέστι γνῶσις τῆς τῶν ὄντων φύσεως.

76 Russell and Wilson 1981: 58–63.

77 ὥστε καὶ τῶν ἐτέρωθι ναῶν καὶ ἄλλων κόσμων δημοσίων εἴ τις φαίη ταύτην εἶναι τὴν χορηγόν, οὐκ ἂν αἰσχυρθεῖη.

78 Τεμένη δὲ θεῶν καὶ ἱερά καὶ ἀγάλματα τοσαῦτα μὲν τὸ πλῆθος, τηλικαῦτα δὲ τὸ μέγεθος, τοιαῦτα δὲ τὸ κάλλος.

79 Καὶ ταῦτα περιττῶς διὰ ποικίλων μαρμάρων εἰς κόσμον ἐξησηκμημένα ...

80 For the churches of Constantinople mainly devoted to the Virgin Mary see also Metochites' *Byzantios*, p. 338–43 and also Manuel Holobolos, *Oration* 3, ed. Treu, p. 85.7–86.29. For the beauty of churches in earlier Byzantine texts see Saradi 1995: 44–45 and in later *encomia* of cities see *ibid.* 45–48 and esp. nn. 228–29.

Text B | *Ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia*

Significance

The text is one of the few extant *ekphraseis* of Hagia Sophia. Although it does not provide any information concerning the structure and architectural details of the building (that might have been of historical value alone, since the building still stands largely intact), it is much more valuable as an indication of the aesthetic values and the attitudes the author and his milieu entertained towards monumental building. In fact, this particular *encomion* shows that not only in language but also in terms of the aesthetic appreciation of major buildings the standards established by Imperial Rome and early Byzantium still remained valid more than one thousand years later, at least for the people who formed Xanthopoulos' literary circle.⁸¹ It seems, though, that rhetorical conventions and Xanthopoulos' working method may have led to the omission of any direct reference to most aspects of “dematerialization” of physical forms within the building, the characteristics of which mark the transition from pagan to purely Christian aesthetics in terms of sacred architecture.⁸²

Text and Context

As is implied by the last sentence of the *encomion* (“... the discourse, having concerned itself with the City's charms ...”) Xanthopoulos viewed this *Ekphrasis* as an integral part of the *Ekphrasis of Constantinople*. Still, unlike praises of cities, an *encomion* of a temple rests on very little in terms of the theory of rhetoric: the last forty-five lines of Menander's Second Treatise on the *Division of Epideictic Speeches*,⁸³ most of which do not harmonize with a Christian setting.⁸⁴ Accordingly, in this segment Xanthopoulos continues his customary practice of either eclectically choosing phrases from earlier authors, or slightly adapting them to his own diction, or even – in a more creative mode – drawing inspiration from them and expounding his own views in such a way that his source remains recognizable. Within this authorial frame, this brief and partial *ekphrasis cum encomion* is mainly informed by two texts, the *Panegyric in Kyzikos About the Temple*⁸⁵ of Aelius Aristides and Prokopios' *On Buildings*. On account of this particular dependence, Xanthopoulos ends up (in all three texts, in fact) recycling attitudes and ideas on aesthetics conveyed by passages that hark back to the Imperial period (Aristides) or the Late Antique/Early Byzantine times (Prokopios). Here, however, Xanthopoulos' horizon is

81 More or less similar attitudes are displayed by Metochites in his *Byzantios*, ed. Polemis, p. 346ff.

82 Examples of “dematerialization” of physical forms which, rooted in Neoplatonic philosophical teachings, shaped Christian aesthetics, can be found in Ćurčić 2010: 196–97. Examples cited are the ample lighting of the church interior through the “hundreds of windows perforating the walls” and the general sense of weightlessness imposed by numerous architectural details, all of which suggest Divine presence. At any rate Xanthopoulos verbally insists on the implicit Divine presence and pays a brief visit to the topic of “weightlessness.”

83 See Russell and Wilson 1981: 220–25.

84 For the difficulties, the particularities and the literary problems of this particular sub-genre of *ekphraseis* see Webb 1999: 59–62.

85 For the temple see Ashmole 1956.

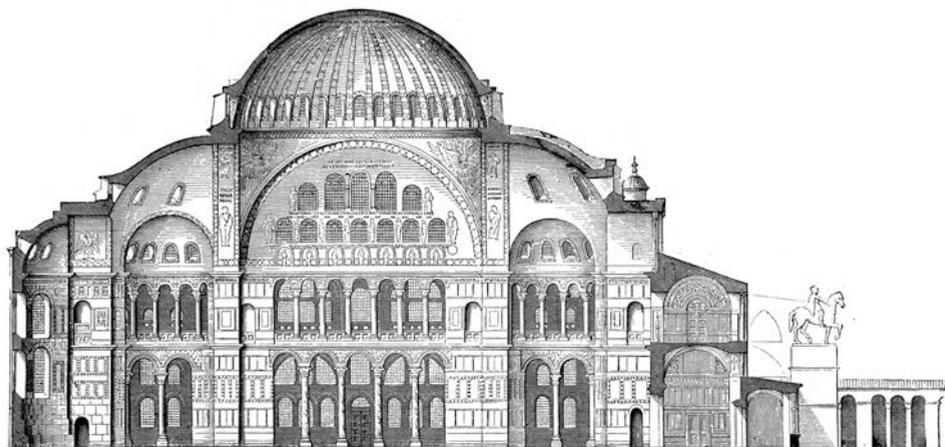


Fig. I.8.2a Sketch of Hagia Sophia from W. Lübke and M. Semrau, *Grundriß der Kunstgeschichte*. 14. (Auflage, 1908)
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limited to a singular building on which he seems to be applying all the expectations of a Late Antique audience. For example, the insistence on both the exceptional size and extreme beauty of the monument, (based on diction borrowed from the *Panegyric in Kyzikos*) aligns Hagia Sophia with the temple of Hadrian at Cyzicus, as a work that “is beyond the power of a man (to accomplish it).”⁸⁶ As a consequence, Hagia Sophia can claim a place among the Seven Wonders of the World,⁸⁷ if not that of the First Wonder of the Christian World. Concomitant with this understanding is the next suggestion that the building is “... truly the work and pride of gods alone ...” or, as the Christian Xanthopoulos puts it: “... this masterpiece is the work of the most high Trinity (see fig. I.8.2a)”⁸⁸ Another example is the claim that this church is a landmark signaling Constantinople to those sailing from afar, just like the other wonder of the Hellenistic world, the Pharos of Alexandria.⁸⁹ In general, the text expressly⁹⁰ avoids the technical description of the particularities of the Church construction like the one found, for example, in Prokopios’ *On Buildings*, and simply stresses the wondrous character of the building and its effects on the beholder (mainly amazement). In the sequel, it summarily describes the three zones of the structure,⁹¹ dwells a little upon its harmonious co-existence with the four elements

⁸⁶ The phrases in inverted commas are taken from the translation below; for more details and relevant texts see the Commentary, n. 10, p. 926.

⁸⁷ For this see DeLaine 2002: 206–09; there is a similar evaluation in Metochites’ *Byzantios*, ed. Polemis, p. 348ff.

⁸⁸ See also the Commentary, nn. 12, 13, and 25, p. 926 and 928.

⁸⁹ DeLaine 2002: 210.

⁹⁰ See the Commentary, n. 26, p. 928.

⁹¹ Evident even in the sketches that usually accompany the description of Hagia Sophia by Procopius see Downey, *Procopius on Buildings*, p. 14–15.

of nature, and concludes with a rhetorical apostrophe on how it is easy for everyone to say a few words of admiration for the building but very difficult for almost everyone to try and do this (adequately). The last paragraph included in this section is just a brief *ekphrasis* of the landscape outside the city walls of Constantinople in the area where the Pege fountain is situated and facilitates the smooth transition of the narrative from the *Ekphrasis* of Constantinople and Hagia Sophia, to the miracles of the Pege.

Text

Ἔπαινος τῆς Ἁγίας Σοφίας.

Οἷς δὲ καὶ τὸν μέγαν τοῦτον ἀνέστησε δόμον, τὸν τῆς οἰκείας τῷ ὄντι σοφίας ἐπώνυμον, τὸν μάλα οἰκεῖον τῇ πόλει κόσμον καὶ τῇ παρούσῃ ἐξουσία καὶ διαίτη προσήκοντα· μέγιστός τε γὰρ ἔστι καὶ κάλλιστος τῶν ἀπανταχοῦ ὄγκω καὶ τρυφῇ, ἔτι δὲ λελογισμένη σεμνότητι κατὰ κράτος πάντας νικῶν. μέγας δὲ μεγαλωστὶ ἀνατεταμένος ἐκτρέχει ἔρωτι, ὡς εἰκάσαι, τοῦ καταστέρω συμμιγῆναι τῷ πῶλῳ, κάντεῦθεν δεικνύων ὡς ἔργον ὄντως τοῦ κρείττονος. φιλονεικεῖ καὶ γὰρ πρὸς τὰς ὄψεις τῷ ὕψει καὶ φεύγει ὡσπερ τὸν θεατὴν, ἐρωτικῆς δίκην, τῷ μεγέθει ἀποκρυπτόμενος καὶ μιμεῖται τὴν φύσιν, οὗ τῇ κλήσει σεμνύνεται, ὑποχωρῶν ἀεὶ τοσοῦτον, ὅσον καταλαμβάνεται, οὐ ῥαδίως τε ἀναχωρεῖν, ἀλλὰ μετὰ βίας τὸν ἄπαξ ἐαλωκότα ἐὼν, ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἐμφιλοχωρεῖν ἐς πλεῖστον τῇ πολλῇ ῥάστῳν παρέχων. ἀγχίστροφος δ' ἐφ' ἕκαστον ἢ τῆς θεᾶς μεταβολή, τὸ νικῶν εὐρεῖν οὐδαμῇ ἔχουσα· τοσοῦτον καὶ γὰρ ἔργον ἐγήγερται, ὅσον ἐνθυμηθῆναι τὸν μήπω θεώμενον μανίας ἔργον εἶναι νομίσει, ἰδόντα δὲ, φάναι κρείττον πάντως ἢ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον. δηλοῖ τε ὀρώμενος, ἥστινος δὴ πόλεως, καὶ ψηφίζεται μὴ ἂν ἄλλης πόλεως τὸ ἀνάθημα εἶναι· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν ἀρκέσαι τὴν φύσιν ἀπάσας τοσοῦτον ἔργον ἐνστήσασθαι. καὶ μοι δοκεῖν, εἴ που ποιηταῖς ἦν ἐντυχεῖν, τᾶλλα παρεῖσι μυθολογήματα, ἐνταῦθ' ἀψευδεῖν, ὡς ἀτεχνῶς τῶν κρειττόνων ὄντως ἔργον καὶ φιλοτιμία. ἐγὼ δ' ἂν ῥαδίως εἰπέην δοκῶ μοι, ὡς τριάδος ἔργον τῆς ἀνωτάτω τὸ φιλοτέχνημα, ἵνα κὰν γῆ μετρίαν ἔχη διατριβήν, δεῖσαν ἴσως καὶ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐπιμίνυσθαι. πλὴν τοσοῦτος ὢν, καλλίων ἔστιν ἢ μείζων, τῷ ἐφ' ἅπασι κοσμίῳ τὸ ἀπέριττον ἐνδεικνύμενος. οὐχ ἦττον δὲ καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἐκ πολλοῦ τοῖς καταίρουσι καὶ πόρρωθεν ἤκουσι προδεικνύς, ἀντὶ πυρσῶν ἀρκῶν καὶ ὀρέων, ἢ ῥαστῳν καὶ τρυφῇ τῇ ἄλλῃ ἔνδον, οἷς καὶ λόγου κρείττον, ὡς ἐρεῖν, καλλωπίζεται, ὡς συμβαίνειν ἄπορον εἶναι θαυμάσαι, ποτέρω προέχει, τῷ μεγέθει ἢ κάλλει· τριπλοῦς γὰρ τίς ἔστι καὶ τὰ μὲν αὐτῷ κατάγειός ἔστι θεᾶ καὶ ἀφανῆ κάλλει ἀμυθῆτω κοσμῶν, τὸ δὲ πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἐκτρέχει, τῷ αἰθερίῳ χύματι ἐοικῶς, μέση δέ, ἦν ἀμήχανόν τε λόγῳ ἐρεῖν καὶ πρὸς ἀκρίβειαν ἐξευρεῖν. τοὺς δ' ἐξεπίτηδες δρόμους καὶ περιδρόμους γεωμέτραις ἴσως ἀποθέσθαι προσήκον, οὐκ οἶδα εἰ μὴ κάκεινοις τὸ τοσοῦτον ἔργον ἐργῶδες διαμετρήσασθαι. παράδοξον δ' ἐφ' ἅπαντι συνδρομῆν ἐνταῦθ' αἰς ἴδοι μήκους πρὸς πλάτος καὶ βάθους πρὸς ὕψος αὐτῶν, ὡσπερ ἐξεπίτηδες συμπληροῦντων τὸ τέμενος καὶ ἀμιλλωμένων αὐτῶν ἕκαστον. ἐντεῦθεν μᾶλλον οἷόν ἔστι δειχθῆναι καὶ στοιχείων αὐθις ἔριν δὴ τινὰ ἀγαθὴν, ποτέρου κληθεῖ ὁ νεῶς διατεινομένων· αἰθῆρ μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐς ὕψος ἐκτρέχοντα οἰκειοῦται, γῆ δὲ αὐτοῦ ἀπρίξ ἔχεται, ἀποπνεύσει δ' ἂν καὶ ἀήρ, οἶμαι, εἴ τι αὐτὸν ἀντιστάσειεν ἕτερον, διαχεῖται δὲ καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ ἡδύ, ὅτι ὄχημα ὁ τοσοῦτος αὐτῷ γίνεται, κάντεῦθεν παρασύρων εἰσποιεῖται αὐτόν. ὁ δέ, τὴν ἔριν ἴσως λύων αὐτοῖς, πᾶσιν ἐπίσης ἀνεῖς ἑαυτόν, οὐρανῷ ἐστήριξε κάρη καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ βαινὶ καὶ οὐδενός ἔστιν, ἐπ' ἀστάτου σαλεύων, ὡσπερ, τῇ τῶν στοιχείων φιλονεικίᾳ, κατὰ δὴ τὸν τῆς γῆς λόγον ἐπ' οὐδενός ἐδραζόμενος, καὶ τῷ φεύγειν ἀπανταχοῦ περιάγων τοὺς ἑραστάς καὶ τῷ δῆθεν κρατούμενος κλέπτεσθαι. εἶκοι δὲ οὗτος οἷον ἀβρύνεσθαι, ὡσπερ ἢ τῇ παλάμῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐδραζόμενος, ἢ τῷ ἄνωθεν νεύματι ὡς τὸ πᾶν συνεχόμενος, οὗ τὴν ἄλλην θέσιν καὶ τὴν ἐν καλῷ τάξιν καὶ ἀρμονίαν, ὡς ἐνόν γε διαλαβεῖν, ἔργον σπουδῆς ἐτέρας καὶ κρείττονος ἢ καθ' ἡμᾶς· ὥπερ οὐκ οὐκ

Translation

Praise of the Hagia Sophia.

Among these [edifices, the city] has erected this great temple,¹ which truly bears the name of His own Wisdom,² and which is the most fitting ornament for the city, appropriate for the present opportunity and way of life; for it is immense and superior to all [churches] everywhere, both in size and luxury and, moreover, it mightily surpasses all by means of its measured solemnity.³ “All huge and hugely,”⁴ it stretches high longing, as one may assume, to mingle with the star-studded sky;⁵ and from this it demonstrates that it truly is the work of God.⁶ With its height it vies with the eyes and it somehow escapes the viewer hiding behind its size, like a beloved one,⁷ and imitates the nature of the One whose name it boasts, by receding for as much as it seems to be apprehended.⁸ Still, it does not allow anyone, once captured by it, to have an easy departure but, rather, a very difficult one, and it does not permit nonchalance/idleness to overwhelm [him]. And vision constantly shifts to each [of its aspects], unable to find which one prevails.⁹ For the edifice that has been erected is so great, that someone who still hasn’t seen it might assume that it is the work of madness to have conceived it and, once he sees it, he is bound to say that it is beyond the power of a man [to accomplish it].¹⁰ But, the temple makes clear to those who behold it, to which city it belongs and ensures that this ornament could not be [the product of] any other;¹¹ for all the other cities would not suffice by nature to put in place such a building. And I am of the opinion that if someone were to encounter some poets, who might set aside the other myths, they would not lie in this, namely, that this is truly the work and pride of gods alone.¹² But, I think, that I, myself, would rather easily say that this masterpiece is the work of the most high Trinity, so that It might have, even on earth, a modest abode¹³ if, perchance, the need arises to mingle with us. However, although this is such a great church, its beauty exceeds its size,¹⁴ projecting simplicity through its well-ordered entity. Moreover, [the church] makes the city conspicuous well ahead of time to those coming from afar and putting into port, by fulfilling the task of signal fires or mountains,¹⁵ no less than by the comfort and the other luxury¹⁶ it provides in its precincts, with which it is adorned more than words can tell [so to say], so that it happens to be impossible to decide what to marvel at more: its size or its beauty?¹⁷ For it is [structured in] three levels and one part of it is a spectacle at ground level embellishing with ineffable beauty what cannot be seen, another part extends towards the heavens, resembling the ethereal expanse,¹⁸ and the middle one is impossible to describe in words and calculate accurately. As for the walks and the winding alleys that form integral parts of the structure, it might be fitting to leave them to the surveyors, but I do not know whether such a task might be toilsome [even for them] to accomplish.¹⁹ Here, one could see everywhere a paradoxical combination of length with width and of depth with height, which purposefully complete the temple and compete with each other.²⁰ From this, it is also possible to once again see a certain noble contest²¹ among the elements of nature, each one of them claiming possession of the church; for the ether claims it as its own as the temple ascends in height, still the earth holds fast onto it and, I think, that the air might stop blowing if something

ἄν τις ἀμάρτοι, ἢ στερέωμα στερεώματος, ἢ οὐρανοῦ ἐφαρμόσας εἶναι ἀκρόπολιν καὶ ὄρον ἔσχατον τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς ἀγαθῶν προσειπῶν, οὐκ ἐν γῆ πεπηγότα, ἀλλ' ἐξημμένον τῷ ὄντι τῆ ἄνωθεν ἐκείνη καὶ χρυσέα σειρᾶ, ὡς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ προβάντα, χάσμα μέγα εἶναι διασπάντος τε καὶ διερρωγότητος. οὕτω δ' ἔχει κάλλους καὶ μεγέθους τὸ ἔργον, ὥστε οὔτε ἄπορος λόγων οὕτως οὐδεὶς ἐστίν, ὡς μὴ ἂν ἐθέλειν θαυμάζειν ἰδῶν, οὔτ' αὖθις λέγειν οὕτω πρόχειρος, ὡς ἐνδείξασθαι ῥάδιον εἶναι παντὶ καὶ μὴ δυσχερὲς ἐγχειρῆσαι. ὁ μὲν δὲ λόγος οὕτω τοῖς τῆς πόλεως καταγοητεύσας καλοῖς, παρήνεγκε τοῦ σκοποῦ, ἀθρόον ἐπεισεσῶν. ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὴν ὑπόσχεσιν ἄλιν ἀναστρεπτέον τῆς διηγήσεως.

Ταύτης δὲ τῆς βασιλευούσης τῶν πόλεων, οὐ πολλῶ τῶν χερσαίων τειχῶν ἄποθεν πρὸς θάλασσαν ἐπινεύοντα, ἔνθα τὸ ἀνέκαθεν αἱ Χρύσειαι Πύλαι πρὸς δόξαν ἦσαν τῆ βασιλίδι, τόπος τίς ἐστίν ὡσεὶ στάδιον ἐν διέχων τῆς πόλεως, ὅση πέφυκεν ἀρετὴν εἶναι γῆς κεκτημένος, ἐξ ἀρχαίων δ' ἀνεμμένος τῆ Θεομήτορι· καὶ ὁ τόπος τοῦ ἀέρος ἐν καλῷ κείμενος, δένδροις μὲν παντοίοις κατάφυτος, πλατάνων δὲ τὸ πλεῖστον εὐφυῖα καὶ ἀναδρομῆ κυπαρίττων ὠραϊζόμενος. πόα οὖν αὐτὸν εὐθαλῆς καὶ μαλακὴ περιέτρεχεν, ἄνθη μὲν παντοῖα προβαλλομένη, ἀποχρῶσα μὲν ἐν στιβάδι, ἀρίστη δὲ καὶ βοσκήμασιν ἐφειμένη. πηγὴ δὲ ἀφθόνου καὶ διειδοῦς νάματος ἐξεπίτηδες ἀνατρέχουσα, παρεῖχε μὲν τῷ τόπῳ μετὰ ῥαστώνης ὄσης τὸ χάριεν, εὐπρόσωπον δὲ καὶ τὸν χῶρον ἅμα καθίστα. οὐ μὴν δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ θεία χάρις τῷ ὕδατι ἐπιρρεύσασα, ἐνεργὸν αὐτίκα ἐδείκνυ καὶ πρὸς γονὰς θαυμάτων ἐρρωμενέστερον. χρόνος ὁ μεταξὺ συχνὸς διερρωρηκῶς, καὶ τῷ μὲν ὕδατι ἰλὺς κατὰ βραχὺ ἀθροισθεῖσα τὴν πηγὴν ἀποκρύπτει καὶ ἀργὴν πρὸς ἀνάδοσιν ὕδατος δείκνυσιν. ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ συνηρεφές τῶν δένδρων ἀναφράξαν τὴν εἴσοδον, ὑπὸ συνεργῶ τῷ μέσῳ χρόνῳ, λήθη τὰ τοῦ τόπου δίδωσιν, καὶ ἦν ὁ τόπος ἰλὺς δὲ καὶ μόνη συνεστηκυῖα, ἐπὶ νοτίδι βραχυτάτη γνωριζομένη.

else draws the temple to itself away from it [the air], while, finally, the water pours all over it with sweetness, because this great temple becomes its vehicle and for this reason, the water, snatching it, makes it its own.²² But the temple, although resolving, perhaps, their strife, by equally devoting itself to all, “uprears its head to heaven though its feet are still on earth,”²³ and belongs to none of them, wavering incessantly (as if, on account of the strife of the elements, it is fixed on nothing on the side of the earth),²⁴ and leading to all directions those enamored with it by its flight and by stealing away when, supposedly, grasped [by the hand].²⁵ It also seems that this temple is somehow beautified, as if it either rests in the palm of God, or is entirely held together by the Spirit from above. Describing, however, as much as possible the other aspects of its location and the splendor of its orderly and harmonious structure, would be the subject of another effort which is above my abilities.²⁶ And one might not be wrong in applying to it the terms “firmament of the firmament” or “citadel of heavens”²⁷ and calling it “the most sublime of our good things,” which is not fixed on earth but it is truly suspended by that heavenly and golden chain,²⁷ as if it has emerged from a sky that split and parted into a great chasm. Therefore, such is the beauty and the magnitude of this work that there is no one so deficient in words that might be unwilling to express his admiration having seen it and, again not anyone so adept at extemporizing in speaking, in order to demonstrate that it is easy and simple for everyone to try and perform it.²⁹ However, the discourse, having concerned itself with the City’s charms, was so enchanted, that it suddenly veered off its course. So let us turn back to the objective of our narrative.

In this Queen of the Cities, not far from the land walls in the direction of the sea, where the Golden Gates³⁰ have always been for the glory of the Queen-city, there is a place at a distance of almost a stadium from the city.³¹ This place possesses all the natural superior qualities on earth and has been dedicated to the Theotokos since ancient times. The place is situated under a fair atmosphere and is thoroughly planted with all sorts of trees, adorned by the abundant growth of plane trees and cypress-tree hedges. It is covered by thick and soft grass which grows flowers of every kind with a multitude of tender stalks, and is of perfect quality for animals to freely graze on. A spring with abundant and clear water flowed naturally forth, gracing this place with charm and great luxury³² and, at the same time, making the region pleasant.³³ Moreover, Divine Grace came down to the water rendering it immediately active and more effective in producing miracles. However, since then, a long time has passed and, little by little, silt accumulated in the water, covered the spring, and interrupted the flow of the stream. In addition, the thick shade of the trees blocked the entrance and, with the assistance of passing time, committed the position of the spring to oblivion; and the site was mostly a mass of mud alone, recognized (as a spring) only by the presence of small patches of moisture.

Commentary

1. For churches as a major feature of urban life in early Byzantium see Saradi 2006: 385–439. For Hagia Sophia in particular see Mango 1986: 59–68; Krautheimer 1984: 205ff.; Ćurčić 2010: 192–98; Mainstone 1988.
2. The predominant legend that attributes the name of Hagia Sophia to a dream dreamt by Justinian is found in the *Patria* account, Book 4, the *Narrative about the Construction of the Temple of the Great Church of God which is called Hagia Sophia*, see Anonymous, *Accounts of Medieval Constantinople*, ed. Berger, p. 246 (transl. p. 247).
3. Xanthopoulos has based the entire sentence from μάλα to νικῶν on another excerpt from Aristides' *Panathenaic Oration*, p. 188.1–9. He also seems to draw inspiration from Prokopios' opening remarks on Hagia Sophia (*On Buildings*, ed. Wirth, p. 10).⁹²
4. An Homeric expression, *Il.*16.776, also used by Metochites in his *Byzantios*, ed. Polemis, p. 348.59.
5. Concerning the height of the temple that reaches into the sky, see also Prokopios, *On Buildings*, ed. Wirth, p. 10.3 and Menander's *Division of Epideictic Speeches*, Russell and Wilson 1981: 220 (445.2–4), with Saradi 2006: 67.
6. For the perception of Divine agency in relation to the building of Hagia Sophia see Prokopios, *On Buildings*, p. 14–15; Metochites *Byzantios*, p. 344.15–20, 346.45–49. For a pagan perspective (on the Temple of Kyzikos) see Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos About The Temple*, p. 240.20; also DeLaine 2002: 209.
7. Cf. Metochites, *Nikaeus*, ed. Sathas, p. 143.1–2.⁹³
8. Gregory of Nazianzos, *Oration 2*, ed. Bernardi, p. 188 (*verbatim*).
9. Xanthopoulos has composed this sentence, paraphrasing or using unchanged most of the words from a passage in Prokopios, *On Buildings*, p. 13.⁹⁴
10. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos About the Temple*, p. 240.3–6.⁹⁵ For the attitude behind this statement and its implications, see Text and Context, p. 920–21. DeLaine 2002: 209–10.
11. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos About the Temple*, p. 240.8–10.⁹⁶ For the integration of temples into the Christian urban landscape see Saradi 2006: 65–68, 385ff.

92 Aristides: ... καὶ μάλα τῶν Ἀθηνῶν κόσμος οἰκίος, καὶ οἷα δὴ τῆς παρουσίας ἐξουσίας καὶ διαίτης ... σεμνότητι καὶ τρυφῇ νικῶντα ... ὀρωμένοις νικᾶν; Prokopios: ... κάλλει δὲ ἀμυθῆτω ἀποσεμνύνεται. τῷ τε γὰρ ὄγκῳ κεκόμψευται καὶ τῇ ἀρμονίᾳ τοῦ μέτρου, οὔτε τι ὑπεράγαν οὔτε τι ἐνδεῶς ἔχουσα, ἐπεὶ καὶ τοῦ ξυνειθισμένου κομπωδεστέρα καὶ τοῦ ἀμέτρου κοσμιωτέρα ἐπιεικῶς ἐστι ... (this last sentence ingeniously summarized by that λελογισμένη σεμνότητι of Xanthopoulos).

93 ... πρόεισι εἰς μῆιστον, φεύγουσα τὸν θεατὴν, ἀφορμὴν ἐρωτικοῦ πάθους.

94 ... οὐ παρέχονται δὲ τοῖς θεωμένοις αὐτῶν τινι ἐμφιλοχωρεῖν ἐπὶ πολὺ τὴν ὄψιν, ... ἀγχίστροφός τε ἡ τῆς θέας μεταβολὴ ἐς αἰεὶ γίγνεται, ἀπολέξασθαι τοῦ ἐσορῶντος οὐδαμῆ ἔχοντος ὃ τι ἂν ποτε ἀγασθεῖ μάλλον τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων.

95 ... τοσοῦτον ἔργον ἐγείραντες, ὅσον ἐνθυμηθῆναι μὲν ἂν μανίας ἔργον εἶναι ἔδοξεν, ἐκτελέσαι δὲ κρεῖττον ἢ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον.

96 ... οἶμαι δ' ἂν ἅπαντας συμφῆσαι μήτε πόλεως ἂν ἄλλης εἶναι τὸ ἀνάθημα μήτε λιθοτομίας ἑτέρας ἢ τῆς ὑμετέρας· οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἀρκέσαι τὴν φύσιν.

12. In this phrase, Xanthopoulos continues to adapt to Christian circumstances a phrase that occurs again in Aristides' *Panegyric in Kyzikos About the Temple*, p. 240.17–24.⁹⁷ Note, though, that here the meaning is similar, not the wording. The word κρειττόνων (typical for pagan gods), which might strike one as odd in a Christian context, obviously alludes to Poseidon and Apollo and the poets are Homer and Hesiod in Aristides' passage. Cf. also Menander, *Division of Epideictic Speeches*, Russell and Wilson 1981: 222 (445.14–15).
13. For Hagia Sophia as the abode of the Holy Trinity cf. Prokopios, *On Buildings*, p. 15; Metochites, *Byzantios*, p. 350.102–04.
14. Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos About the Temple*, p. 240.17 (*verbatim*). Cf. Manuel Holobolos, *Oration 2*, ed. Treu, p. 58.18–19, also Metochites, *Byzantios*, p. 350.86–87.
15. The idea of Hagia Sophia serving as a beacon for sailors is again inspired by Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos About the Temple*, p. 240.12–16.⁹⁸ It seems that a similar concept, poetically elaborated, is also present (perhaps independently from Aristides) in Paul Silentiary's *Description of Saint Sophia* (ed. de Stefani, vv. 825–920). The whole description closes with this comparison and metaphor but the focus in Paul is on the lavish lighting of the Church, especially during the night. For the implied parallel with the Pharos of Alexandria see Text and Context, p. 920; DeLaine 2002: 210 (see fn. 82, p. 919), Macrides and Magdalino 1988: 72–73, 77, with more emphasis on historical circumstances and metaphorical implications.
16. Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos About the Temple*, p. 240.28 (*verbatim*).
17. *Ibid.*, p. 240.17.
18. “Ethereal expanse,” (αἰθερίω χύματι) is an extremely rare expression which occurs only in Proclus, *The Theology of Plato*. I relied on its old translation by Thomas Taylor (see Bibliography, p. 941), but I wonder whether Xanthopoulos uses this exceptionally uncommon expression to indicate the starry sky or, perhaps, the galaxy.
19. The long period from “For it is” down to “accomplish” is lifted again from Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos About the Temple*, p. 240.30–241.9.⁹⁹ Despite the drastic alterations, the source is easy to identify. From this point on, Xanthopoulos makes a rather hasty attempt to cover some technical aspects of the monument and his language is

97 ... εἰ δ' ἔτυχον παριόντες Ὀμηρος καὶ Ἡσίοδος, ῥαδίως ἂν μοι δοκοῦσιν εἰπεῖν τὸ περὶ τοῦ τείχους τοῦ Τρωικοῦ μυθολόγημα μεταθέντες, ὡς ἄρα Ποσειδῶν καὶ Ἀπόλλων κοινῇ φιλοτεχνήσαντες ἀπειργάσαντο τὸ ἔργον τῆ πόλει, ὁ μὲν τὴν πέτραν παρασχῶν ἐκ τοῦ βυθοῦ τῆς θαλάττης καὶ ἅμα ποιήσας δυνατὴν εἶναι κομισθῆναι, ὁ δ' ὥσπερ εἰκὸς οἰκιστὴν βουλευθεὶς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ πόλιν κοσμήσαι προσθήκη τηλικαύτη.

98 ... νῦν δὲ ὁ νεῶς ἀντί τῶν ὀράων ἀρκεῖ, καὶ μόνοις ὑμῖν οὐδὲν δεῖ λαμπτήρων οὐδὲ πυρσῶν οὐδὲ πύργων πρὸς τοὺς καταίροντας, ἀλλ' ὁ νεῶς πληρῶν ἅπαν τὸ ὀρώμενον τὴν τε πόλιν καὶ τὴν μεγαλοψυχίαν τῶν ἐχόντων αὐτὴν ὁμοῦ δηλοῖ.

99 ... πάρεστιν ὄραν νεῶν τὸν μέγιστον, ... τριπλοῦν τῆ φύσει. τὰ μὲν γὰρ αὐτοῦ κατάγειός ἐστι θέα, τὰ δ' ὑπερῶς, μέση δὲ ἡ νενομισμένη. δρόμοι δὲ ὑπὸ γῆν τε καὶ κρεμαστοὶ δι' αὐτοῦ διήκουτες κύκλω, ὥσπερ οὐκ ἐν προσθήκης μέρει, ἀλλ' ἐξεπίτηδες εἶναι δρόμοι πεπονημένοι. Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν οὐδὲν δεῖ λόγῳ κοσμεῖν, ἀλλ' εἰς τοὺς γεωμέτρως καὶ ἐπαινέτας ἀποθέσθαι, καὶ τούτων ὅσοι τέλειοι καὶ ἱκανοὶ μετρήσαι πρᾶγμα τοσοῦτον, ὡς ἐγὼ καὶ τοῦτο ὀρωδῶ, μὴ οὐδὲ τούτοις πᾶσιν ἢ τὴν ἀκριβείαν ἐξευρεῖν. For a reference to a visualization of this description see n. 91, p. 920.

- rather evasive, as is his working method. See the detailed description of Hagia Sophia in Krautheimer 1984: 205ff.
20. Here, one ... each other: A summary reference to what is described in detail by Prokopios, *On Buildings*, p. 10.3–14. In particular, all this might be inspired by Prokopios' phrase: "For it proudly reveals its mass and the harmony of its proportions/τῶ τε γὰρ ὄγκῳ κεκόμψεται καὶ τῆ ἁρμονίᾳ τοῦ μέτρου" (*ibid.*).
 21. Greek: ἔριν δὴ τινα ἀγαθῆν, cf. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, ed. Solmsen, l. 24.
 22. I have been unable to find any reference, even rhetorical, to a contest among the elements claiming a building. At first glance, this extensive metaphor indicates the harmony in which the Church of Hagia Sophia co-exists with its earthly environment and the four elements of nature. In this understanding the building is presented here as something monumental on the one hand, a landmark (evident by its function as lighthouse or mountain see n. 15, p. 927) but, on the other hand, not as simply challenging nature, as is the common understanding in Roman monumental architecture,¹⁰⁰ but in harmony with it.
 23. Another Homeric reference, *Il.* 4.443, also inserted in a similar context in the *Ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia* of Michael of Thessaloniki, eds. Mango and Parker, 237.92–93.
 24. Xanthopoulos gives his own description of the "floating impression" the upper part of the church, and especially its arches (here, most likely) and its dome (δόμος), imprints on the beholder, firstly expressed by Prokopios: "For it seems somehow to float in the air on no firm basis, but to be poised aloft to the peril of those inside it. Yet actually it is braced with exceptional firmness and security."¹⁰¹
 25. The phrase from "and leading ... hand" is lifted from Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration* 2, ed. Bernardi, p. 188 (see also the Commentary, n. 8, p. 926).¹⁰² Xanthopoulos applies to the Church a quality attributed by Gregory of Nazianzos to the Divinity, i.e. the inaccessibility by any human. As a concept, this, in fact, is the basis of apophatic theology and the phrases from Gregory's *Oration* 2 are derived from a paragraph (2.76) of the work that expands on negative/apophatic expressions on God (most notable: "οὐ [i.e. God] σκότος ἀποκρυφή/Who hides in darkness"). A similar concept is found in *Oration* 28.3 of Gregory and other Church Fathers.¹⁰³
 26. With this statement, Xanthopoulos makes clear that his intention is not to give any technical description of the building, such as the ones found in Prokopios, *On Buildings*, the *Description of Saint Sophia* by Paul the Silentiary, and the *Ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia* by Michael of Thessaloniki. He certainly takes recourse to the "inadequacy *topos*."¹⁰⁴

100 See DeLaine 2002: 210–13.

101 Transl. Downey, p. 17: Greek text, ed. Wirth, p. 11: δοκεῖ γὰρ πη οὐκ ἐν βεβαίῳ ἐπηρωρῆσθαι, ἀλλ' ἐπικινδύνως τοῖς ἐνθάδε οὔσι μετεωρίζεσθαι. καὶ τοι διαφερόντως ἐν τῷ βεβαίῳ τῆς ἀσφαλείας ἐστήρικται.

102 ... καὶ ὑπάγων πρὸς τὰ ἄνω τὸν ἐραστήν τῷ φεύγειν, καὶ τῷ ὅσον κρατούμενος κλέπτεσθαι.

103 See Giulea 2010; Laird 1999: 592–94 on the same topic, but in Gregory of Nyssa and other earlier Church Fathers.

104 On the "inadequacy *topos*" see Webb 1999: 59–60.

27. Cf. Aristides, *Panathenaic Oration*, p. 100.16.¹⁰⁵
28. Cf. Prokopios, *On Buildings*, p. 12.19–21.¹⁰⁶ Prokopios in this passage refers to the dome exclusively, whereas Xanthopoulos applies the whole comparison to the entire church. The reading $\sigma\epsilon\iota\rho\zeta$, which is emended by Prokopios' edition to $\sigma\phi\alpha\iota\rho\alpha$, is supported by all extant manuscripts of Prokopios, Zonaras (*ibid.*, p. 12 *apparatus criticus*) and, in addition, by all manuscripts of the Pege Miracles. The emendation seems to be superfluous.¹⁰⁷
29. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric in Kyzikos about the Temple*, p. 239.6–7.¹⁰⁸
30. Χρύσειαι Πύλαι/Golden Gates: This is a reference to the Golden Gate of Theodosius (most likely I), which was one of the Gates of the Land Walls of Constantinople towards the South not far from the sea of Marmara. It was used by many Emperors for triumphal entries to the City.¹⁰⁹ In reality, the Pege Shrine is closer to the Gate of Selymbria known also as the Pege Gate.¹¹⁰
31. Prokopios, *On Buildings*, ed. Wirth, p. 21.11–13 is the source of inspiration for this and the next passage.¹¹¹
32. Cf. Prokopios, *ibid.*, p. 21.1–4. The text is excessively amplified here by Xanthopoulos.¹¹²
33. This brief *ekphrasis* of a *locus amoenus* surrounding the Shrine of the Pege faithfully follows the prescription of “how to praise a country” by Menander, albeit in a very rudimentary form. Still, key words and concepts that fulfill the “headings of purpose” of a text like our *ekphrasis* are present as, for example, pleasure ($\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha\iota\zeta\acute{\omicron}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$, $\rho\acute{\alpha}\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}\nu\eta$, $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\epsilon\nu$, $\epsilon\upsilon\pi\rho\acute{\omicron}\sigma\omega\pi\omicron\nu$ $\chi\acute{\omega}\rho\omicron\nu$) and utility (the possibility for animals to freely graze).

105 ... τὴν ἀκρόπολιν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ...

106 ... δοκεῖ δὲ οὐκ ἐπὶ στερεῶς τῆς οἰκοδομίας ἐστάναι, ἀλλὰ τῇ σφαίρα τῆ χρυσεῖ ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐξημμένη καλύπτει τὸν χώρον.

107 For the “floating dome” see DeLaine 2002: 217.

108 ... κάλλη τοίνυν δημοσίων οἰκοδομημάτων ... καὶ μέγεθος τῆς πόλεως οὐτ' ἄπορος λόγων οὕτως οὐδεὶς ὥστε μὴ ἂν ἔχειν ἐπαινεῖν οὐθ' οὕτω λέγειν ἱκανὸς ὥστε ῥαδίως ἂν ἐνδείξασθαι.

109 See Bardill 1999; Mango 2000.

110 See Gedeon 1886: 15.

111 ... ταῦτα δὲ ἄμφω τὰ ἱερά προὸ τοῦ τῆς πόλεως πεποῖηται τείχους, ... τὸ δὲ ἀγχιστά πη τῶν Χρυσῶν καλουμένων Πυλῶν, ἃς δὴ ἀμφὶ τὸ τοῦ ἐρύματος πέρας συμβαίνει εἶναι ...

112 ... ἐνταῦθά ἐστι δάσος κυπαρίσσων ἀμφιλαφές, λειμῶν ἐν ἀπαλαῖς ταῖς ἀρούραις τεθελῶς ἄνθεσι, παράδεισος εὐφορῶν τὰ ὠραῖα, πηγὴ ἀσφοφτὴ βλύζουσα γαληνὸν τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ πότιμον, ἱεροπρεπετὴ ἐπιεικῶς πάντα.

Text C | *Ekphrasis of the Shrine of Pege*

Significance

The significance of this brief *ekphrasis* lies mainly in two aspects. First, despite its limited, but crucial phrasal dependence on Prokopios' *On Buildings*, it appears to give an adequate description of a church unnoticed by historians of Byzantine architecture.¹¹³ Xanthopoulos' witness is worth further investigation by historians of Byzantine architecture and art for its account of later structural developments. Second, the highly spiritual description of the dome mosaic of the Virgin – Zoodochos Pege with the metaphorical/theological equation of the water of the Pege with Christ (the *intelligible Sun*) makes even more nuanced the theological contours of this particular iconographic type and enhances its originality (see relevant comments). Thanks to its dependence on a particular passage from Prokopios this *ekphrasis* touches upon at least one of the topics that became part of a Christian aesthetics of the “dematerialization” of the object, i.e. on the abundance of light (see the Commentary, n. 9, p. 938, and fn. 89, p. 920).

Text and Context

This is a rather brief *ekphrasis* that purports to be of the first building of the Pege (rather than the later additions to the complex and monastery) that was built by Leo I (r.457–74) and included a crypt within the church described here.¹¹⁴ The text preceding this *ekphrasis* explains how Leo miraculously discovered the site of the Pege, when he arrived *in situ* while helping a blind man. Eventually, with the intervention of an invisible voice, which gave him instructions, Leo was able to heal the man with the water and mud that he found at the fountain, even though this was blocked by trees and plants. Since the voice had also predicted his elevation to the imperial throne, Leo returned the favor as soon as he became emperor and built the church in honor of the Theotokos of Pege (see figs. I.8.2b and I.8.2c).¹¹⁵ The text describes a building that was in all probability originally a domed basilica. However, the term “stoa” in the text (which in the particular context I translate as “apse or vault”) might indicate a cruciform church. If Xanthopoulos has a cross-in-square plan in mind¹¹⁶ this is an anachronism that might¹¹⁷ point to a later restoration of the building after its partial destruction by an earthquake in 869. Compared to the *ekphrasis* of Hagia Sophia, this one relies to a lesser degree on phrases and words borrowed and adapted from the sixth-century *ekphrasis* of the same church by Prokopios (see the Commentary, p. 938) and Lucian. Still, our text, as is, allows for the conclusion that the Pege shrine differed from Hagia Sophia, with its floor considerably below ground level, and its

113 For example, I have not found any reference to this text in Ćurčić 2010.

114 For a first approach to the Pege see C. Mango and N. P. Ševčenko, *ODB*, s.v. Pege, 1616; the crypt is called *Kataphyion* in the *Anonymous Miracles of the Pege* p. 210/211.

115 For a detailed discussion of events and all related information on the content of the present *ekphrasis*, with most updated bibliography, see Talbot 2015: 164–71, esp. 169–70.

116 For which see Mango 1986: 96–97.

117 For the appearance of the cross-in-square church in early ninth century see Mango, 1986; Ćurčić 2010: 274.



Fig. I.8.2b The shrine in the Monastery of Theotokos Pege, Balikli, Istanbul, October 3, 2017
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upper section well above the ground. The building was rectangular, with a width measuring one third of its length and a domed ceiling resting on arches. Windows, probably in or beneath the tympanum of the dome, allowed for ample light. The fountain was situated in a crypt at the lowest level of the nave and two balustraded flights of twenty-five steps each led to it, while two smaller flights of six steps each allowed access to a space above and behind the spring. A covered duct divided the crypt into two and through its two



Fig. I.8.2c Image of the Theodochos Pege, Church of Panagia Hodegetria Mystras, Ephorate of Antiquities of Lakonia

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openings provided access to the water and the mud.¹¹⁸ The ceiling was covered in gold and the dome was decorated with the original image of the so called Zoodochos Pege [life-bearing fountain], an image presenting the Virgin with her hands raised combined with a frontal image of the Christ-child against her chest, both resting on or levitating above a miraculous fountain.¹¹⁹ The originality of this iconographic type is well described by Teteriatnikov.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Talbot 2015: 169.

¹¹⁹ See Teteriatnikov in Vassilaki 2005: 228–29, who dates the appearance of this image between 1306 and 1320.

¹²⁰ Vassilaki 2005: 229–33.

Text

Περὶ τοῦ νεῶ τῆς Πηγῆς καὶ ἔκφρασις αὐτοῦ.

Λέων γε μὴν ὁ μέγας ἐς ὕστερον κατὰ τὴν τῆς Θεομήτορος πρόρρησιν τῷ βασιλείῳ θρόνῳ ἐνιδρυθεὶς, αὐτίκα τὴν εὐεργέτιν ἀμείβεται. καὶ δὴ τὸν τόπον ἐκείνον τῆς ἰλῦος ἀνακαθάρας, καὶ τῆς πηγῆς ἀναστομώσας τὴν φλέβα, ἐς πολὺ καὶ μέγα τι βάθους ἰών, ἐκκαθαίρει μὲν αὐτῆς ἅπαν νόθον καὶ περιττόν, περὶ κύκλῳ δὲ ταύτην ἰκανῶς διαφράξας οἰκοδομῖα στερρᾶ, νεῶν τῇ Θεομήτορι ἀνιστᾶ, ἐπ' αὐτὴν δὴ τὴν πηγὴν περιστήσας τὸν ὄροφον. ὁ δὲ ἐστὶν οὐχ ἥττον ἐς γῆν βαθυνόμενος, ἢ ὑπὲρ γῆν τὸ ὀρώμενον. ἄνεισι μὲν γὰρ ἐξ αὐτῶν, οἶμαι, τῆς γῆς τῶν κρηπίδων τὰ κτίσματα, ἐν τετραγώνῳ δῆθεν ξυγκείμενα, ἔτερομήκη δὲ τὴν θέσιν καθιστῶντα τῷ δόμῳ, ὡς συμβαίνειν τριτημόρια που εἶναι τῷ μήκει τὸ εὖρος. ἀλλ' ἀποίκιλος μὲν ἡ οἰκοδομῖα τοῖς τοίχοις ἕως οὗ τῆς γῆς ὑπερκύψειαν, μικρὸν δ' ὑπερφανέντες τῆς γῆς, αὐτίκα ποικίλλονται· στοὰς γὰρ τέσσαρας διαγράφουσιν, ὧν αἱ μὲν δύο πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα καὶ δύνοντά που τὸν ἥλιον κατὰ κενοῦ τοῦ ἀέρος μετεωρίζονται, αἱ δ' ἐπὶ θάτερα τούτων, τοῖς γειτνιωσὶν ἐναπεριδόμεναι τοίχοις, συνεξυφαίνονται καὶ τελευτήσασιν ἐπικαθῆνται. οἰκοδομῖα δὲ τις ἐφύπερθεν τῶν ἀψίδων κύκλῳ περιτρέχει τὸν δόμον, ἀνεσταλμένη κατὰ βραχύ, καὶ στοαῖς τισιν ἐπίσης διαλιπούσαις ἐρείδεται. ἐς ἀγωγὴν δὲ φώτων ἀποκεκλήρωται τὸ διάλειμμα, ἐξ ὧν καὶ φῶς ἄπειρον ἐπεισεῖ τῇ πηγῇ καὶ περιουσία αἴγλης ἐν μεγάλῳ καὶ πολλῷ τῷ φωτὶ καταστράπτει τὸν χῶρον. ἐπὶ τούτοις ἡ θόλος μετεωρίζεται, ὄροφος ἐν σφαιροειδεῖ μεταρσίῳ ἡρέμα ἐς βάθος ἐπικυρτούμενος καὶ ποσῶς αἰρόμενος εἰς μετέωρον· κόσμου δὲ τοσοῦτον τούτῳ περίεστιν, ὡς εἰκάσαι τῷ οὐρανῷ περιλαμπομένῳ καὶ ἀνθοῦντι πυρί. τοῦ γε μὴν ἀδύτου τὸ ἄνωθεν καὶ τὸ ὑπὲρ αὐτὴν δὴ τὴν πηγὴν οἰκοδόμημα ἕτερον διαφράττει ἐπιπέδῳ θόλῳ κοσμούμενον, ὡς ἂν ἀποπληροῖη τῷ ἔτερομήκει τὸ κόσμιον. καὶ τινας δὲ βαθμίδας ἐναρμοσάμενος ὁ τεχνίτης κατὰ πέντε που, οἶμαι, καὶ εἴκοσιν ἐκατέρωθεν, εὐμαρῇ τὴν κάθοδον ἐς αὐτὴν τὴν πηγὴν ὑπανέδειξεν ἐπὶ μαρμάρους συγκαταβαίνουσιν ἐντιθεῖσί τι καὶ κόσμου καὶ χειραγωγοῦσι τοὺς κατιόντας, ἵνα μὴ ταῖς νοτίσι διολισθαίνωσιν· ἡ μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν ὑπτία, θατέρα δὲ καὶ τοῦ σκολιοῦ συμμετέχουσα. χρυσοῦ μὲν ἀκιβδηλῶ ἡ ὀροφὴ πᾶσα, μᾶλλον δὲ ἡ κεφαλὴ τῷ νεῶ, κατακόρως ἐγκέκρυπται τῷ ὑέλῳ ἐπιπολάζοντι διαφανομένῳ, καὶ αὐγῇ μαρμάρων, ἃ ὁ τοῖχος ἡμφίεσται, ἀπανταχοῦ περιαστράπτει τὸ τέμενος. ἡ δὲ πηγὴ σχεδὸν κατὰ μέσον ἐστὶ τὸν χῶρον· μικρὸν γὰρ τι τοῦ μέσον εἶναι ἀναχωρεῖ, εὖρος ὀργυιῶν που δύο διακατέχουσα, ἀέννα ψυχρά τε καὶ διειδῆ προβαλλομένη τὰ ῥεῖθρα. μαρμάρων δὲ οἰκοδομὴ ἐν τετραγώνῳ αὐτὴν ἀποφράττει, στόμιον ἰκανὸν ἀνιείσα τοῖς βουλομένοις ὑδρεύεσθαι. τοῦ δ' αὖ τετραγώνου ἐξ ἐκατέρωθεν ἴσαι ταῖς προειρημέναις βαθμίδες ἐγείρονται, αἱ μὲν ἐς ἥμισυ σφαίρας σχηματιζόμεναι, ἄλλαι δὲ καὶ πρὸς τὸ τετράγωνον ἀποτελετώσαι κατὰ ἕξ ἐκατέρωθεν εἰς τὸ ἄνωθεν τῆς πηγῆς τοὺς βουλομένους διαβιβάζουσαι. καὶ μετρία δὲ τις φιάλη πρὸ τοῦ στόματος ἔστηκε τῆς πηγῆς, βραχὺ κοιλαιομένη, ὡς αὐτίκα μάλα τὴν ὑδρίαν ἐπιδεξομένη, ἐς ὅπας τινας διατετημένη, ὡς ἂν τοῖς ἐκρέουσι χώραν χαρίζηται· κοῖλον δὲ τι ἕτερον ἐπ' ἐδάφους αὐτὴν ὑποδέχεται πρὸ τῆς ἐπιρροῆς τῆς πηγῆς, στενοχωρουμένῳ δὴ τῷ ὑγρῷ ἀπανταχοῦ παρέχον διέξοδον. δίεσι δὲ ὁ ὀχετὸς κατὰ μέσον τὸν δόμον, τὸ ἄδυτον διαιρῶν ἐμπεφραγμένος παντάσασιν· ὅπας δὲ δύο ἀνοίγνυσιν,

Translation

The Church of Pege and its *Ekphrasis*.

Later on, and in accordance with the prediction of the Mother of God, Leo the Great¹ was elevated to the imperial throne, and he immediately remunerated his benefactress. Thus, he cleared out the silt from that place and reopened the vein of the source.² Reaching great depths, he removed from it all that was foreign and redundant, and fenced it all around with a sturdy edifice, raising a temple to the Mother of God, the roof of which he placed over that very spring.³ And the temple is as much dug into the ground as its [part], which is visible, rises above the ground. For the walls ascend, I think, from the very foundations of the earth, standing one next to the other in an almost square formation, and they give the temple a quadrangular shape, the length of which is about three times its width.⁴ The masonry of the walls up to the point where they emerge above ground is plain, but as soon as they protrude from the earth they immediately assume an ornate appearance. For they form four barrel vaults, two of which levitate against the empty air on the east and the west sides, while to either side of them, supported by and sitting on top of the adjacent walls,⁵ the remaining two are also conjoined.⁶ Another masonry structure encircles the edifice curving gradually upward above the arches,⁷ and rests upon a number of other arches/*stoas*, which leave openings of equal dimensions.⁸ These openings are meant to allow the entrance of light and, indeed, ample light pours into the fountain through them and makes the whole space shine in great splendor with a profusion of majestic luminescence.⁹ On top of all these hangs the dome, a roof of a sphere-like elevation, which hollows gradually [in depth] and rises considerably in height.¹⁰ And there is so much beauty in it that it resembles the heavens, glowing and flashing with fire.¹¹ The upper part of the crypt and the construction that is above the spring itself is covered by another structure which is adorned with a smooth dome, so that it might bring the beauty of the structure to perfection by means of its unequal dimensions.¹² And the master builder has attached on either side [of the crypt] a staircase of twenty-five steps each – I think –, thus making easy the descent to the fountain, with [the addition of] marble [balustrades] that gradually lead lower, adding some embellishment [to the place] and leading safely by the hand those going down so that they might not slip on the moisture. One of the staircases is straight, while the other one is somehow curved.¹³ The entire roof, or rather the head of the church,¹⁴ is thoroughly covered by the pure gold which glimmers through the glass layer, and the brightness of the marble revetments makes the temple shine throughout.¹⁵ And the fountain is almost in the middle of this space, for it is situated slightly off the center, occupying an area of about two cubits¹⁶ and gushing forth uninterrupted streams of cold and translucent water. A square marble structure fences the fountain leaving an opening sufficient for those wishing to draw water. On either side of the rectangular structure have been erected two more flights of six steps each, some of which are semi-spherical [curved], while some are square and lead whoever wishes to the area above the fountain.¹⁷ Before the mouth of the spring stands a mid-sized *phiale* [basin], which is slightly hollow, in order to accommodate a water-vessel, and perforated,

ἡ μὲν κυκλωτερεῖ λίθῳ ἐνηρμοσμένη κατὰ μέσον τὸν δόμον, ἡ δ' ἑτέρα γειτνιάζει πρὸς τ' ἄδυτα, ἑτερόμηκες περικειμένη τὸ ἔλυτρον, ἀφ' οὗ καὶ τὸν ἱερὸν πηλὸν καὶ καθάρσιον δοιδυκοειδεῖ τινι πτύφῳ ἀρύνονται, οἷς ταῦτα ἐπιτέτραπτα ὑπουργεῖν. κέκραται δὲ καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ ἐς παράδοξον ἔνωσιν· τοῦ τε γὰρ ψυχρὸν παντάπασιν εἶναι ἐνδεῖ καὶ τοῦ χλιαρὸν εἶναι πάλιν ἀφίσταται, ὡς συμβαίνει παντοῖον καὶ ὅσον γίνεσθαι τοῖς ἐθέλουσι, κατὰ τὸ τῷ μάννα ἀδόμενον. ἔστι δὲ τὰ μάλιστα διειδές τε καὶ κοῦφον ταῖς τοῦ Πνεύματος αὔραις ἱερῶς μετεωριζόμενον καί, τὸ δὴ πάντων ὑπερεκκείμενον, ὅτι τῶν ἐναντίων εἶναι θεραπείαν τὸ ὕδωρ τοῦτο συμβαίνει· ὦν γὰρ ἡ τέχνη νοσημάτων ἀπεῖπε τὴν περὶ τὸ ψυχρὸν ἀσχολίαν, τούτων εὐροις ἂν ὡς θᾶπτον τούτῳ τὴν ἴασιν. ἀλλ', ὃ με μικροῦ διέλαθεν, βούλομαι διεξιέναι ἀξιοθέατον ὄν. ἔχει μὲν γὰρ ἅπας ὁ χώρος εἰκόνας παντοίας, ἐξαισί' ἄττα τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τῆς Θεομήτορος ἐνηρμοσμένα ψηφίσι. φαῖης ἂν τοῖς πλάσμασι καὶ τὴν φύσιν αὐτὴν ὕστερεῖν. τῆ γε μὴν μέση θόλω, ἥ ὄροφος καθίσταται τῷ νεῷ, αὐτὴν ὁ πλάστης τὴν ζωηφόρον Πηγὴν χερσὶν ἰδίαις ἀρίστως διέγραψεν, τὸ πάγκαλον βρέφος καὶ προαιώνιον, ὡς διειδές τι καὶ πότιμον ὕδωρ, ζῶν καὶ ἀλλόμενον, τῶν κόλπων ἀναμορμύρουσαν. εἰκάσαις ἂν νεφέλην αὐτὴν κατιδῶν, ἡρέμα ὡς ὑετὸν ἀσποφητὴ τὸ ὕδωρ ἄνωθεν καταρρέουσαν, κἀκεῖθεν τῷ ὕδατι ἀτενίζουσαν ἐνεργὸν αὐτὸ καθιστᾶν, ἐπωάζουσαν, ὡς ἂν τις εἴποι, καὶ γόνιμον παριστάνουσαν, ἦν καὶ <ὡς> Πνεῦμα ἔγωγε τῷ παρόντι φαίην ἂν Θεοῦ τῷ ὕδατι ἐπιπήχεσθαι. καὶ γὰρ ἀμέλει τοῦ κατέναντι τῆς μορφῆς ὀμφαλοῦ καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ τῆς ῥοῆς ἐπιπωματίζοντος διαρθέντος, τῆς σκιᾶς ἀντανακλωμένης τῷ ὕδατι, ἴδοις ἂν ὡς ἐν κατόπτρῳ μετὰ τοῦ ζῶντος νάματος αὐτὴν τὴν Θεομήτορα ἐπινηχομένην καὶ μαρμαρυγὰς ὑπερφυεῖς ἀφιεῖσαν, ὡς συμβαίνει θαυμάζειν, ποτέρῳ μᾶλλον πιστευτέον εἶναι, ἄρα ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος τὸν τύπον ἄνωθεν διαγράφεσθαι τῷ ἡλίῳ κάτωθεν τῷ νοητῷ προσβάλλοντι ἀποπαλλόμενον, τὸ παραδοξότατον, κὰν τῆ ὀροφῆ διασώζεσθαι, ὃ καὶ μᾶλλον δίκαιον ἐκλογίζεσθαι, ἢ ἄνωθεν τὸν τύπον προσβάλλειν τῷ ὕδατι ὡς ἐν κατόπτρῳ ἀντανακλώμενον; ἀλλὰ τοιοῦτον μὲν τὸ τέμενος ὁ Λέων τῆ Θεομήτορι ἀνιστᾶ, Πηγὴν τὸν χώρον κατονομάσας, ἐξαισίον οἶον ἰδόντι, κρεῖττον δὲ ἢ λέγειν, καὶ τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον ἢ ἐν τῷ ὕδατι χάρις ἐξέλαμψεν. ἐς ὕστερον δὲ καὶ τινες ἄλλοι προσθήκαις οἰκοδομημάτων τὸν χώρον ἐσέμνυναν, κάλλος περιεργότερον περιθέμενοι καὶ ὠραιότεραν τῷ τόπῳ ἐπαγαγόντες εὐπρέπειαν.

in order to let the water streams flow. Another hollow structure on the ground receives the stream at the front of the mouth of the fountain, and allows the pooling water to freely flow from its brim.¹⁸ A completely covered channel runs through the middle of the building, dividing the crypt in half. [This channel] has two openings: one at the center of the building, fitted with a round stone cover, and another one closer to the crypt, which is an oblong reservoir from which attendants extract the holy and purifying mud with a pestle-shaped shovel. And the water is mixed in a paradoxical blend, for, far from being cold, it is not warm either, and it so happens that for those in need it assumes the exact quality and quantity they wish for, like the celebrated *manna*.¹⁹ It is also exceptionally transparent and light, soaring sacredly with the breath of the Holy Spirit, and, most significantly, it so happens that this water is the cure of opposites, since one might find a swift healing in it for those illnesses for which the medical art forbade contact with cold.²⁰ But what I almost forgot [and wish to describe as being worthy of seeing]²¹ is the following: the whole church contains all kinds of images with mosaics depicting certain wonderful events concerning Christ and the Theotokos. One might say that [here] nature proves inferior to art. In the middle of the dome, where there is the ceiling of the church, the artist depicted with his own hands the life-bearing Source [i.e. the Virgin Mary], who bubbles forth from her bosom the most beautiful and eternal infant in the likeness of transparent and drinkable water, which is *alive and leaping*;²² upon seeing it one might liken it [the Source] to a cloud making water flow down gently from above, as if a soundless rain, and from there [sc. above] looking down toward the water [in the *phiale*] so as to render it effective [i.e. miracle-working], incubating it, so to speak, and rendering it fertile.²³ I would say in the present sermon that this [image of the Theotokos] hovers over the water like the Spirit of God. For, indeed, whenever the plug opposite that image is raised and the flow of water is interrupted allowing the reflection of the image to appear on it, one might be able to see, as if in a mirror, the Theotokos herself floating together with the living water and emitting supernatural sparkles. As a result, one might wonder whether one should believe that it is the form leaping up from the water below that is inscribed above [i.e. on the dome] by the impact of the intelligible sun and – what is most admirable – is preserved on the dome (which is a rather accurate thought), or that it is the form reflected as if in a mirror that projects onto the water from above.²⁴ But such is the church, which Leo raised for the Mother of God, calling the place Pege, which is a wonderful sight for the beholder, and more beautiful than words can describe, and this is the way in which the grace in the water shone forth.²⁵ Later on, some others exalted the location with additions of edifices, investing it with more elaborate beauty and enhancing the comeliness of the area with charm.²⁶

Commentary

1. Leo the Great, Emperor 457–74. See *PLRE* II, Leo 6 (= Leo I), 663–64; T. E. Gregory, and A. Cutler, in *ODB*, s.v. Leo I. See also *Anonymous Miracles of the Pege*, 208–11.
2. Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Song of Songs*, ed. Langerbeck, 6.62.6–7: σὲ τὴν πηγὴν ... ἐκ τῆς πλευρᾶς τοῦ σιδήρου τὴν φλέβα ταύτην ἀναστομώσαντος, οὗ ὁ γευσάμενος πηγὴ γίνεται ὕδατος ἀλλομένου εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.
3. The building described here is also known as the Refuge (Καταφύγιον in the *Anonymous Miracles of the Pege* [p. 210] or Καταφυγὴ in later passages of Xanthopoulos' account). Other sources, starting with Prokopios' *On Buildings* (ed. Wirth, p. 21), attribute this church to Justinian. In fact, by the year 536 there was an entire monastery at that site, the abbot of which, Zenon, appears among the signatories of the *Councils of Jerusalem – Constantinople*.¹²¹
4. These proportions point to a basilica-like structure (with dome), but see also the following notes.
5. For they form ... sides ... top: The first phrase is based on a passage from Prokopios, *On Buildings*, ed. Wirth, p. 11.21–12.3, whereas the second conveys a similar image to that described by Prokopios, but in entirely different diction.¹²² What complicates the whole matter is the fact that Prokopios speaks of apses (ἀψίδας) whereas Xanthopoulos speaks of *stoas* (στοαί), but then in the next sentence Xanthopoulos speaks of apses. It seems that Xanthopoulos uses *stoa* as a synonym of apse.
6. The description of the church's architecture is rather unclear. Alice-Mary Talbot assumes that it had a domed ceiling,¹²³ but the term *stoas* (στοαί) and the way they correlate with the walls (on top of which they sit) makes one think of barrel vaults, which would also be difficult to accommodate within a basilica, and would make better sense in a cruciform church.
7. This phrase again seems to echo a similar one from Prokopios, *On Buildings*, ed. Wirth, p. 12.3–4,¹²⁴ combined with another brief sentence from the same work (*ibid.*, p. 10.21–22).¹²⁵ It is difficult to decide whether Xanthopoulos speaks here about a structure resting directly on the vaults or his use of the expression “above the arches” indicates the presence of additional arches above the vaults and below this structure.
8. This phrase, most likely, describes the drum of the dome.
9. For this phrase cf. Prokopios, *On Buildings*, ed. Wirth, p. 10.14–18.¹²⁶

121 *ACO* III, ed. Schwartz, p. 142.28–30; see also Gedeon 1886: 70.

122 ... ἐπὶ τοῦτοις δὲ ἀψίδες τέσσαρες ἐν τετραπλευρῷ ἀνέχουσι... τῶν δὲ ἀψίδων αἱ μὲν δύο κατὰ μενοῦ τοῦ ἀέρος ἐπανεστήκασιν πρὸς ἀνίσχοντά τε καὶ δύνοντά που τὸν ἥλιον, αἱ δὲ λειπόμεναι οἰκοδομίαν τέ τινα καὶ κίονας μικροῦς κομιδῇ ἔνερθεν ἔχουσιν.

123 Talbot 2015: 169.

124 ... ὑπερθεν δὲ αὐτῶν κυκλωτερῆς οἰκοδομία ἐν στρογγύλῳ ἐπίηται.

125 ... οἰκοδομία τις ἐκ γῆς ἐνέχει ... ὑπεσταλμένη κατὰ βραχύ... .

126 ... φωτὶ δὲ καὶ ἡλίου μαρμαρυγαῖς ὑπερφυῶς πλήθει. φαίης ἂν οὐκ ἔξωθεν καταλάμπεσθαι ἡλίῳ τὸν χῶρον, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀγλῆν ἐν αὐτῷ φύεσθαι, τοσαύτη τις φωτὸς περιουσία ἐς τοῦτο δὴ τὸ ἱερόν περιέχεται.

10. This brief description of the dome of the *Kataphygion* has borrowed a few key words from Prokopios' famous description of Hagia Sophia's dome (*On Buildings*, ed. Wirth., p. 12.17–33).¹²⁷
11. Cf. Lucian, *On the House*, ed. Harmon, 8.4–6.¹²⁸
12. This description indicates a domed (flat?) structure above and behind the fountain within the church.
13. The staircases might have been attached to the interior of the walls on either side of the Church. Gedeon (1889: 23–24) based on an anonymous leaflet, suggested that the fountain and the floor of the crypt were some 9 meters below ground level (in fact, he speaks about 14–15 cubits πήχεις).
14. Cf. Lucian, *On the House*, ed. Harmon, 8.1–2.¹²⁹
15. Apart from the Lucianic loan, the phrase again rearranges words from Prokopios, *On Buildings*, ed. Wirth, p. 14.4–7.¹³⁰
16. That is, about 12 feet or 4 meters wide.¹³¹
17. For a photo of the modern site, which still roughly corresponds to this section of the description see Talbot 2015: 166 or fig. I.8.2b.
18. For this basin, which might have been destroyed by a broken column referred to in a later miracle and was, possibly, replaced by a monk called Hilarion Kanabes, there is a poem by Manuel Philes.¹³²
19. See John Chrysostom, *On Penitence*, PG 49: 341.20.
20. Examples are provided by a number of miracles. For example, in cases of difficulty in urination (*dysouria*), for which the medical theory and practice forbade consumption of cold food and beverages, the fresh water of the Pege shrine provided a cure. See *Anonymous Miracles of the Pege*, p. 214/215 for such a miracle and n. 6 for a reference to the relevant medical theory. (Paul of Aegina, *Medical Compendium in Seven Books*, ed. Heiberg, 3.45.11.1–24). Note also that the entire passage from the beginning down to this sentence has been included *verbatim* in Xanthopoulos, *Ecclesiastical History*, PG 147: 74.49–77.16.
21. The bracketed sentence is extant only in Pamperis' edition (p. 26). No manuscript that I know of preserves it.
22. Cf. Jn. 4:14. For this image see Teteriatnikov 2005; Starodubčev 2009.
23. Gen. 1:3. In the middle ... fertile: This part faithfully follows the translation in Talbot 2005: 169. It is worth noting though that, despite the fact that on all icons of the Virgin Zoodochos Pege that I have been able to consult the infant Christ is present against

127 ... τούτου δὲ τοῦ κυκλοτεροῦς παμμεγέθους ἑπιναεστηκυῖα τις σφαιροειδῆς θόλος ποιεῖται αὐτὸ διαφερόντως εὐπρόσωπον... ταῦτα δὲ πάντα ἐς ἀλληλά τε παρὰ δόξαν ἐν μετασίῳ ἐναρμοσθέντα, ἕκ τε ἀλλήλων ἠωρημένα καὶ μόνοις ἐναπεριδόμενα τοῖς ἀγχιστα οὕσι ...

128 ... οὐρανὸς ἐν νυκτὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀστέρων ἐκ διαστήματος περιλαμπόμενος καὶ ἐκ διαλείμματος ἀνθῶν τῷ πυρί.

129 ... Καὶ τοῖνον ἢ τοῦδε τοῦ οἴκου ὀροφή, μᾶλλον δὲ κεφαλή, ...

130 ... χρυσῷ μὲν ἀκιβδηλῶ καταλήλειπται ἡ ὀροφή πᾶσα, κεραννύσα τὸν κόμπον τῷ κάλλει, νικᾷ μέντοι ἢ ἐκ τῶν λίθων αὐγὴ ἀνταστράπτουσα τῷ χρυσῷ.

131 See Talbot 2015: 169.

132 See Talbot 2015: 169; Talbot 1994: 147–48; see also A.-M. Talbot, II.4.11 in this volume.

the bosom of the Virgin, the text itself here speaks of a Virgin Mary “who bubbles forth from her bosom the most beautiful and eternal infant in the likeness of transparent and drinkable water, which is *alive and leaping*.” A close reading of the text indicates the presence of water in lieu of the infant-Christ as a metaphor for Him or, alternatively, water issuing forth from Her bosom next to Christ(?). If the text is not disturbed here, this is rather odd, because symbolical representations, esp. of Christ, have been discouraged since the issuing of Canon 82 of the Quinisext Council.¹³³

24. For indeed ... from above: My translation comes very close to the one found in Teteriatnikov 2005: 226, but for a slight difference: instead of reading the words τῷ ἡλίῳ τῷ νοητῷ as “perceptible sun” I understand them as a reference to Christ “the intelligible Sun.”¹³⁴ The synergy of Christ is only to be expected here since Xanthopoulos makes a case for His constant help and the “concession” of healing powers to the Theotokos (an issue raised in passing in Miracle 9 of Xanthopoulos’ collection of the Miracles of the Pege where a man from Thessaly is resurrected from the dead [see Pamperis’, edition p. 26]).
25. But such is ... forth: This phrase is also incorporated in Xanthopoulos, *Ecclesiastical History*, PG 147: 77.16–23.
26. The last phrase is also based on the *Anonymous Miracles of the Pege*, ed. and transl. Talbot, p. 210.7–9.¹³⁵

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133 691, see, e.g., ACO, Ser. II.2: 344.6–346.2.

134 Cf. M. Psellos, *Theologica* I, ed. Gautier, 69.118.

135 ... ὅτι τινες τῶν μετέπειτα καὶ προσθήκας ἐπετεχνήσαντο καὶ κάλλος περιεργότερον περιτεθείασιν καὶ ὠραιότεραν ἐπήγαγον τὴν εὐπρέπειαν.

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I.8.3 Theodore Laskaris (1221/2–1258)

Visit to Pergamon

DIMITER ANGELOV

Ed.: N. Festa, *Theodori Ducae Lascaris epistulae CCXVII* (Florence, 1898) no. 80 (107–08) (abbreviated below as “Ep.”); repub. on the basis of Festa’s edition by N. Tomadakis, *Βυζαντινή ἐπιστολογραφία* (Thessaloniki, 1993), 252–53; and also, partially and with notes, by N. Wilson, *An Anthology of Byzantine Prose* (Berlin and New York, 1971), 123–25. Corrections and emendations: Festa, Ep., X; A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *VizVrem* 6 (1899), 552; P. N. Papageorgiu, “Zu den Briefen des Theodoros Laskaris,” *BZ* 11 (1902), 20

MS.:¹ Florence, *BML*, Plutei 59.35, ff. 117r–118v (s. XIV)

Other Translations: No full translation of the letter exists. Parts of it have been rendered into English by Mango, *Art*, 245; Wilson, *Scholars*, 220–21; A. Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, 2007), 377. There is a partial French translation by Sophie Antoniadis, “Sur une lettre de Théodore II Lascaris,” *L’Hellénisme contemporain*, ser. 2, 8 (1954), 356–61 at 357–58

Significance

Letter no. 80 describes a visit to Pergamon, whose magnificent ancient ruins provoked his admiration.

The Author

See D. Angelov, I.1.3 in this volume.

Text and Context

Theodore Laskaris visited Pergamon (Bergama, Turkey) with travel companions who included his secretary Kostomyres and an attendant by the name of Christopher. The addressee George Akropolites, the future historian and one of Theodore’s teachers, was a rising civil official in the empire of Nicaea at the time. The letter was written between 1249 and 1254. All epistles in the Laurentian collection precede Theodore’s accession in 1254, while the reference to “the Goat Herd” (*tragophylon*), a comic nickname for Theodore

¹ Consulted.

Philes (Theodore Komnenos Philes), presupposes a date of composition after 1249, the earliest possible date for the latter's appointment as governor of Thessaloniki and western Macedonia. Theodore Laskaris and Theodore Philes were embroiled in a bitter personal conflict that involved mutual accusations and slanders. In Letter no. 78, Theodore asked Akropolites for his assistance against the slanderer and wrote that he was laying charges against Philes before the senior emperor John Vatatzes. The letter translated below (Letter no. 80) introduces us to a later stage of the conflict after Philes has been reprimanded and dishonored.² It is likely that the epistle dates to the period between mid 1252 and the late autumn of 1253, when Akropolites accompanied John Vatatzes on a campaign in western Macedonia and visited Thessaloniki.³

Theodore's goal in writing the letter was not to give a full description of Pergamon, but to record his impressions and mixed emotions. He approached the grandeur of the ancient ruins with the eyes of a connoisseur who admired the monumentality and lines of classical architecture. A famous Hellenistic and Roman city, Pergamon was, at the time of Theodore's visit, a key administrative and military center of the theme of Neokastra. The late antique city had extended over a large area including the lower part of the hill (on which the Hellenistic acropolis with its famous temples stood) and the plain below. By the early eighth century, Pergamon's population had declined drastically and the urban site remained mostly deserted until the late eleventh century. The emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1143–1180) re-fortified Pergamon along with other settlements in the area, such as Atramyttion and Chliara, which formed the nucleus of the newly founded theme of Neokastra. The move of the imperial government to Anatolia after the fall of Constantinople to the Crusaders in 1204 increased the strategic importance of Pergamon, whose bishop was elevated to metropolitan status. The heart of the Byzantine settlement was the fortress (the ancient acropolis), and Theodore saw a vertically structured settlement "elevated" in the air. By the middle of the thirteenth century clusters of single-floor urban houses, which were built of reused ancient stones, spread on the southern slope of the hill below the fortress amidst antique ruins. On the basis of the excavations of the houses, the population of the thirteenth-century settlement has been estimated as reaching up to 2,400 people, far less than the over 34,000 inhabitants of the antique city.⁴

2 Theodore Komnenos Philes replaced as governor of Thessaloniki and western Macedonia the *megas domestikos* Andronikos Palaiologos, who died between 1249 (he was alive in October 1248) and 1252. Theodore Laskaris discharged Philes in 1255 or 1256 and punished him with blinding. See Macrides 2007: 243 n. 6, 341 n. 10; Ahrweiler 1965: 169, 174, for the documentary evidence on Philes. On Theodore Laskaris' conflict with Philes see Epp. 77 and 78, p. 103–06, addressed to Akropolites. Epp. 36, 37, 38, and 39, p. 44–51, addressed to Nikephoros Blemmydes, pertain to the same conflict.

3 Described in detail in Akropolites, *History*, §49, §50, ed. Heisenberg and Wirth, I, 88–100; on the date of the expedition see Macrides 2007: 251.

4 See the synopsis in Rheidt 2002; see also Rheidt 1991; Rheidt 1992.

Text

Πέργαμος πόλις οἷον ἑναερία οὐ πνευμάτων κατοικητήριον, ἀλλ' ἀνθρώπων εἰς δαίμονας φυλακτήριον (οὐστίνιας δὴ τούτους, ὑποληπτέον), ἡμᾶς ὑπεδέξατο δυσθεώρητος οὔσα, οὐχ ἦττον δὲ δυσανάβατος. θεάτρων οὔσα μεστή, καὶ τούτων οἷων γεγηρακότων καὶ μαρνανθέντων τῷ χρόνῳ καὶ ὥσπερ ἐν ὑέλῳ τινὶ τὴν ποτε δεικνυμένων λαμπρότητα καὶ τὸ μεγαλοπρεπὲς τῶν δειμάτων αὐτά. ἑλληνικῆς γὰρ μεγαλονοίας ὑπάρχει ταῦτα μεστά, καὶ σοφίας ταύτης ἰνδάλματα· δεικνύει δὲ ταῦτα πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἢ πόλις κατονειδίζουσα, ὥσπερ ἀπογόνους τινάς, τοῦ πατρῶου κλέους τῷ μεγαλείῳ. σμερδαλέα γὰρ εἰσι ταῦτα πρὸς τὰς νῦν ἀνοικοδομάς, κἂν Ἀριστοτέλει δοκῆ πάντα σμικρὰ θαυμασμοῦ¹ πρὸς τὸ σύμπαν. ἀνεγείρονται δὲ καὶ τεῖχη χαλκῶν οὐρανῶν ποικίλην οἰκοδομὴν ἔχοντα. ποταμὸς δὲ μέσον διέρχεται ἀψίδεσι προμηκεστέραις² καταγεφυρούμενος. οὐ, μὰ τὸν πόλου δομήτορα, συνθέτους εἴποιοι τις εἶναι ταύτας, ἀλλ' οἷον αὐτοφυεῖς τε καὶ μονολίθους· ὥσπερ, εἶπερ εἶδε³ καὶ Φειδίας ἄλλος λιθοκόπος, ἐθαύμασε τὸ κατὰ στάθμην ἴσον τούτων καὶ ἀκλινές. μέσον δὲ τῶν οἰκοδομῶν κελλύδρια χθαμαλὰ καὶ οἷων λείψανα τῶν τεθνεώτων οἴκων ἐμφαίνονται, πολλὴν ἐμποιοῦντα τῇ θέᾳ τὴν ἀλγηδόνα. ὡς γὰρ εἰς τοὺς νῦν οἴκους αἱ τῶν μυῶν ἔχουσι τρῶγλαι, οὕτως ἂν εἴποιοι τις καὶ ταῦτα πρὸς τοὺς ἀφανιζομένους. εἰ δὲ καὶ ἡ τῶν οἰκητόρων ἀναλογία τοιαύτη, φεῦ τῆς τῶν ζώντων κακοτυχίας· πόσον ἔσχον τὸ κατ' ἔλαττον ἄνισον. ἐφ' ἑκατέρους μέρεσι δὲ τῶν τοῦ μεγάλου θεάτρου περιτειχισμάτων κυλινδρώδεις ἴστανται πύργοι, οἷον ἐξ ἴσου τοὺς λίθους ἔχειν ζηλοτυποῦντες ζώνας τέ τινας περιζωννύμενοι. οὐτε χειρὸς ἔργον, οὐτε νοὸς νόημα τοῦτο τῶν νῦν· ἐκπλήττει γὰρ καὶ βλεπόμενον. οἱ δὲ μέσον τὴν ἄνοδον ἔχοντες διαπορθμεύουσι πρὸς τὰ μετ' αὐτοὺς περιτειχίσματα τὴν ἐξέλευσιν. συναναφαίνεται δὲ τῇ πόλει καὶ θαῦμα καινόν· ὠραιότερα γὰρ εἰσι τὰ πρόποδα τῆς κορυφῆς καὶ τὰ τῶν τεθνεώτων τῶν ζώντων. ταύτην ὀρώντες ἡμεῖς πῶς μὲν ἄθυμοῦμεν, πῶς δὲ σκιρτῶμεν, καὶ ὥσπερ ἐν χαρμολύπῃ καὶ κλαυσογέλωτί τινι διάγομεν. παιόνειον δὲ τι ὥσπερ τὸν τοῦ Γαληνοῦ οἶκον ὀρώντες, ἀρούμεθα τὴν ὠφέλειαν, τὸν ἡμέτερον Χριστοφόρον, ἢ κυρτοφόρον, ἔχοντες ὑπουργόν. ταῦτα δὲ καὶ ὁ Κοστομύρης καταμαθὼν ἔδραμε κατιδεῖν προστάξει θείας τινὸς ἰσχύος· εἰ δὲ καὶ στίξεις μετὰ τὴν πρόσταξιν ἐπιστατικῶς, νοήσεις τὸ ὄθεν. ἀρύεται δὲ καθ' ἑκάστην ἐκ τῶν ὑψηλοτέρων τὰ πρόποδα, φιλεῖ, ὡς εἰκός, δὲ τὰ ἄξια φάρμακα.

Περὶ δὲ τῆς τοῦ τραγοφύλου βασιλικῆς δι' ἡμᾶς παιδείσεως καί, ὡς εἰκός, ἀτιμίας ἀντευχαριστεῖ μὲν ὁ λόγος, ὅς ἐστι βασιλικῆς διαιτητῆς ὀμιλήσεως· ἡμεῖς δὲ ὡς ὑπουργοὶ μὲν τοῦ λόγου καί, ἀνερυθριάστως εἶπω, βασιλέως υἱοὶ τε καὶ υἰωνοί, καὶ τούτῳ ἔκπαλαι, βασιλικὴν δῶμεν ἐν καιρῷ καὶ λογικὴν τὴν ἀνταμοιβήν. οὐδὲ γὰρ ἴσον τοῦ λόγου φιλοτιμίας δῶρον τοῖς βασιλεῦσι κρίνομεν φέρειν, ὧ καλλίστη μοι κεφαλὴ καὶ φιλοσοφίας καὶ σοφίας ἀκρόπολις.

Translation

Pergamon received us, a city as if elevated in the air, not a dwelling for spirits, but a protector of people against demons⁴ (you ought to understand who these are), a city difficult to see and no less difficult to climb. It is filled with sights that are aged, as it were, and withered by time, showing as in enamel⁵ the past fame and magnificence of the people who built them. For they are full of Hellenic genius and are representations of its wisdom. But the city displays them in order to reproach us, as descendants, with the greatness of its ancestral fame. For they are awe-inspiring to look at in comparison with today's buildings, as much as Aristotle thinks that anything compared with the universe is an insignificant ground for admiration.⁶ Walls diverse in their construction rise up to the brazen sky.⁷ A river flows in the middle bridged by very long arches.⁸ Someone would say – I swear by the Maker of the celestial sphere – that they are not composite but self-made, so to speak, and monolithic. If a sculptor like Phidias saw them, he would have admired their even straight lines and regularity. Humble huts and, as it were, relics of dead houses, whose appearance causes pain, are seen among the buildings. For one could say that what mouse holes are to today's houses, the latter are to the houses that have disappeared. If the analogy of the inhabitants is the same, alas, what misfortune is there for the living! How much less uneven lines they had! On each side of the walls of the great theater, round towers rise, vying with each other, so to speak, in the evenness of their stones and being girdled with some bands.⁹ This is neither the work of a modern hand, nor the concept of a modern mind. For it is astonishing even to observe. <The towers> have an ascending path between them and lead the way out toward the walls that follow. And a strange wonder is displayed simultaneously with the city. For the feet are more beautiful than the head and the works of the dead are more beautiful than those of the living. Looking at the city, we are in a way saddened and in a way exultant. And we proceed with bitter joy, as it were, and with tears mixed with laughter. As we see a hospital like Galen's residence,¹⁰ we draw benefit from it and use as a servant our friend Christopher, or rather our hunchback.¹¹ When Kostomyres learned about these things, he rushed to see them by the order of some divine power. If you will introduce punctuation carefully in accordance with the order, you will learn its origin. For every day he gets the basics [of knowledge] from those who are more exalted¹² and loves the appropriate medicines, as is right.¹³

Reason, the judge of the emperor's speech, thanks you in turn for the imperial reprimand and the disgrace, as is right, of the Goat Herd (*tragophylon*) on account of us.¹⁴ As servants of reason – and, to speak unblushingly, as sons and grandsons of an emperor (and both since long ago) – we will give him in the right time an imperial and logical retribution. For we do not reckon, my best head and acropolis of philosophy and wisdom, that it is possible to bring a gift to the emperors that equals the generous bestowal of reason.

Commentary

1. Scholars have considered the text defective here. See Ep. X (Latin pagination of the preface of Festa's edition).⁵
2. MS προμηκεστέροις.
3. I have emended ἴδη in Festa's edition to εἶδε as suggested by Papadopoulos-Kerameus. The MS has ἴδε.
4. The author's word choices would have reminded the audience of Babylon ("a dwelling for demons and a haunt for every unclean spirit") in Rev.18:2. Pergamon is presented more positively in the letter.
5. Literally "in a glass," that is, in an enamel.⁶
6. Pseudo-Aristotle, *De Mundo*, 391a18–b3.⁷
7. "Brazen sky" is derived from *Il.*, 5: 504, 11: 44, 17: 425; but cf. Deut. 28:23.
8. Probably an arched bridge or arched bridges over the Selinus River (modern Bergama Çayı).
9. Cyril Mango (*Art*, 245 n. 8a) identified the structure with the Serapaeum or Red Court below the hill, which would explain the reference to the two circular towers; the word θέατρον can mean "a sight." But it is possible that Theodore had in mind the Hellenistic theater on the steep western slope of the acropolis: the theater was "great" in contrast to the smaller Roman theater in the sanctuary of Asclepius over 2 kilometers south of the fortress. In the fifteenth century Cyriac of Ancona reported two "great amphitheaters" among the ancient remains of Pergamon.⁸
10. According to Nigel Wilson, the hospital compared to "a house of Galen" was the sanctuary of Asclepius.⁹ Alternatively, Theodore could have meant a contemporary facility for the sick and the infirm in the medieval settlement. Hospitals are known to have been built in the empire of Nicaea under imperial patronage.¹⁰ It is notable that Theodore was aware of Galen's origin from Pergamon.
11. Christopher was a servant of Theodore Laskaris with a distinctive hunch; see Ep. 168.10–13 (p. 223), Ep. 216.47–50 (p. 270). Nigel Wilson sees instead a reference to Saint Christopher as a patron of travelers.¹¹
12. That is, his teachers. The Greek word for "basics" (πρόποδα), meaning literally "feet," is used above to refer to the lower city of Pergamon as opposed to the fortified acropolis, the "head." Theodore employs here the metaphorical meaning of πρόποδα as the foundations or basics of knowledge. See Ep. 6.23 (p. 23): πρόποδα φιλοσοφίας.

⁵ Wilson 1971: 124.

⁶ See Hetherington 2000; see also the fourteenth-century ceremonial book of Pseudo-Kodinos, ed. Macrides *et al.*, 52.5, 53 n. 65.

⁷ As identified by Wilson 1971: 124; Wilson 1996: 220 n. 7.

⁸ F. Scalamonti, *Life of Cyriac of Ancona*, ed. Bodnar and Foss, 82–83.

⁹ Wilson 1971: 125; Wilson, *Scholars*, 221.

¹⁰ See Nikephoros Gregoras, ed. Schopen, I, 42.4–6; Nikephoros Blemmydes' poem on the Sosandra monastery, ed. Heisenberg, 118.104–08; Ep. 118, p. 164.7–165.12.

¹¹ Wilson 1971: 125; Wilson, *Scholars*, 221.

13. Kostomyres was an imperial secretary; see Ep. 138 (p. 195). He has been identified both with John Kostomyres, an imperial secretary and head of the *katepanikion* of Smyrna who is known from documentary evidence,¹² and with a certain Nicholas Kostomyres, a correspondent of the teacher George Babouskomites.¹³ Neither identification can be certain. Theodore Laskaris arranged for the education of imperial secretaries, which explains the mention of his progress as well as the need for punctuation of a composition by Akropolites, himself a teacher.
14. That is, Theodore Philes. On the nickname the Goat Herd (*tragophylon*) see Ep. 77.32–34 (p. 104) and n. 1.
15. At this point, the author plays with the name of his addressee (“Akropolites”) and the latter’s role as his teacher.

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¹² Ahrweiler 1965: 159.

¹³ Laurent 1935: 90, 98; Constantinides 1982: 22.

I.8.4 Basil Pediadites (after 1143–before September 1219)

Living in Corfu: A Letter to Constantine Stilbes

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: S. Lambros, “Βασιλείου Πεδιαδίτου ἐπιστολή πρὸς Κωνσταντῖνον Στιλβήν,” *Κερκυραϊκὰ ἀνέκδοτα ἐκ χειρογράφων Ἁγίου Ὁρους, Κανταβρυγίας, Μονάχου καὶ Κερκύρας* (Athens, 1882), 48–49 = *Νεοελληνικὰ Ἀνάλεκτα* 9.2, 514–15

MS.:¹ Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, no. 229 (s. XIV/XV), ff. 9r–10v

Other Translations: Partial translation in Veikou, *Epirus*, 327²

Significance

In this cluster of texts speaking about aesthetically pleasing places, Pediadites’ letter stands out as a rare example of a literary work concerning ugliness.

The Author

Basil Pediadites is an enigmatic figure and a study of his work and life is long overdue.³ He has been identified with Basil Hagiopaulites or Basil Chondros. Basil Hagiopaulites was a teacher at the school of the *Orphanotropheion* and although he was denounced when a deacon in 1168, he later became metropolitan of Corfu. He appears to have written orations, three letters, a dialog in the style of Lucian, a number of *schede* (grammatical exercises), and a poem – for which he was condemned by the Synod in 1168.

Text and Context

In the letter below Pediadites complains about the uneducated Corfiots and is nostalgic for the learned environment of Constantinople. The lack of learning on Corfu contrasts with the author’s personal erudition, as evinced by the multiple quotations of Classical authors in the letter. Similar complaints are common in Byzantine epistolography and this letter has many similarities to a letter by Apokaukos also translated in this volume.⁴ Furthermore, they would have been particularly appreciated by this very addressee. The recipient of the letter, Constantine Stilbes (d. after 1225), began a brilliant career in the

1 Not consulted.

2 Veikou includes the translation of the passage in p. 49, 1–9 of Lambros’ edition.

3 For a general introduction on Pediadites see Manafis and Polemis 1994–98: 1–12; Labate 1989: 63–72; for a complete bibliography and a full list of Pediadites’ works see Nesseris 2014: 2, 422–27 no. 171.

4 See Cavallo 2003: p. 77–106; for Apokaukos’ letter see I.8.8 in this volume.

Constantinopolitan school system as a teacher in the school of the *Ophanotropheion* (between 1182 and 1194).⁵ At some point after 1204, Stilbes followed the path to exile in Nicaea.

The letter also includes a description of the town of Corfu, called Koryphos in medieval times and which appears to be small and poor. Recent scholarship, based on both archaeological and archival research, similarly suggests that Corfu was a humble citadel (*μάστρον*) able to offer refuge to the local population.⁶ Despite the low stature of the local population, the location of the island made it a crucial geostrategic point for the Byzantine Empire.

The letter dates from slightly before 1204. Padiadites refers to his wish to return to Constantinople and thus the *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the letter is April 1204, when the fourth Crusade diverted to Constantinople. In all probability, he became metropolitan of Corfu in 1202.⁷ In his letter, Padiadites states that he composed it two years after departing to Corfu. Also, if the letter was written in late 1204, Padiadites would not refer to Stilbes as a teacher, but as the metropolitan of Kyzikos, as he had assumed that ecclesiastical office by then. Therefore, the letter dates from late 1203 or early 1204.

The text can only be found with other works by Padiadites, which are included together with letters by the eleventh-century author John Mauropous and other instructional works on rhetoric in a composite manuscript written by different hands. While a complete codicological description of the manuscript is still pending, the part with the letter has been attributed to either a fourteenth- or a fifteenth-century scribe.⁸

5 See R. Ceulemans, I.6.7 in this volume.

6 Tsougkarakis 1998: 215–28.

7 Browning, “The Patriarchal School,” 21–23; on the argument see Manafis and Polemis 1994–98: 2.

8 For the description of the manuscript see James 1895: 410–15, where the description is reproduced and a fifteenth-century date suggested for the scribe; Manafis 1976–77: 308, where a fourteenth-century date is suggested; see also Karpozelos 1990: 36.

Text

Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἐπιστολή πρὸς τὸν διδάσκαλον κύριον Κωνσταντῖνον τὸν Στιλβῆν, ἀρχιερατεύσαντος τοῦ Πεδιαδίτου ὅτε ταύτην ἔπεμψε πρὸς τὸν Στιλβῆν.

Τιμιώτατε πάντων ἐμοὶ δέσποτα, δεύτερον τοῦτο ἤδη τὸν ζωηφόρον ὁ ἥλιος διεμέτρησεν, ἀφ' οὗ συνεταξάμεθά σοι τὰ ἐξιτήρια, καὶ οὐδ' ὀλιγόστιχόν σου γράμμα ἐνεχαράξαμεν. εἴωθε γὰρ τὰ μεγάλα καὶ ἐκπληκτικώτερα τῶν πραγμάτων πρῶτα μὲν παντελῆ σιγῆν ἐμποιεῖν, ἔπειτα ἡρέμα τιθέναι τὰ λαλιάς καὶ τὰ διηγήματα. ὁ κατὰ τὸ εἶκός ἐπισυμβεβῆκει κάμοι, πρῶτα μὲν ἐννοησαμένῳ ἡλικίου τούτου κατετολήσαμεν πράγματος, μὴ καθαροὶ ἀψάμενοι καθαροῦ καὶ θεοπρεποῦς, τῆς ὑπερτάτης ἱερωσύνης, εἶτα καὶ πόθεν ἀπεληλάμεθα ποῦ, ἐκ βασιλίδος εἰς ἐσχατιάν, ἐκ πόλεως γραμμάτων εἰς ἀγροικίαν, ἐκ παντός καλοῦ εἰς πᾶν τούνατιον. καθὼς οὖν ἄνωθεν ὑπεθέμεθα ἡσυχῆ φθέγγεσθαι τοὺς τοῖς μεγάλοις ἐγκύρσαντας, σπερματικῶς τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς ὑπογράψω σοι. ἰλιόθεν με φέρων ἄνεμος Κικόνεσσι πέλασσε, τοῖς Λαιστρυγόσι, ταῖς Χαρύβδεσι, ταῖς ἀμπώτισι· τούτων γὰρ πάντων ἐν τῷ καθ' ἡμᾶς Ἀδριατικῷ πεπείρατο ὁ πολύμητις. περὶ τῶν Κορυγαίων, εἶτ' οὖν Κερκυραίων, τὰ εἰρημένα.¹ τοῦ κατ' αὐτοὺς δὲ πέρι χωρίου Ἡσίοδος διασαφήσειε κάλλιστα, χείματος μὲν λέγων εἶναι ψυχρόν, θέρους δὲ ἀργαλέον, οὐδέποτε ἔσθλόν. οὔτε ἀλέξημά ἐστι τὸν νοσοῦντα εὐρέσθαι, οὔτε νοσήλιον· ἡ τοῦ τόπου δὲ σηπεδῶν... ἀλλὰ παρὰ τοῖς Κερκυραίοις ὁ πεντηκονταέτης ἐστὶν ἐσχατόγηρως, καὶ ὡς ἂν τὸν Ἰάρεδ θαυμάσαις αὐτὸν ὡς μακροβιώτατον, οὕτω τὸν ἐξηκονταέτη ὁ Κερκυ[ρ. 49]ραῖος. κελλύδρια ἐν ἡμῖν πνιγηρὰ τε καὶ καλυβοπρεπῆ, ταῖς ἐν τοῖς ἀμπελώσι σκηναῖς ἢ ὀπωροφυλακίαις προσεικότα, ὧν πρὸς καταγέλωτα ἐκφραστέον τὸν ὄροφον.² κάλαμοι κατὰ δυάδα ζευγνύμενοι, βοτάναις συνδεδεμένοι, τὰς κεράμους ὀχοῦσιν, οὐ συγκειμένους κατὰ συνάφειαν, ἀλλὰ διεστηκυῖας ἀλλήλων ὅσον συνεκάλυψεν ἡ ἐπικειμένη, ὡς εἶναι καὶ τῷ φλογμῷ καὶ τῷ ψύχει καὶ τοῖς ὄμβροις βάσιμα πανταχόθεν. ὀπώρα ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μία ἐστὶν αὐτόχθων, ῥήτεον δὲ ὅτι οὐδὲ μέτοικος. ἡ τῆς μητροπόλεως ἰκανότης ὅποια οὐδὲ πτωχοεπισκοπῆς· καίτοι τὴν κατὰ κόσμον θυμηδίαν περόνην τῇ ψυχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεός, δι' ἧς ἀνέχεται τὴν προσεδρείαν τοῦ σώματος· πάλαι γὰρ ἂν τὸν δεσμὸν ἀπέρρηξε τῆς σαρκός τοῦ λέγοντος ἠκουσας. τί γοῦν τὸ καθέξον ἐνταῦθα ἡμᾶς; ὁ ἐντεῦθεν λαὸς εὐαγγελικῶν λόγων οὔτε συνήσιν οὔτε ἀνέχεται· λείπεται μήτε αὐτὸν ὠφελεῖσθαι καὶ ἡμᾶς ἐγκεκλεισμένους τῆς Κορυφοῦς τὴν ἐσχάτην ἀμαθίαν νοσεῖν. ποῦ γὰρ λόγος ἐνταῦθα, ποῦ βίβλος, ποῦ συζήτημα λογικόν; εὐξαιο θεόθεν φυλάττεσθαι ἡμῖν τὴν ὑγίειαν, τὸ μόνον γλυκὺ ἐνταῦθα ἡμῖν παρηγόρημα. καὶ ποτε ἀναβησόμεθα καὶ τὴν γειναμένην προσείπωμεν. οἶδα μὲν ὡς συναναβήσεται ἡ κακὴ συνοδοιπόρος πενία καὶ κατισχύσει ἡμῶν, τὰ πάντα δὲ τῆς ἐνταῦθα ὑπερορίας καὶ κακίας τῶν συνοικούντων τὴν Κερκυραίων γῆν καὶ τῆς τοῦ τόπου ἀπαρηγορησίας οἰστότερα.

Μὴ ἀπαξιώσης ἡμᾶς ἢ μᾶλλον εἰπεῖν μὴ φθονήσης ἡμῖν τοῦ ἐκ τῆς ἐπιστολιμαίας προσλαλήσεως ψυχαγωγήματος. περὶ τοῦ Γρηγορίου ἀξιῶ ὡς ἂν τυγχάνῃ τῆς προσηκούσης ἐπιμελείας. μέμνησο καὶ ἡμῶν ἐν ταῖς πρὸς Θεὸν ἐντυχίαις σου.

Translation

Letter by the same to the teacher Constantine Stilbes, Padiadites was a metropolitan when he sent this to Stilbes.³

My lord, most honored of all, the life-bringing sun has already passed its second cycle,⁴ since I composed for you a farewell speech, and I sent you a letter with not a few lines. For it seems that the most important and wondrous of all things are first concealed by absolute silence, but then they are exposed gradually with words and narratives. The same habitually happens to me. For first, following my thoughts I dared such a great deed, because without being pure I touched the pure and God-befitting deed of the priesthood; then I was sent from the one place to the other, from the Queen City⁵ to far beyond, from the learning of the city to rusticity,⁶ from everything good to everything that is exactly the opposite. Since, as I said before, the important subjects are articulated gradually, I will briefly write my news to you below.

“From Ilium, the wind bore me and brought me to Cicones,”⁷ to the Laistrygonians, to Charybdis, to tides; for the man of many wiles⁸ experienced all these in my very Adriatic sea. So, are these said about the people of Corfu⁹ – i.e. the people of Korkyra.

About their place, Hesiod has put it in the best way saying that “it is cold in winter, sultry in summer, good at no time.”¹⁰ Neither a remedy, nor a treatment can be found for the diseased; and the decay of the place ...¹¹ But a man of fifty years old is in his last days among the Corfiots, and you may admire him like Jared,¹² and the same [holds true for] the Corfiot who is sixty years old.¹³ I live in tiny dwellings, stuffy and booth-like,¹⁴ similar to sheds in vineyards or the huts of garden-watchers, the roofs of which can only be described for laughs. Reeds are bound in pairs, joined together with weeds, supporting the roof-tiles (these are not attached to each other, but they are distributed so that each tile is placed to cover [a single spot], permitting the heat, the cold and the rainwaters to penetrate [between the tiles] from everywhere).

There are no local fruits – that said [there are not] even imported ones. Any sufficiency of the bishopric is not even that of a penury-bishopric.¹⁵ And yet God made the worldly delights a linchpin for the soul thanks to which [the soul] accepts to dwell within the body – for you have heard that [the soul] could break the bond with the flesh.¹⁶ Therefore, (the people) is not benefited and I become ill because of the extreme ignorance of Corfu. For here, there are no rhetorical speeches, no books, no discussions with arguments.¹⁷

Pray to God to keep me healthy – my only sweet consolation in this land. And at some point, I will come [to Constantinople] and greet my mother-land.¹⁸ I know that the wicked companion, our penury, accompany me and prevail over me. But [I also know] that anything is more tolerable than the exile in this place, the wickedness of those living at the land of Corfu, and the horridness of this place.

Do not disdain me, or to put better, do not envy me for the pleasure resulting this epistolary speech.¹⁹ I beseech [God] for Gregory so that he receives the appropriate care. Remember also me in your prayers to God.

Commentary

1. The punctuation of the edition has been slightly altered.
2. The punctuation of the edition has been slightly altered.
3. The exact date that Padiadites became a metropolitan is not known.
4. Two years.
5. That is, Constantinople.
6. If this is one of the rare occurrences of the word Γράμμα with the meaning “quarters of a city,” the phrase should be translated as “I was even sent . . . from the quarters of the City to the country side.”
7. *Od.*, 9.39.
8. This is one of the stock adjectives for Odysseus in *Il.* and *Od.*
9. Note the irony: the Greek word Κορυφαῖοι (meaning the people from Koryphos) sounds like κορυφαῖοι (meaning, the “chiefs,” “the leaders”). From what follows, it becomes clear Padiadites did not have Corfiots in high esteem.
10. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 641; Hesiod refers to Ascrea in Boetia.
11. Lacuna in the manuscript.
12. Gen. 5:18. Jared is said to have lived 162 years.
13. Padiadites must have been around 60 years old at the time he composed the letter.⁹
14. The word καλυβοπρεπή is an hapax. To the phrase κελλύδρια . . . πνιγηρά τε καὶ καλυβοπρεπή, cf. Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2, 52, par. 2 (referring to the Athenian plague):

οἰκῶν γὰρ οὐχ ὑπαρχουσῶν, ἀλλ’ ἐν καλύβαις πνιγηραῖς ὥρα ἔτους διαιτωμένων ὁ φθόρος ἐγίγνετο οὐδενὶ κόσμῳ.

For having no houses but dwelling at that time of the year in stifling booths, the mortality was now without any form.¹⁰

The word κελλύδριον is usually translated from small cells, but what Padiadites means here is the place where he resides.

15. Πτωχοεπισκοπή is an hapax. Perhaps this is also an indirect comment on the exceptionally little power the metropolitan of Corfu had over his people.¹¹
16. That the soul is a prisoner of the flesh is a commonplace in Byzantine literature.
17. Οἱ λογικοὶ διάλογοι often refers to Plato’s dialogues.¹²
18. On γειναμένη see Hesychius, *Gamma*, 262.

⁹ See n. 3; Manafis and Polemis 1994–98: 12 place the date of Padiadites’ birth at around 1143.

¹⁰ Transl. Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury.

¹¹ See Angold 2009: 241–43.

¹² LSJ s.v. “λογικός,” cf. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, bk. 3, par. 58, ed. Long.

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I.8.5 John Apokaukos (c.1155–1233)

Nafpaktos and the *Episkopeion*: A Letter by John Apokaukos to the Metropolitan of Thessaloniki

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: N.A. Bees, “Unedierte Schriftstücke aus der Kanzlei des Johannes Apokaukos des Metropoliten von Naupaktos (in Aetolien),” *BNJ* 21 (1971–74) no. 67, 122–25, esp. 122,1–124,95;¹ repr. in I. Delimaris, *Πατέρες τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικοὶ συγγραφεῖς τῆς δυτικῆς Ἑλλάδος 1: Ἄπαντα Ἰωάννου Ἀποκαύκου* (Nafpaktos, 2000) no. 101, 266–70

MS.:² St. Petersburg, RNB, Φ no. 906, Graecus 250 (= Granstrem 454) (s. XIII), ff. 47r–v

Other Translations: Excerpts have been translated by Paul Magdalino, “The Literary Perception of Everyday Life in Byzantium: Some General Considerations and the Case of John Apokaukos,” *ByzSlav* 47 (1987), 32–33³ = *Tradition and Transformation*, Variorum Collected Studies 343 (Aldershot and Brookfield, Vt., 1991) no. X

Significance

The beauties of the provincial city of Nafpaktos and the episcopal palace are described with an amplitude of visual and sound images.

The Author

See T. Tsampouras and F. Spingou, I.2.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

In the following letter, John Apokaukos addresses his close friend, the metropolitan of Thessaloniki, Constantine Mesopotamites.⁴ The letter was first published in a posthumous article of Nikos Bees containing an edition of Apokaukos’ letters from the St. Petersburg manuscript. Following the arrangement of the letters in the manuscript, Bees did not separate the first letter to Mesopotamites (printed below) from a second one to the same recipient and printed the two letters as a continuous text. That second letter, however, has a different subject matter: here, Apokaukos is concerned with the interaction between high ecclesiastical officials and ordinary people, as well as the rough and rather boorish

I am grateful to Alicia Walker for her comments.

1 = Lampropoulos, *Ἀπόκαυκος* no. 101, p. 234–35.

2 Consulted.

3 = ed. Bees 1971–74, ll. 51–60, 80–86, 108–35.

4 Laurent 1963: 285–86.

manners of his servant Kotas, who had recently died.⁵ The sharp shift in the subject matter of the letter, the inclusion of a customary closing sentence in the middle of the seemingly continuous text,⁶ and the repetition of the usual greeting to the metropolitan of Thessaloniki,⁷ leave little doubt that the text in pages 122–25 of Bees' edition should be read as two letters rather than one.

The first letter, which is our focus, has been dated to the year 1225, that is a year after the recovery of Thessaloniki by the Despot of Epirus and the re-establishment of the local metropolitan to his see.⁸ Although Mesopotamites' letter does not survive, Apokaukos, when writing his response, must have been reading an encomiastic letter on the beauties of Thessaloniki and the local episcopal palace. In response, Apokaukos gives an extensive rhetorical comparison (*synkrisis*) between the cities of Thessaloniki and Nafpaktos and the local *episkopeia*. At times, it is unclear whether the *synkrisis* concerns Thessaloniki and Nafpaktos or Constantinople and Nafpaktos. Muddy streets and problems with the water supply often concerned medieval visitors to the Byzantine capital rather than those visiting the second biggest medieval city. Apokaukos also complains about a faulty seal stamp with the figure of the Virgin “Panhymnetos” (the “Most Blessed”) that he had received. The metropolitan of Nafpaktos concludes his letter by informing Mesopotamites of his forthcoming visit to Thessaloniki and, closes with the customary ending, wishes for the longevity of the recipient.

The episcopal palace or *episkopeion* had been a particular point of interest and a subject of rhetorical elaboration in numerous letters by Apokaukos. Unfortunately, there are no archaeological remains of either the *episkopeion* or the metropolitan church that was attached to it. The following account combines visual and acoustic images in order to praise the building as an appropriate residence for a bishop. For Apokaukos, architectural features reflect a bishop's duties when governing his flock. He exalts proximity and so he praises the local palace for its compact size, as this allows the bishop to be closer to his people and to participate actively in daily worship. Following a short *ekphrasis* of the *episkopeion*, the description of Nafpaktos' landscape further reveals the town to be a place blessed by God and prudently built by humans.

5 This part of the letter has been transl. by Magdalino 1987: 33 (= ed. Bees 1971–74, ll. 8–35).

6 Ed. Bees 1971–74, ll. 94–95: ἡ δύναμις τοῦ Χριστοῦ χάρισατο ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις αὐτοῦ τὸν ἕμὸν Θεσσαλονίκης πολυχρονούντα.

7 Ed. Bees 1971–74, ll. 95–98.

8 On the identification of the recipient of the letter with Constantine Mesopotamites see Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, 234–35.

Text

[f. 47r]. . .¹ ἀφετηρίας ἐξώρμησε πρὸς τὸν Κάρμηλον. καὶ τί δεῖ τὸν ἕνα τοῦ σινηπέως κόκκον καὶ τὴν τῆς κέγχρου σμικρότητα πλατείας ἐντιθέναι ταῖς ἀποθήκαις ἐνὸν ἴν καὶ ἐρεβίνθου λεπύρω τὰ δύο ταῦτα ἐγκλείσασθαι; ὡς δὲ πρὸς τὸ προκειμένον ἐπαναδραμεῖν, σὺ μὲν ἔχε τὰ σὰ πλάτη καὶ ταῖς πολυξύλοις καὶ ταῖς πολυπλίνθοις οἰκίαις ἐπίχαιρε, ἀθύροις δὲ ὅμως καὶ τεταπεινωμέναις τὴν δόκωσιν· καί, ὡς τὸ πᾶν εἰπεῖν τοῦ Σιράχ, ἐν ἀργίᾳ χειρὸς σταζούσαις ἐπὶ τὸ ἔδαφος. οὐκ ἐπαινέσομεν λίθον, ὅτι βαρὺς, ὅτι πυκνὸς καὶ ὅτι δυσβάστακτος. ἐπαινέσομαι μάρμαρον,² οὐχ ὅτι μικρὸς, ἀλλ' ὅτι στρογγύλος, ἀλλ' ὅτι διάλευκος, ἀλλ' ὅτι κατὰ τὸ τοῦ σφαιρώματος κέντρον τὴν ὀπὴν οὐκ ἔχει παράλοξον. καὶ τὸ ἐπισκοπεῖον δὲ τὸ ἐμὸν οὐ καταμάρμαρον ὄλον, οὐ λευκὸν ἢ γάλα, εἴποι τις τοῦτο μὴ σκώπτῃς ἀνὴρ, συνεπτυγμένον παλάτιον. καὶ σοὶ μὲν κατὰ τὰ μέτρα τὰ περσικά, παρασάγγαι³ ταῦτα ὁ τεχνουργὸς Ἐρμογένης ὠνόμασε, τὸ ἐπισκοπικὸν ἀπώκισται τέμενος, ὡς ἂν μὴ καταδεχόμενον ἔχειν ἐγγὺς τὸ ἐπίσκοπον μηδὲ τῷ ἱερῶσύνῃς σηκῶ τὸ τοιοῦτον πρόβατον ἐνσηκάζεσθαι, ὡς καὶ τὸν ἐκέϊσε προσμένοντα, ὀρθρίζοντά τε καὶ ἀναφωνοῦντά σοι τὸ εὐλόγησον, ἢ μηδὸλως ἀκούεσθαι, ἢ δοκεῖν ὡς ἐξ Ἄιδου.⁴

Ὁ δέ γε ἐμὸς τοῦ ὄρθρου σημαντῆρ θυραῖος ἰστάμενος καὶ παρὰ μαρμαρίνω ὑπαίθρῳ οὐκ ἀνάγει τὴν φωνὴν ἐκ τῶν σπλάγχχνων, οὐδὲ τῇ ἐξηχήσει στενοχωρεῖται τοῦ πνεύματος, ὡς καὶ δοκεῖν πεφουσημένος εἶναι ἄσκος καὶ συμπατούμενον ὄργανον καὶ ἀπὸ βύρσης βοείας ἐπὶ τοὺς αὐλοὺς ἀνάγων τὸ πνεῦμα τοὺς τὴν ἠχὴν ἀποθλίβοντας, ἀλλ' ἡμέρως πως καὶ μεμετρημένη φωνῇ εὐλογεῖν προτρέπεται τὸν ἐπίσκοπον· ὁ δ' εὐθύς ἤκουσεν, ὁ δ' εὐθύς ἐπευλόγησεν. ὅσον οὖν τὸ ἐγγὺς τοῦ πόρρω διαφορώτερον, τόσον ἀλλήλων ὁ ἐμὸς τοῦ σοῦ σημαντῆρος διέστηκε.⁵

Παρήμειψα δὲ τὸν τῆς κέλλης οὐδὸν καὶ τὸν τοῦ ἐκκλησιαστηρίου πεπάτηκα, καὶ οὐκ ἀναβέβηκα κλίμακας, οὐ διώδευσα περιπάτους, οὐ γέγονα κάθιδρος ἐκ τοῦ κόπου, οὐκ ἀσθμαίνων τῷ περιπάτῳ, ἀλλὰ συνειλεγμένῳ τῷ πνεύματι καὶ τῆς κέλλης ἐξῆλθον καὶ τὸ ἱερὸν ἐπάτησα δάπεδον· καὶ ποτε παρὰ τῷ τοῦ ὕπνου κραββάτῳ καθημένος οὐ παρήκουσα τῶν ψαλλόντων, ὃ πάσχειν οἶδας τοὺς ἐνωτιζομένους ἐκ διαστήματος, ἀλλ' ὡς τοῖς ψάλταις συνόντος μου καὶ τὸ ὠτίον οὐ παρακούει καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα οὐ παραψάλλει. μὴ κακκίζεις καὶ τοὺς τῶν ἡμετέρων καταλυμάτων μαρμαρίνους ἀναβαθμούς καὶ τὰ μαρμαρόστρωτα ὑπαιθρα, διὰ τὴν ὑψηλότοπον ἴδρυσιν τὴν ὄψιν τῶν ὀρώντων πρὸς τὴν ὑποκειμένην θάλασσαν ἀκοντίζοντα καὶ τοῖς τῶν φυτῶν εὐώδεσι σκιαζόμενα, καὶ τὸν ἐν κύκλῳ τοῦτον φραγμόν, τοῦ ἐδάφους μὲν ἀνατρέχοντα, ἐκ κιονίσκων δὲ ποικιλλομένων μαρμαρίνων ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀνεχόντων ἑτέρας ἐγκαρσίας εὐθείας, ἐξ ὁμοίας τῆς ὕλης, αἷς ἐπιστηθίζουσιν ἑαυτοὺς οἱ περὶ τὸ τῆς αὐλῆς προκύπτοντες ἔδαφος; ταῦτα τὰ [p. 123] τῶν ἐλαχίστων ἡμῶν, τῶν σμικροπολιτῶν, τῶν ἐρημοπολιτῶν, ἵνα τι καὶ τῶν σῶν φίλων εἴπω.⁶

Μὴ καὶ τοὺς ἰχθύας ἡμῶν, μὴ καὶ τὰ κίτρα⁷ ἡμῶν οὐκ ἐπαινέσεις εἰς ἐπαρκές; ὅτι τῶν μὲν ἔστιν ἅ κάδδοις ἀμιλλῶνται πρὸς μέγεθος καὶ ὡς ὠραῖα μὲν ἰδεῖν, καλὰ δὲ φαγεῖν καὶ τὴν ὄσφραντικὴν θηλῦναι διὰ τὴν εὐπνοίαν; οἱ δὲ διαφορογενεῖς μὲν, εὐβρωτοὶ δέ, καθαροὶ δέ, πῖτοι δὲ καὶ γένος παντοδαπὸν καὶ φυλαί, ὡς εἴποι τις, μυριόχρωμοι;⁸

Translation

[Untitled]

[f. 47r]... He launched his way to Carmel; and why should he place a single mustard seed and the smallest piece of grain in a container of enormous size, even though both can be contained within the husk of a chickpea? But, to return to our subject, hold on to your extended allotments and rejoice over your houses built with great amounts of wood and stone, but without doors³³ and with low roofing – and to put it all in the words from the Wisdom of Sirah – “by the idleness of the hands they fall to pieces.”¹⁴ I will not praise the stone, because it is heavy, dense, and hard to carry. But I will praise the marble, not because it is light, but because it is round, absolutely white, and the hole at the center of the sphere is not oblique. Also my *episkopeion* is not entirely white – not even milk is white – and a scoffer may even call it a “mini-”palace. The episcopal church is also far removed from your Persian measures – these were called “*parasangas*” by Hermogenes, the theoretician of the art of rhetoric¹⁵ – as if [the church] does not consent to a proximity to the bishop, so that the flock would not reside inside this farm for the priesthood – and it will expect him who is far away to be awake and to shout to you “bless me,” and either not to be heard at all or to seem to be speaking from the underworld.¹⁶

Also my morning *semantron*,¹⁷ stands by the door, at the marble yard, and it neither raises its voice from deep inside [the earth]¹⁸ nor does it disturb the spirit with an unpleasant sound (such that it might seem similar to a puffed animal belly that is squeezed like a musical instrument¹⁹ and brings the breath from the ox-skin to the flutes that squeeze out the sound), but gently, in a moderate voice, the *semantron* calls the bishop to offer his blessing. And he, as soon as he hears [the call] immediately extends his blessing. As much as “near” differs from “far,” so differs my *semantron* from yours.

When I have left the entrance to the cell behind, I have walked through the church building and I have not had to climb stairs nor to navigate through corridors, and I neither sweat profusely because of the effort, nor have I become breathless from the walk, but have maintained the breath with which I left the cell even as I walked on sacred ground. And whenever I sit by my bedside, I have never misheard those chanting – something that as you know²⁰ can happen to those who listen from a distance – but since the cantors are close to me, my ear does not mishear and my tongue does not sing the wrong words.

Do you not envy the marble staircases and the marble-clad courtyards of our sojourns, because they offer to the beholder a view²¹ towards the nearby sea, being established on high and framed by sweetly-scented plants? Do you not envy the fence that encompasses what has risen up from the ground with small pillars of variegated colors that carry various capitals from similar materials, and that are placed transversely and at the same height, reaching out towards and holding close those visitors to the courtyard’s space? These are [p. 123] our [people], the humble, the citizens of a pretty state, the citizens of the desert²² – to say a few words that suit your taste.

Would you not also praise the abundance of our fish and our citruses? Because they [the citruses] are rivalling urns because of their size and are beautiful in appearance,

Τὸ δὲ λουτρὸν ἡμῶν οὐ μετάρσιον; οὐ τὴν ὄψιν ἔλκει τοῦ βλέποντος; οὐ γραφικοῖς ποικίλλεται χρώμασιν; οὐ φωταγωγοῖς ὑέλοις καταπεφώτισται; οὐχ ἡδονὴν τῷ λουομένῳ ἐντίθησιν; οὐ καταμάρμαρον ὄλον; οὐ δεξαμεναὶ διάλευκοι παρ' αὐτῶ;⁹ τὸ φρούριον δὲ ἡμῶν οὐ δυσανάλωτον ἢ μικροῦ καὶ ἀνάλωτον; οὐκ ἐπὶ μετεώρου τοῦ ἀέρος ἐπωκοδόμηται; οὐ τῇ τοῦ κωμικοῦ Νεφελοκοκκυγία παραμιλλᾶται; πόλις αὕτη παρ' ἐκείνῳ οὐ ψάουσα γῆς, ἐν δὲ τῷ μανῶ ἀέρι [f. 47v] καὶ τῷ μικροῦ μὴ ἀναπνευστῶ διηρμένα ἔχουσα τείχη καὶ τὸν περίβολον ἐναέριον. ἡ δὲ πᾶσα πόλις ἡμῶν οὐχὶ ἄπηλος; καὶ μὴν πολλῶν ἀκούω μακαρίζοντων τοὺς ἡμετέρους πολίτας, ὅτι μὴδὲ τὰ περὶ τοὺς πόδας τούτων καττύματα ἐν χειμῶνι, ἐν ὄμβρῳ, καταμολύνονται τῷ πηλῶ, οὐδ' ἴλουσπῶνται βορβόροις, ὡς τὰ τῶν ζώων φιλόπηλα, οὐδὲ τῆς τετριμμένης διὰ τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πηλοῦ πλαδαρὸν ἐκ τοῦ παραβαδίζειν ἀπομηκίζονται, οὐδὲ ξυλίνας ἐμβάδας, ὡς ποδοκάκην ἕκαστος ὑποδέεται, καθηλωμένας, καὶ ταῦτα, ὡς μὴ τὸ περὶ τὴν γῆν μέρος τῶν ὑποδημάτων τούτων ἐκτρίβοιτο, οὐδ' ἀλληλόκτυπον πάταγον ἐξηχοῦσι περὶ τὸ ἔδαφος τοῦ ναοῦ, οὐδὲ μολύνουσιν ὅπως οὖν πατοῦντες αὐτό, κἂν οἱ καταρῥάκται αὔθις τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τῇ ἐμῇ Ναυπάκτῳ ἐπανοιχθῶσιν. ὅσαι τοῦ ἡμετέρου περιβόλου ἐντός, ὅσαι τούτου ἐκτός καὶ ὅσαι ἄλλη ἐπ' ἄλλη προρῥέουσιν ἀργυρίζουσαι οὐδ' αὐταῖ σου τὴν γλῶσσαν πρὸς ὕμνησιν ἐκκαλέσονται; ἐξ ὧν ἡμεῖς πίνομεν ἀφθονον ὕδωρ, τὸ ποτὸν καθαρὸν καὶ χερσὶν αὐτῶν ἀπαντλοῦμεν καὶ τούτων ἀπορῥοφῶμεν, παλάμας κοιλαίνοντες, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκ φρεατίων ὑδάτων οὐδὲ φρεωρυχοῦμεν, ὡς οἱ ἀσπάλακες, καὶ χειρόκητον ὕδωρ καὶ κατορωρυγμένον ἀφύσσομεν, οὐδὲ ποσὶ περὶ τὸ στόμα τοῦ φρέατος ἀντιβαίνομεν καὶ δακτυλοκοποῦμεθα σχοίνῳ διὰ τὴν ἐκ ταύτης τραχύτητα. δυστυχήματα ταῦτα, οὐκ εὐτυχήματα πόλεως, παρ' ἧ καὶ γέρον ἴσως ἀπολεῖται τῇ δίψῃ, αὐτὸς μὲν παρειμένους ἔχων τὰ χεῖρας καὶ μὴ δυναμένους ἀντλεῖν, ἐτέρου δὲ μὴ εὐτυχῶν τοῦ ἀντλήσοντος· αἱ δὲ παρ' ἡμῖν καὶ γραῖται καὶ γέροντες, ὡς οἱ νέοι, πρόχειρον ἀντλοῦσιν ὕδωρ, πίνουσιν ὡς θέλουσιν εἰς ὄλον χρόνον· οὐ κάδδος αὐτοῖς ἐξεχύθη πολλάκις εἰς δευτέραν ἀντλησιν ἠναγκασμένοις, ἢ σχοῖνος οὐκ ἔτριψεν αὐτῶν παλάμας, ἄλυσις οὐκ ἔθλιψεν αὐτῶν δακτύλους, σκληρὸν παρακρέμασμα πρὸς τῷ σχοινίῳ ἐξ ὑγρότητος μὴ σαπῆ τὸ σπαρτίον. ὁ μὲν οὖν μῦθος αὐτονομῶν τὸν τοῦ Πηγάσου ταρσὸν πατάξαι λέγει τὴν γῆν καὶ πηγὴν εὐθύς ἀναροιβδησαι τῷ παταγμῶ καὶ Ταρσὸν ὀνομασθῆναι τὸ τόπον· Κιλικίων πόλις αὕτη περιφανῆς καὶ τοῦ Ταρσέως Παύλου πατρίς. τὴν Ναύπακτον δὲ οὐχ [p. 124] εἶς, ὡς ἔοικε, Πήγασος, δυσάριθμοι δὲ πατάξαντες ἐν αὐτῇ πολλῶν πηγῶν ἀνάδοσιν ἐποίησαντο· καὶ ἔστι ταύτης τὰ ἔσωθεν καὶ τὰ ἔξωθεν τὰ ὕδατα¹⁰ καταντλούμενα· καὶ εἰ διὰ τὰς δυοκαίδεκα πηγὰς ἀνάγραπτος ἢ Ἑλήμ, ἀναγραπτέα μᾶλλον ἢ Ναύπακτος διὰ τὴν τούτων δαψιλίαν. καὶ ὀκνήσειεν τάχα ὕδατομέτρης ἀριθμῶ παραδοῦναι τὰς ἐν Ναυπάκτῳ πηγὰς, ἐξ ὧν ἔπιες, ἐξ ὧν ἐλούσω, ἐν αἷς τὸ σὸν τριβώνιον ἀπερῥύπωσας, ὧ δυσάρεστε σὺ καὶ τὰς ἀλλοτρίας περιφρονῶν ἀγαθότητας. καὶ εἰ μὴ μου τὴν γλῶτταν ἢ ἐκ τῶν νοσημάτων κατενεπέδωσε νάρκωσις, τάχ' ἂν τοὺς σοὺς φύγους εἰς ἐπαίνων ἐθέμην αὐτὸς ἀφορμῆν· νῦν δὲ σὴν χάριν, σιωπῶ τὰ πολλά, καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν σιωπὴν ἐπιλύπων μηνυμάτων ἐτέρων παραλιμπάνω λαβήν.¹¹

Ὁ Δημήτριος ἀπεκόμισέ μοι τὴν ἀργυρέαν σφραγίδα. οὐκ ἐγλύφη δὲ καλῶς ἢ ἡμετέρα πανύμνητος· ὄρα; κατανωτίζεται μοι τὰ γράμματα καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῆς ἀποστρέφει

good in taste, and overwhelm the sense of smell with their fragrance. And [the fish] are of various kinds, easy to eat, clean, oily, of all species, and, one could say, of all breeds and of innumerable colors.

And is not our bath not raised up high? Does it not attract the gaze of the beholder? Is it not adorned with the colors of paintings? Is it not lit up with glass suffused with light? Does it not give great pleasure to the bather? Is it not entirely made out of marble? Are the nearby reservoirs not extremely clean?²³

Isn't that our citadel²⁴ difficult or rather nearly impossible to conquer? Is it not built up high in the air? Does it not contest even the Cloud-cuckoo land²⁵ of the comic poet? (This is a city, according to him, that did not touch the ground, its walls were raised on the thin air [f. 47v] and where it is hard to breathe, and the enclosed area is also up in the air).²⁶ Is not our entire city without mud?²⁷ And is it not true that I hear many say that our citizens are blessed, because the soles of their shoes do not become soiled when it rains in the winter time, nor do they crawl in the mire, like the mud-loving animals,²⁸ and their undersides are not detached because of tottering in the quagmire, and they do not have to wear wooden slippers [clogs] as stocks nailed on to their shoes, such that the part of their shoes that touches the ground would wear out. They do not make a terrible noise by clattering their shoes on the floor of the church, nor do they dirty it as they walk, even if the waterfalls of the sky are suddenly opened over my dear Nafpaktos.

Would not even all [the springs] that are inside our courtyard, and all those that are outside, and all those colored silver, which compete with one another with their streams call your tongue to praise? From those we drink ample water, a clean drink that we pump out with our hands and we gulp it down by curving our palms. But we do not drink water from wells, nor do we need to dig it out like rats, nor do we swallow water drawn by hand and unearthed from the ground, nor do we stand with our feet on the opening of the well, and nor do we cut our fingers because of the roughness of the rope. These are disadvantages, not advantages for a city, in which even an old man may die from thirst, as he may have paralyzed hands and be unable to draw the water out [from the well], and he might not be lucky enough to find another man to pump out [water] for him. In our city, old women and men pump out water for a second time, like young people, and they drink as much as they wish the entire year. Their bucket does not overspill many times, forcing them to pump the water out again, the rope does not hurt their palms, the chain (a stiff addition to the rope, so that the hanging rope will not become soaked) does not crush their fingers. The myth claims that [p. 124] Pegasus' hoof [*tarson*] dropped off and struck the ground and a spring gushed up immediately from the stricken spot – for this reason the name Tarsus was given to the place. This is a famous city and the fatherland of Paul from Tarsus.²⁹

But it seems that not just one Pegasus, but many have struck their feet at Nafpaktos, causing many springs to sprout. The waters that are pumped inside and outside the city are such that if Ailim³⁰ became famous because of its twelve springs, Nafpaktos should be even more renowned because of the abundance of its springs. And the hydrometer³¹ would hesitate to attest to the number of springs in Nafpaktos,³² from which you

τοῦ μὴ βλέπειν ἐπὶ τοὺς τῶν πιττακίων μου τίτλους· δέον ὄν ἐπιστροφὴν πρὸς τὰ γραφόμενα ἔχειν, ἐκ τῆς ἐναντίας διαγλυφῆς τε καὶ ἐπινεύσεως.¹²

Θεοῦ δὲ διδόντος καὶ τῆς εὐχῆς τῆς μεγάλης ἀγιωσύνης σου στηρίξω μετὰ τὸ Πάσχα τὸ πρόσωπόν μου πρὸς τὴν σὴν Θετταλὴν καὶ πρὸς τὴν λάμπιν τοῦ σοῦ προσώπου πορεύσομαι· ἡ δύναμις τοῦ Χριστοῦ χαρίσαιο ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις αὐτοῦ τὸν ἕμὸν Θεσσαλονίκης πολυχρονοῦντα.

drank water, in which you cleaned yourself, at which you washed your coat – you, the ill-pleased, who despises kindness, which is something alien to you. If my tongue was not bound by benumbing illnesses, I would have used your blemishes as excuses for praises. But now, for your sake, I keep silent about many things, and I take the opportunity of my silence to continue on to other sad news.

Demetrios³³ brought me the silver seal. But the Panhymnetos [Theotokos] has not been carved out very clearly. Can you see?³⁴ She rejects my letters and she turns her face away from the addressee on my epistles. So, it is necessary to return to the seals and to engrave them the opposite way, following the existing figures.³⁵

God willing, and with the blessing of your great holiness, I will set my route after Easter towards you, Thessaloniki, and I will approach the brilliance of your face. May the power of Christ grant my dear [metropolitan] of Thessaloniki to his churches for many years.³⁶

Commentary

1. The beginning of the letter is missing. The letter is bound at the beginning of a new quire.
2. μάργαρον in the manuscript.
3. παρσάν(ας) in the manuscript and παρασάνας in Bees. On the correction see n. 15.
- 4–6, 8–9, 11–12. I have altered the punctuation offered in Bees' edition by introducing a new paragraph division.
7. κίτρα Bees.
10. καὶ ὕδασι Bees.
13. Although Apokaukos asks for proximity between the bishop and his people, he considers the presence of physical gates and barriers between the episcopal palace and the town to be important. In a letter addressed to his friend, the archbishop of Ohrid Demetrios Chomatenos, Apokaukos criticizes Constantine Doukas, who seized the episcopal palace and altered its appearance,⁹ because he had destroyed all physical barriers surrounding the structure:¹⁰

[p. 240, 18–241, 14] τὸ δὲ γράμμα τοῦτο πρόσωπον τὸ ἕμὸν ὑποδύν, ταῦτα τὴν μακαριότητά σου αἰτεῖ, τὸ ἐντυχεῖν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τοῖς δεσπόταις, τὸ ἀνειπεῖν αὐτοῖς μετὰ θάρρους, ὡς οὐ καλὸν ἱερέα καὶ γέροντα παρανόμως ὕβρεσι πλύνεσθαι καὶ πολυτρόπως διώκεσθαι· προσθεῖναι καὶ ὅσα ἐπικρέμανται ἐπιτίμια παρὰ τῷ τρισκαιδεκάτῳ κανόνι τῆς δευτέρας ἐν Νικαίᾳ συνόδου κατὰ τῶν τὰ ἐπισκοπεῖα κοινοποιούντων καὶ πορνεῖα ταῦτα ποιοούντων καὶ κοσμικὰ καταγῶγια, καὶ δημοτικὰς τὸ σύμπαν ἐπαύλεις, καὶ τόπον θυμέλης διὰ τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς πραττομένων· καὶ ὡς κατὰ μέρος ἔχῃς λαλεῖν τὰ ἐμὰ δυστυχήματα, αὐτὸ τε τοῦτο ἐστὶ καὶ ὅσα ἐκτίθεμαι. τὸν ὄλον [p. 241] ὄρον τοῦ ἡμετέρου ἐπισκοπεῖου (περιτετεῖχιστα δὲ τοῦτο καὶ τῷ ἐκ τιτάνου καὶ λίθων θριγγῶ περισφίγγεται) κατασχών ὁ Δούκας, οἰκοδομὰς εἰς ὕψος ἠρμένας ἐν αὐτῷ συνεστήσατο εἷς τε δίαίταν ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τινων ὑπ' αὐτόν· τὰς περὶ τὴν αὔλειον θύρας αὐτοῦ περιεῖλεν [οὔσας] ἐκ ξύλων ἀσῆπτων καὶ περιεζωσμένας σιδήρῳ καὶ νῦν τὸ κένωμα τῶν πυλῶν, πᾶσιν ἄθυρον ἐπιχαῖνον, πάντας εἰσδέχεται, ὡς τὰ ἐν πόλεσιν ἄμφοδα, τὰ εἰς ἐμβόλους παρωννυμούμενα· ἑτέραν ἐκαινούργησε πύλην, τὸ ἐπισκοπικὸν θριγγίον περιελών, ὡς εἶναι τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ διχόθεν βατὰ γυναιξίν, ἀνδράσι, παιδίοις, τῷ συμμιγεῖ στρατιωτικῷ, τοῖς ἐξ ἄλλοδαπῶν παραβάλλουσι· καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐκεῖ θυρωρός, οὐδεὶς ὁ ἐν τοῖς ἐντὸς ἀγγέλων τὰς ἐκτὸς παρουσίας, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐν πλατεῖᾳ ὁδῷ οὔτοι, τοῦτῳ κάκεῖνοι ἄλλοις περιτυγχάνουσι, καὶ ἔστιν οἶκος ἐμπορίου καὶ κοινὸν ἀπροσερότησον καταγῶγιον ὁ οἶκος τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

[p. 240] This letter speaks on my behalf and asks the following from your blessedness: to meet the lords on my behalf and courageously promulgate that it is not good for a priest and old man to be washed out with rebukes and to be chased out in many ways. The anticipated penalties should be added as they are defined by the thirteenth

9 On the relevant events see A. Walker and F. Spingou, I.5.15.

10 Ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1907: 239–44; cf. Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, no. 60, p. 208–09. MS. St. Petersburg, RNB, gr. 250 (= Granstrom 454) (s. XIII), ff. 22v–23v.

canon of the Second Council of Nicaea against those who turn episcopal houses to common habitats, and convert them into brothels, secular inns, or mansions for laity in their entirety, or a theater stage because of what occurs in them. And in order to be able to say my misfortunes in detail, this is what is going on, what I narrate to you (below): the entire [p. 241] place of my *episkopeion* (this is surrounded by a wall and is enclosed by a fence made of stone and gypsum) is seized by Doukas. He founded tall buildings¹¹ in there for his stay and others under his command. He removed its outer doors [i.e. of the *episkopeion*] which were made of incorruptible wood and they were covered with iron, and now the gap between gates, since it is entirely with no doors, welcomes everyone, like the quarters in the cities which are defined by colonnades. He [i.e. Doukas] made a new gate, removing the fence of the *episkopeion*, so that everything is accessible to women, men, children, all kinds of soldiers, and those that were grown in foreign lands. There is no porter there, there is no one to announce to those inside [the *episkopeion*] the presence of visitors, but like in an open space those [inside] meet the others [who are coming from outside]. This house of the Father of Christ, becomes a house of merchandise¹² and a veritable shared inn.¹³

14. Eccl. 10:18.

15. Apokaukos alludes to a passage in the treatise of the second-century rhetorician, Hermogenes' treatise *On Methods of Speaking Effectively*.¹⁴ The specific passage instructs a future orator as to how to find the meaning of the words:

Πάσης λέξεως τῆς ἀγνοουμένης ἐν πεζῷ λόγῳ τρεῖς μέθοδοι τῆς εὐρέσεως· ἡ γὰρ ἔθνικὴ ἐστὶν ἢ λέξις ἢ τεχνικὴ ἢ νομικὴ. ὁ γοῦν παρασάγγης οὐ οἶδα τίς ἐστίν· ἔθνικὸν γὰρ ἐστὶ καὶ Περσικὸν ὁδοῦ μέτρον, οἱ τριάκοντα στάδιοι.

“There are three methods to find the meaning of any word that you might not know its meaning in prose; for a word is either ‘foreign’ or ‘technical’ or ‘legal.’ For example, I don’t know what *parasanges* means, because it is a foreign word, a Persian standard for length [equal to] thirty stades.”¹⁵

16. Meaning: from far away. For Apokaukos, a large church does not allow the bishop to be close to his people. Apokaukos here toys with the metaphor of Christians as a “flock” and so the church becomes a farm. If the farm is large, the shepherd would be distanced from and so unable to communicate with his flock. The personification of the church building – which here assumes its own will – is particularly interesting.

17. Also called *σημαντήριον* or *ξύλον*. A board made of copper alloy or wood often used to mark the beginning of a church ceremony or of a meal in monasteries.¹⁶

11 Literarily “buildings built up in height.”

12 Cf. Jn. 2:16.

13 Ἀπρωσερώτητον can only be found in the *War of Troy*, ed. E. Jeffreys and M. Papatomopoulos v. 2418.

14 2.3, ed. Rabe, p. 415.

15 A stade = 180–200 meters or 600 feet.

16 On the *semantron* see A.-M. Talbot, *ODB*, s.v. and Papalexandrou 2017, 82–83. The observations of Amy Papalexandrou (2017) on sound and sonic environments are pertinent to the contents of this passage.

18. Note the visual image at this point: the *semantron* is in the open air, widely accessible, not in a confined place.
19. Apokaukos must be referring to a wind instrument similar to a bagpipe, rather than the grandiose “organon” or “polyaulon,” that was used in ceremonies and in the spectacles of the Constantinopolitan Hippodrome.¹⁷
20. Note the irony.
21. On the importance of the view see also D. Penna, I.8.8.
22. Cf. Aristophanes, *The Knights*, 814.
23. This is a surprising use of the word that refers customarily to monks and monastic communities.¹⁸
24. The precise location of the Byzantine bath remains uncertain, although some possibilities have been introduced.¹⁹
25. Nafpaktos was a famous ancient port-town. It became particularly prominent in the tenth century as it was on the route from the West to Constantinople. The ancient citadel that was meant to protect the port was relocated in medieval times. It had the same appearance up until the seventeenth century.²⁰
26. Or Nephelococcygia is the new city founded on the clouds in Aristophanes’s *Birds*.
27. Although the comparison is made with Thessaloniki, Constantinople was famous for its muddy streets.²¹
28. This is probably an interpolation of a marginal note. It explains information that was offered earlier and does not contribute to the general argument.
29. Reference to the apostle Paul (cf. Ac. 21:39). In this passage, Apokaukos muddles two mythological traditions. The first claims that the place acquired its name “Tarsus” from Pegasus’ lost hoof (*tarson*).²² The other suggests that it is the strike of Pegasus’ hoof that made springs to gush forth.²³
30. Usually spelled as “Αἰλεῖμ,” Ex. 15:27.
31. The Greek word ὑδατομέτρης is a *hapax legomenon*. Paul Magdalino coined the term “hydatometer” for translating this passage and he noted that it should be understood as the imaginary counterpart of a γεωμέτρης or “land surveyor.”²⁴
32. Reference to a previous visit of the bishop of Thessaloniki to Nafpaktos.
33. Given the name of the messenger and the fact that the reference is included in a letter addressed to the metropolitan of Thessaloniki, it is highly possible that the seal stamp

17 On the organon or polyaulon see Maliaras 2007: 267–442; Markovits 2003.

18 See, e.g., Eustathios of Thessaloniki, *On the Improvement of the Monastic*, 148. 1–3, ed. Metzler; however, the word is attested elsewhere in Apokaukos’ work with comparable meaning. Cf. John Apokaukos, *Letters*, ed. Bees no. 58, l. 2) and 109, l. 10. On the first attestations of the word ἐρημοπολίτης see Basil of Caesarea, *Letter* no. 42, 5.24, ed. Y. Courtonne.

19 See, e.g., Athanasoulis and Androudis 2005: 515–34.

20 Veikou, *Epirus*, 326.

21 That is common complaint of Byzantine authors; see e.g., Mitylenaios, *Poems* no. 132, addressed to the secretary Constantine, who did not want to leave his house to avoid the mud on the streets.

22 On Pegasus and Tarsus see Dionysius Periegetes, *Description of the Known World*, 866–74 and the commentary of Eustathios of Thessaloniki, ed. Müller, p. 34–46.

23 Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 2.31.9.4–10, ed. Spiro.

24 Magdalino 1987: 33 n. 21.

- was sent to Apokaukos from Thessaloniki. The stamp carried the Theotokos “Pan-hymnetos,” to whom the episcopal church in Nafpaktos was dedicated.
34. Apparently, Apokaukos had used the very stamp he complains about for sealing the letter.
 35. The problem with the seal was that both the figure of the Theotokos and the name of Apokaukos were reversed.
 36. The phrase *χαρίζου μοι πολυχρόνιος* is one of a customary phrase for closing a letter.
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I.8.6 Philagathos of Cerami (c.1080–after 1155)

The *Ekphrasis* on the Cappella Palatina in Palermo

MIRCEA DULUŞ

Ed.: G. Rossi-Taibbi, *Filagato da Cerami, Omelie per i vangeli domenicali e le feste di tutto l'anno: Omelie per le feste fisse* (Palermo, 1969), 174–75

MSS.:¹ Madrid, Biblioteca nacional de España, Graecus 4554 (s. XII), ff. 60ra–63ra; Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 2009 (s. XIII), ff. 95r–99r²

Other Translations: J. Johns, “The Date of the Ceiling of the Cappella Palatina in Palermo,” in *The Painted Ceilings of the Cappella Palatina*, eds. E. J. Grube and J. Johns (Genova 2005), 13–14 (English); W. Tronzo, *The Cultures of His Kingdom: Roger II and the Cappella Palatina in Palermo* (Princeton, N.J., 1997), 121 (partial) (English); B. Lavagnini, “Filagato da Cerami: Omelia XXVII, pronunciata dal pulpito della Cappella Palatina in Palermo” (Palermo, 1992), 9–10 (Italian)

Significance

Being among the few substantial architectural descriptions preserved from the Byzantine period, Philagathos’ *ekphrasis* articulates an aesthetic experience in terms of vividness and persuasion framed through the *mimesis* of literary tradition. The description equally illustrates the profound assimilation of Byzantine aesthetic, religious, and political templates by the Norman dynasty. Finally, the *ekphrasis* transmitted certain architectural “facts” about the Cappella Palatina in its Rogerian phase, namely the completion of the wooden ceiling, the marble revetment, the chancel screen, the existence of wall-hanging tapestries, and the Rogerian wall-mosaics (see figs. I.8.6.a–c).

The Author

See Mircea Duluş, I.3.7 in this volume.

Text and Context

The *ekphrasis* of the Cappella Palatina is part of the *proemium* of the sermon delivered in the royal chapel for the Feast of the Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul observed on June 29. The oration addresses the Gospel reading Mt. 13:16–19 on the subject of Christ’s question

¹ Not consulted.

² For a description of these manuscripts see Rossi-Taibbi 1965: 51–59.



Fig. I.8.6a Palermo, Cappella Palatina, pulpit and mosaics of south wall
© Layne Cannon

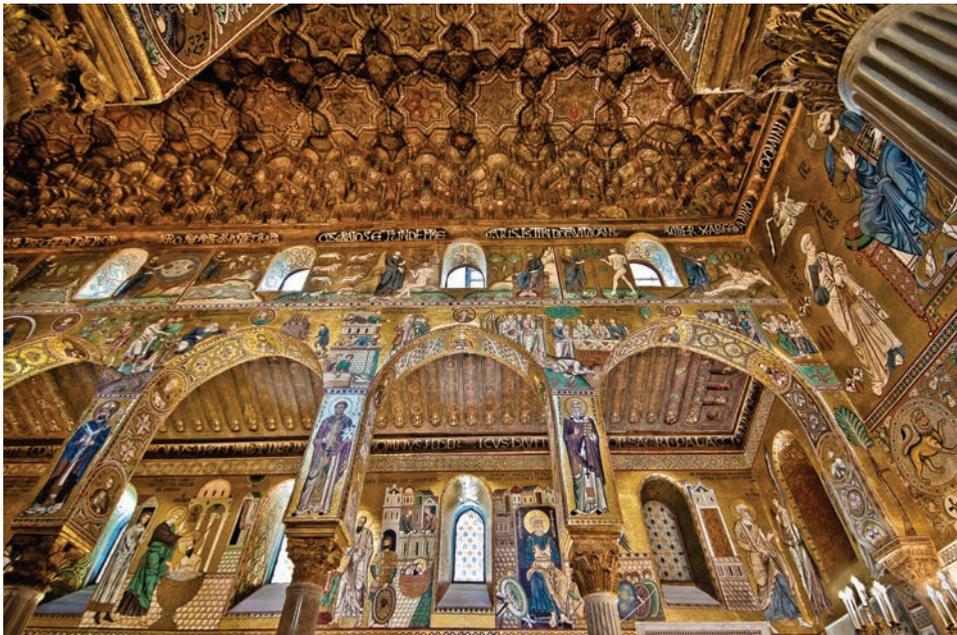


Fig. I.8.6b Palermo, Cappella Palatina, ceiling and west wall of nave
© Timothy Hendrix



Fig. I.8.6c Palermo, Cappella Palatina, interior, view of three apses
© Miguel Arenaza

to his disciples, “Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?” The description is set within a panegyric framework devoted to Roger II (r.1130–54), “the pious *basileus* and savior who surpassed all his contemporaries and predecessors alike in piety and greatness of spirit, as much as the rays of the sun eclipse the shining of the stars.” Embedded within

Roger's panegyric the *ekphrasis* celebrates the building as the culmination of his kingship, which "placed the sign of his truly royal and great character."³

The description has mostly attracted the interest of modern scholarship for its references to the architectural and decorative specifications and their relation to the chronology of the decoration of the Chapel.⁴ The construction of the Cappella Palatina began after Roger II assumed the royal title in 1130. The main parts of the structure must have been completed by 1140 when a royal foundation charter was issued for the Chapel (April 28, 1140). The charter emphasized that the monument marked the "restoration" of kingship in Sicily since "the kingdom which was for a long time in abeyance has, through the Redeemer's benevolence, been fully restored to its original state, honorably promoted and exalted."⁵ As regards the famous mosaic decoration, it is surmised that by 1143, which is the year recorded in the inscription at the base of the dome of the sanctuary, it must have been partially set in place. The decoration was completed only under Roger's son and successor, William I (r.1154–66).⁶

The date of Philagathos' *ekphrasis* is a matter of scholarly controversy and is bound to these few known dates concerning the construction and decoration of the building. The delivery of the oration has been assigned to the same year as the feast of the dedication mentioned in the foundation charter (June 29, 1140); it is argued that at the end of the *proemium* Philagathos alludes to a sermon he delivered that year at the *encaenia* of the Chapel, on April 28, 1140, when the great charter of endowment was issued.⁷ Kitzinger rejected this hypothesis arguing that the reference to the wall mosaics makes it more likely to have been written in the late 1140s or early 1150s. Consequently, Philagathos' oration preached at the *encaenia* would refer to the commemoration of the original consecration, which "undoubtedly did take place in the Cappella Palatina annually."⁸ However, Johns advanced recently a more tempting solution which corroborates the new evidence on the decoration of the chapel with the mosaic inscription round the base of the rotunda. Thus, he connects the delivery of the sermon with the date of the consecration of the chapel recorded by the mosaic inscription in 1143, happening "perhaps on the anniversary of the foundation – April 28, 1143."⁹ Therefore, Philagathos would have delivered the sermon on June 29, 1143, two months after he preached a sermon at the consecration (*encaenia*) of the chapel on 28 April.

The style of the text is polished. It abounds in metaphors, alliterative, and hyperbolic statements (i.e. μέγιστόν τε καὶ κάλλιστον καὶ κάλλει καινοτέρῳ διαπρεπέστατον). The accurate usage of the *clausulae* (i.e. the rhythmic close of a sentence) invigorates the

3 On the importance of this chapel for the Norman ideology and transcultural propaganda see Bongianino 2017: 3–24.

4 Kitzinger 1975; Tronzo 1997: 15; Johns 2005: 1–14.

5 The text is cited from Houben 2002: 55.

6 Demus 1950: 25–27; Kitzinger 1949: 269–70; Di Stefano 1979: 37–40; Ćurčić 1987: 125; Tronzo 1997: 15–16.

7 Rossi-Taibbi 1969: lv.

8 Kitzinger 1975: 306.

9 Johns 2010: 6.

apparent monotonous narration in a kind of “counterpoint.”¹⁰ This effect is in part derived from the literary tradition, for the *ekphrasis* carries the unmistakable imprint of Lucian’s *The Hall* and Procopius of Gaza’s *Descriptio horologii*.¹¹ Considering that both Lucian and Procopius were both recommended by Gregory of Corinth, a grammarian active c.1120–50, as literary models, it can be confidently asserted that Philagathos’ practice of *mimesis* dovetails with contemporary Byzantine rhetorical taste.¹²

¹⁰ Perria 1982: 370.

¹¹ Bianchi 2011: 39–52; Amato 2012: 7–9; see also Fobelli 2002: 268–73. On *ekphrasis* see also I. Nilsson, Introduction, II.2 in this volume.

¹² Wilson 1983: 184–90.

Text

*Συνήδομαί σοι, πόλις, καὶ σοί, θεῖε τῶν ἀνακτόρων ναέ, πάσης ἐπί σε σήμερον ἡλικίας χυθείσης, καὶ τῶν ὅσοι τὴν τύχην ἐπίδοξοι, ἱερέων τε τοσοῦτων τὴν παροῦσαν ἡμῖν ἐπικοσμοῦντων πανήγυριν. τούτων δὲ πάντων αἴτιος τὰ μὲν πρῶτα Θεός, παρ' οὗ πᾶν ὃ τι χρηστὸν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις προῆλθε καὶ γίνεται, δευτέρον δὲ βασιλεὺς εὐσεβῆς, σωτὴρ, εὐμενής, ὅτε τοὺς ὑπηκόους ὀρᾷ· τοῖς γὰρ πολεμίους τὸν θυμὸν ταμειύεται. ὅς δὴ πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων ἀγαθῶν γενόμενος ἡμῖν παροχεύς, εὐσεβεῖα τε καὶ μεγαλοφροσύνη πάντας νικήσας τοὺς νῦν καὶ τοὺς ἔμπροσθεν, ὅσον τὰς τῶν ἀστέρων ἀγλαΐας τὰ ἡλιακὰ σελαγίσματα, ἔν καὶ τοῦτο προσέθηκε γνώρισμα τῆς ἐκείνου βασιλικῆς ὄντως καὶ μεγάλης ψυχῆς, τὸν τερπνότατον τοῦτον τῶν κηρύκων ναόν· ὃν καθάπερ κρηπίδα καὶ ἀσφάλειαν ἐν τοῖς ἀνακτόροις ἐδείματο, *μέγιστόν τε καὶ κάλλιστον καὶ κάλλι καινοτέρω* διαπρεπέστατον καὶ *φωτὶ φαιδρότατον καὶ χρυσῶ διαυγέστατον* καὶ ψηφῖσι στιλπνότατον καὶ *γραφαῖς ἀνθηρότατον*. ὃν τις ἰδὼν πολλάκις, καὶ πάλιν ἰδὼν, ὡς νῦν αὐτῷ πρῶτον φανέντα θαυμάζει καὶ τέθηπε, πανταχοῦ τῇ θεᾷ πλανώμενος.*

Ὁ μὲν γὰρ ὄροφος ἀπληστός ἐστι θεᾷ καὶ θαῦμα ἰδεῖν καὶ ἀκοῦσαι, γλυφαῖς τισι λεπτοτέραις εἰς καλαθίσκων σχῆμα ποικιλλομέναις ὠραϊζόμενος, καὶ πανταχόθεν τῷ χρυσῷ περιαστράπτων μιμῆται τὸν οὐρανόν, ὅτε καθαρᾷ αἰθρίᾳ τῷ τῶν ἀστέρων χορῷ *περιλάμπεται*· κίονες δὲ κάλλιστα τὰς ἀντυγας ἐπερείδουσαι, εἰς ἀμήχανον ὕψος τὸν ὄροφον αἴρουσι. τοῦ δὲ ναοῦ τὸ ἀγιώτατον δάπεδον ἀτεχνῶς *ἐαρινῶ λειμῶνι* παρείκασται ποικίλῃ μαρμάρων ψηφίδι, ὡς ἄνθεσι καθωραϊζόμενον, *πλήν παρ' ὅσον τὰ μὲν ἄνθη μαραίνεται καὶ ἀλλάττεται, ὁ δὲ λειμῶν οὗτος ἀμάραντος καὶ αἰδίου*, τῆρῶν ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ τὸ *ἔαρ ἀθάνατον*. πᾶς δὲ τοῖχος ποικιλίᾳ μαρμάρων περικαλύπτεται· τὰ δὲ τούτων ἀνωτέρω χρυσῇ καλύπτει ψηφίς, ὅσα μὴ συνείληφεν ὁ τῶν σεπτῶν εἰκόνων χορός. τὸ δὲ τῆς ἀρρήτου τελετῆς χωρίον *μαρμάρων θώραξ* τοῖς ἱερεῦσι περικλείει τὸν χώρον, ἐφ' ᾧ ἔστιν ἐπαναπαύεσθαι τε καὶ μετ' ἀσφαλείας ἐστάναι καὶ ἔρπειν τῇ θεᾷ τὴν ὄψιν. *κώλυμα δὲ τοῦτο τῶν, εἴ τις προπετής* καὶ ἀνίερος εἶσω τῶν ἀδύτων *ὑπερβῆναι φιλονεκίη*.

Ἡ δὲ θεῖα τράπεζα, ταῖς ἐξ ἀργύρου καὶ χρυσοῦ μαρμαρυγαῖς ἀπαστράπτουσα, καταπλήττει τὸν θεατὴν. τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ ταύτης τιμάσθω σιγῇ. ὁ ναὸς δὲ ἅπας τοῖς ᾄδουσι τοὺς θεῖους ὕμνους, *ὥσπερ τὰ ἄντρα, ἡρέμα συνεπηχεῖ, τῆς φωνῆς ἐπανιούσης πρὸς ἑαυτὴν κατὰ τὸ ἀντίτυπον*. παραπετασμάτων δὲ πλῆθος ἠώρηται, οἷς τὴν μὲν ὕλην νήματα παρέσχε σῆρῶν, συνυφανθέντα χρυσῷ καὶ διαφόροις βαφαῖς, τὴν δ' ἐργασίαν οἱ Φοίνικες θαυμαστῇ τινι καὶ περιέργῳ τέχνῃ ποικίλαντες. πυκνοὶ δὲ λαμπτήρες πρὸς ἑαυτοῦς, ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἀμιλλώμενοι τὸν ναὸν δαδουχοῦσι τῇ ἀκοιμήτῳ λυχνοκαῖα, ἴσα ταῖς ἡμέραις τὰς νύκτας φωτίζοντες. τῶν δ' ἐκ χρυσοῦ καὶ ἀργύρου σκευῶν, ὅσα πρὸς ὑπηρεσίαν τῆς ἱερᾶς τελετῆς, τίς ἂν τὸ πλῆθος ἢ τὸ κάλλος ἐξεῖποι λόγος; ἀλλ' ὁ καιρὸς κατεπεῖγει μεθέλκων τὸν λόγον εἰς τὴν τῶν θείων Εὐαγγελίων ἐξήγησιν. τὰ γοῦν κατὰ μέρος ἐν τῇ τῶν ἐγκαινίων ἑορτῇ ταμειύσαντες, τῶν ἱερῶν λογίων ἀκούσωμεν.

Translation

I rejoice in you,¹ O city, and in you, divine shrine of kings,² for people of every age streamed into you today, all those esteemed for their condition alike, and such a great throng of priests, who adorn the present feast. Of all these things God is the first cause, from whom proceeds and comes to pass everything that is good for men, and in second place [is] the pious sovereign,³ the savior and gracious when he beholds his subjects, for he reserves his rage for foes. He, after having provided us with many and great benefactions, and after having surpassed all his contemporaries and predecessors alike in piety and greatness of spirit, as much as the *rays* of the sun eclipse the shining of the stars, placed one thing, this here, the sign of his truly royal and great character, this most delightful temple of the Holy Apostles, which he built in his palaces as a fundament and bulwark, *greatest beyond compare, fairest and most magnificent for its newly created beauty, glittering with light, blazing with gold, shining brightly with mosaics, and blooming with pictures*;⁴ which anyone who, even if he has seen it many times, when he turns again to see it, becomes filled with wonder and astonishment, as if, as his sight wanders all over it, he were beholding it for the very first time.⁵

For the ceiling is an insatiable sight and a miracle to behold and to hear about; embellished with the finest carvings in the form of little baskets,⁶ and gleaming from every side with gold, it imitates the sky, when the serene night air *shines all around with the choir of stars*.⁷ While the columns, which sustain most magnificent vaults, lift up the ceiling to an incredible height. Yet, the most sacred pavement of the temple is truly *like a spring meadow* for being beautified with variegated pieces of marble, as if it had been adorned by flowers, *except for the fact that flowers wither and change, while this meadow is unfading and eternal because it preserves in itself an everlasting spring*.⁸ Then, marbles of various colors entirely cover every wall, while a small golden pebble adorns their upper part, but only to the extent that the chorus of holy images does not cover [the surface]. As for the place [devoted to the celebration] of the ineffable mysteries, *a panel of marbles* encloses the space ordained for the priests; herein one may find both a peaceful and secure place to stand, as well as a vision to delight with a spectacular sight. This is also a hindrance, *supposing that a reckless and unconsecrated person would be eager to transgress into the innermost precincts*.⁹

Then the holy altar, which glitters with the flashings of silver and gold, bedazzles the spectator. As for the other sublime things let them be honored by silence. The entire shrine itself gently joins the chanters in singing the divine hymns, *just like the caverns when the sound comes back again by repercussion*.¹⁰ Furthermore, [there are] a great number of hangings suspended [on the walls], whose cloth was woven from silken threads intertwined with strands of gold and with other different colors, which *the Phoenicians*¹¹ *have embroidered with a truly marvelous and sophisticated skill*. Numerous lanterns clustered together, so to speak, competing with each other to illuminate the church with unceasing light, making the *nights shine like the days*. Then, as regards the vessels of silver and gold ordained for the sacred rite, what discourse could describe their beauty or speak of their number? But time presses me to turn my discourse to the explanation of the divine Gospels. Well then, as we have dealt out with the particulars [i.e. of the building and its fittings] at the Feast of Dedication, let us listen to the holy sayings.¹²

Commentary

1. Considering the extensive presence of the Procopian corpus within Philagathos' *Homilies* the usage of the verb συνήδομαι in the very opening of the *ekphrasis*, as Amato suggested, is reminiscent of a similar occurrence in Procopius of Gaza, who begins the *ethopoia* of *Phoenix* with this term.¹³
2. Under the veil of a classical formulation Philagathos seems to allude to Norman royal propaganda, which articulated the theory of a *restitution regni* for the newly established kingdom and identified Palermo as the seat of kings, the capital, and metropolis.¹⁴
3. The term *basileus* applied to the Norman king carries ideological underpinnings, for it is otherwise well known that Roger is represented clad in the garb of the Byzantine emperor being crowned by Christ in the narthex of George of Antioch's church of St. Mary's of the Admiral. He also used porphyry for the royal tombs. By these means he emphasized a conception of sovereignty that claimed the same standing as the Byzantine emperor; Antonio Marongiu argued that Roger chose the title *rex* instead of *imperator*, because the title *basileus* was customarily rendered by the Latin *rex*;¹⁵ as such, even Emperor Nero received the title *rex* in a mosaic of the Cappella Palatina.
4. Philagathos' amplification and hyperbolic statements correspond to the standard *ekphrastic* aporia on the impact of physical sight and its problematic representation into words;¹⁶ these opening remarks spelling out the beauty of the shrine are taken directly from Lucian's *The Hall*;¹⁷ the same idea of novel beauty is also expressed in Michael Rhetor's description of Hagia Sophia, which is portrayed as an "eternal novelty of wonder, which remains unaltered even for those who frequently visit the Church."¹⁸
5. The bewilderment in front of artistic beauty is a critical aspect of *ekphraseis*; Photios, for instance, recalls in his *Homily* 10 "with how much joy and trembling and astonishment is one filled" upon entering the Pharos church in the Great Palace.¹⁹ For Philagathos, both Lucian and Procopius of Gaza furnished models for framing the effect of the building upon the beholder.
6. The author describes the wooden ceiling roof executed in the *muqarnas*, or stalactite, technique that originated in the Islamic world.
7. The description of the wooden ceiling of the nave as gleaming with gold imitating the serene sky at night sprinkled with light carries the imprint of Lucian's *The Hall*.²⁰

13 Procopius of Gaza, *Opus* 7.1, ed. Amato 2010, 200.

14 See Wieruszowski 1963: 51–52.

15 Marongiu 1955: 29–48.

16 Webb 1999: 67.

17 Lucian, *The Hall*, 1.6–11, ed. Bompaigne; transl. Harmon 1961: 176.

18 Mango and Parker 1960: 236.

19 Photios, *Homily* 10.5, ed. Laourdas, 102; cf. Webb 1999: 68.

20 Lucian, *The Hall*, 8.1–5, ed. Bompaigne; transl. Harmon 1961: 185.

8. When describing the pavement of the Chapel rendered in *opus sectile*, Philagathos had recourse to the meadow metaphor from Lucian's description of the frescoes on the walls of the Hall.²¹ The imagery of a flowery field was well adapted to the floor of Cappella Palatina, which contains five differently colored stones: "porphyry (dark red), serpentine breccia (dark green with light green strips), cipollino (white with gray flecks), giallo antico (ranging from a pale yellow to dark orange), and a fine-grained white limestone."²²
9. For describing the chancel screen that delimited the sanctuary from the rest of the Chapel, as Amato indicated,²³ Philagathos drew inspiration from Procopius of Gaza, *Description of the Clock*.²⁴
10. This comparison is *verbatim* taken from Lucian's *The Hall*.²⁵
11. The usage of the term "Phoenician" evokes the rhetor's classicizing style and probably indicates a Muslim manufacture.
12. This passage of the *proemium* is considered critical for establishing the date of the sermon; the crux of the matter is the interpretation of the aorist $\tau\alpha\mu\iota\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\alpha\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$; Rossi-Taibbi considers that it points to the sermon Philagathos preached before at the *encaenia* of the Chapel on April 28, 1140;²⁶ Kitzinger does not interpret the aorist differently and translates the sentence in this way: "Since we have dealt with the particulars [scil. of the building and its fittings] on the feast of the dedication, let us listen to the holy sayings."²⁷ Scorsus, on the other hand, in the Latin translation that accompanied his *editio princeps* of Philagathos' sermons ascribes to $\tau\alpha\mu\iota\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omega$ its principal meaning as a "saving up, reserving for future use," thus announcing a future sermon to be delivered at the *encaenia*: "Therefore the things pertaining to the particulars [of the building and its fittings] that still remain to be said are saved up for the Feast of Dedication; let us now listen to the holy sayings" – *Itaque quae etiamnum supersunt dicenda singulatim reserventur ad festum Encaeniorum diem; ac nos interim sacra audiamus eloquia*.²⁸ This interpretation, intended to convey that the *encaenia* will happen in the future reiterated by Lavagnini, is not admissible since the usage of the aorist participle precludes it.²⁹

21 Lucian, *The Hall*, 8, 1–5, ed. Bompaire, transl. Harmon 1961: 178.

22 Tronzo 1997: 31.

23 Amato 2012: 7–8.

24 As Bongianino 2017: 4 excellently commented, Philagathos "wanted to stress the utmost sacredness of the area of the church reserved for the consecrated ministers, the eyes of the king, and the celebration of the Divine Mysteries, as opposed to the nave or "aula" beyond the screens, where the laity stood." Procopius of Gaza, *Opus* 8.4, ed. Amato 2014, 140.

25 Lucian, *The Hall*, 3.9–19, ed. Bompaire.

26 Rossi-Taibbi 1969: lv.

27 Kitzinger 1975: 303.

28 PG 132: 956A.

29 See on this Johns 2005: 3.

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I.8.7 Manuel Philes (c.1270 or slightly later – after 1332/34 or mid 1340s)

On a Depiction of the Rulers by the Gates of Medeia

MARINA BAZZANI

Ed.: Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 75–76, no. 14; previous edition Manuel Philes, *Poems*, par. 221, ed. Miller, II, 234

MSS.:¹ Paris, BnF, gr. 2876 (s. XIV), ff. 260r–v

Athens, EBE, *Metochion tou Panagiou Taphou*, 351 (s. XIV), ff. 80r–v

Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, C.VII.07 (Pasini 318) (s. XIV), f. 61r

Vienna, ÖNB, *Historicus* gr. 112 (s. XIV), ff. 218r–v

Other Translations: Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 76 (German)

Significance

This epigram is an interesting example of the multiplicity of functions inherent to the Byzantine *basileus*. The imperial portrait placed at the very gates of a city in Asia Minor was considered a living image of the emperor. Such a pictorial composition manifests simultaneously the ruler's legal/administrative tasks (such as lowering taxes), as well as his moral and salvific function, which encompasses inspiring loyalty and courage, and providing protection and guidance to the inhabitants of the city. The emperor is both the representative of God on earth and the embodiment of the law.

From an aesthetic point of view this epigram presents the reader with a novel perspective. While in epigrams on precious stones and metals (see I.4.2 in this volume) the poet concentrated his attention upon the multi-sensorial appearance of materials and the way in which this affects the viewer's perception of the art objects, here Philes focuses on the extraordinary prerogative of art to instill life into images so as to render them for the observers as virtually breathing and alive, and thus capable of prompting viewers to act for the good and the glory of the empire.

The Author

See A. Rhoby, with additions by M. Bazzani, I.4.2.

¹ Not consulted.

Text and Context

This poem focuses not so much upon the object of art, as much as on the beneficial effects that the effigy of the emperors at the gates of Medeia in Thrace (modern Kiyıkö, near the Black Sea and the Turkish–Bulgarian border) exerts on the inhabitants of that city. The images of the rulers, Andronikos II (r.1282–1328), with either his son Michael IX (r.1294–1320) or his grandchild Andronikos III (r.1328–41), are rendered with such talent as to appear to be breathing and animated: as a consequence, they arouse courage and patriotism in the viewer. Philes addresses the fundamental topic of the compassion (φιλανθρωπία) of the ruler towards his subjects. In this case, imperial φιλανθρωπία is expressed not only through the reminder about tax exemptions, but even more so by the mention of the protective and moralizing action exerted by the *basileus* against enemies and spiritual evils, so that the relationship between him and his people is likened to the bond between a father and his child.² Although the epigram deals with an image with secular content, it still retains religious resonances conveyed in the powerful images of ὀργῆς καὶ θυμοῦ βέλη (the darts of the emperor’s wrath and rage) and πῦρ ἀπειλῆς δραστικῆς (the fire of his sturdy menace), which strongly recall the language of the Old Testament. Several reasons account for the presence of such noticeable religious undertones in these verses. Firstly, it stems from the deeply rooted belief that the Byzantine ruler is God’s representative on earth, and thus his behavior resembles divine actions.³ It also seems plausible to consider the solemn tone of the poem as an allusive way for Philes to express his reverence towards the ruler or the commissioner of the epigram: for the biblical tone confers *gravitas* to the poem and, at the same time, elevates the emperor above his subjects and closer to God. Although it is impossible to date these verses precisely, one can quite confidently place their composition between 1295 and 1328 when Andronikos II shared imperial rule with a co-emperor.

2 In numerous compositions addressed to aristocrats or to the emperor, Philes appeals to the philanthropic nature of the ruler in order to give his requests not only greater solemnity, but also a sense of inevitability, almost impossibility to reject his pleas. Cf. Manuel Philes, *Poems* E. 199, ed. Miller I, 97–98 and *Poems* P. 200, ed. Miller, II, 211.

3 See also F. Leonte, 1.7.3 in this volume.

Text

Ἐπίγραμμα εἰς τὰς τῶν βασιλέων στήλας αἴτινες ἐγράφησαν εἰς τὰς πύλας τοῦ ἄστεος τῆς Μηδείας¹

Καλὸν πρὸ πυλῶν βασιλεῖς οὕτω γράφειν,
 ὡς καὶ πνοὴν δοκοῦσαν ἐγγεῖν τοῖς τύποις·
 ὁ γὰρ πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὡς πρὸς ἐμψύχους βλέπων
 ἐνάγεται μὲν εἰς ὑπόμνησιν φόβου,
 5 νευρούμενος δὲ ταῖς ἐκεῖθεν ἐλπίσιν,
 αἱ πολλάκις ἤκουσιν εἰς τοὺς φιλτάτους,
 θαρσεῖ κατ' ἐχθρῶν, κἄν θανεῖν πάντως δέοι·
 ὅταν δὲ θεσπίζωσι καὶ λύσεις φόρων,
 ὁ δῆμος ἀθρῶν τὰς γραφὰς ἀναπνέει,
 10 καὶ γίνεται παῖς εὐνοῶν τῇ πατρίδι,
 καὶ κατὰ παντὸς δυσμενοῦς ἐπιτρέχει
 νῦν μᾶλλον οἰκεῖν ἀσφαλῶς ταύτην θέλων.
 τὴν γοῦν καλῶς παθοῦσαν ἐκ τούτων πόλιν
 ἐπισιτισμῷ πλησμονῆς διατρέφων
 15 ὁ παμβασιλεὺς εὐμενῶς ἐπιβλέπει,
 καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἐχθροὺς ἐκδιώκοι μακρόθεν,
 ὀργῆς ἐπ' αὐτοὺς καὶ θυμοῦ τείνων βέλη,
 καὶ πῦρ ἀπειλῆς δραστηκῆς ἐπιβρέχων,
 τοὺς ἄρβενας δὲ μυστικῶς ἐνισχύοι
 20 πιστοὺς νέμων φύλακας αὐτοῖς ἀγγέλους,
 καὶ ταῖς γυναιξὶ σωφρονίζοι τὸν βίον,
 ὡς ἂν ὁ σεμνὸς εὐλογοῦμενος γάμος
 πληθύνῃ μαχητῶν ἐξενέγκῃ τῷ χρόνῳ.

Translation

Epigram on the images of the emperors, which were depicted on the gates of the city of Medeia²

It is good to depict emperors before the gates in such a way
 that they even appear to instill breath to the images;⁴
 For the one who gazes at them, he sees them to be alive
 and he is exhorted to the recollection of fear.
 5 But, as he is strengthened with the hope deriving from the images,
 which is frequently bestowed upon those who show loyalty,
 he is daring against the enemies, even if he must perish completely.
 When they (the emperors) decree a tax waive,
 the people feel relief at the sight of the images,
 10 and become like children loyal to their motherland,
 and rush against every foe,
 as they (the people) wish even more now to inhabit their motherland in safety.
 The all-powerful emperor, who nourishes with abundant provisions
 this city, which has benefitted from all that,
 15 may oversee it in a compassionate manner
 and he may drive far away the enemies,
 directing darts of his wrath and rage against them,
 and letting the fire of his sturdy menace rain on them.³
 In a mystical manner he may support the men,
 20 granting to them loyal guardian-angels,⁴
 and he may lead the woman to a chaste lifestyle
 so that the holy, blessed, marriage
 may in time bring forth a throng of fighters.

4 The original punctuation of ll. 2 and 4 has been changed to suit better the flow and the meaning of the verses.

Commentary

1. Title after the Athenian manuscript; omitted by the modern editors.
 2. The ancient city of Salmydessus in Thrace on the coast of the Black Sea; in Byzantine period it was the seat of a fortress. Medeia is also mentioned in Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Par. 50, ed. Miller, II, 91.
 3. Ez. 38:22. καὶ κρινῶ αὐτὸν θανάτῳ καὶ αἵματι καὶ ὑετῶ κατακλύζοντι καὶ λίθοις χαλάζης καὶ πῦρ καὶ θεῖον βρέξω ἐπ’ αὐτὸν καὶ ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς μετ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπ’ ἔθνη πολλὰ μετ’ αὐτοῦ / “I will judge him with plague and bloodshed; I will pour down torrents of rain, hailstones and burning sulfur on him and on his troops and on the many nations with him.”
 4. Philes plays with the disposition of words in the verse and crafts an ambiguous line that can be interpreted in two slightly different ways (“granting them angels as faithful guardians” or “granting them loyal guardian angels”). By granting the emperor the power to provide celestial guardians to his subjects and to support them, the poet again emphasizes the ruler’s function as agent of God on earth and supreme protector of his people.
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Manuel Philes, *Poems*.

b. *Natural Beauty*

I.8.8 Constantine Harmenopoulos (fl. fourteenth century)

On the Protection of Views

DAPHNE PENNA

Ed.: G. E. Heimbach, *Constantini Harmenopuli: Manuale legum sive Hexabiblos* (Leipzig, 1851, repr. Aalen 1969), 270–75

MS.:¹ Vatican City, BAV, Ottobonianus Graecus 440, ff. 1r – 205v. This is the oldest manuscript of the *Hexabiblos* dated from 1345. For a detailed description of this manuscript see M.T. Fögen, “Die Scholien zur Hexabiblos im Codex vetustissimus Vaticanus Ottobonianus gr. 440,” in *Fontes Minores IV* (1981), 256–345, esp. 263–85. For all manuscripts of the *Hexabiblos* see Fögen, *idem*, esp. 256–58 and L. Burgmann, M. Fögen, A. Schminck, and D. Simon, *Repertorium der Handschriften des byzantinischen Rechts: Teil I. Die Handschriften des weltlichen Rechts* (Nr. 1–327), *Forschungen zur byzantinischen Rechtsgeschichte* 20, (Frankfurt am Main, 1995), 395–97 (Index, Armenopoulos Konstantinos, Hexabiblos)

Other Translations: Pars. 47, 48, and 49 of the fourth title of the second book of Harmenopoulos’ *Hexabiblos* correspond, respectively, to pars. 52, 53, and 54 of the treatise of Julian of Askalon on building regulations. Par. 51 of the fourth title of the second book of the *Hexabiblos* corresponds to pars. 56 and 57 of Julian’s treatise. French transl. of Julian’s treatise, C. Saliou in *Le traité d’urbanisme de Julien d’Ascalon: droit et architecture en Palestine au VI^e siècle*, Collection Travaux et Mémoires du centre de recherche d’histoire et civilisation de Byzance 8 (Paris, 1996), 72–77. There is no other translation available for paragraph 46.

Significance

These passages from the *Hexabiblos* refer to the legal protection of views. The following views are protected: views of the sea, of gardens, and of public depictions. An analogous application of the rules on the view of the sea will also protect a view of the mountains.

I would like to thank Dr. Roos Meijering who generously and enthusiastically helped me with the translations of the Greek texts, Professor Bernard Stolte who likewise helped me with his valuable comments and Professor Frits Brandsma, who pointed out an interesting legal point that arose in the texts (see the Commentary, n. 3) and helped me to investigate it. I also wish to thank Dr. Foteini Spingou for helping me in editing my English text and for her useful comments. Manuscript was consulted with the help of Dr. M. Tantalos whom I would also like to thank.

¹ I have consulted MS Vatican City, BAV, Ottob. Gr. 440 (= O). Additions and emendations are noted in the Greek text.

The Author

Constantine Harmenopoulos was a judge in Thessaloniki who in 1344/45 compiled the *Hexabiblos*, a legal handbook consisting of six books also known as the *Procheiron nomōn* (Handbook of the Laws). Harmenopoulos based his compilation on the *Procheiron*, a law book from the time of the Macedonian emperors² and added excerpts from other legal sources, such as the *Synopsis Basilicorum Maior* and the *Peira*. His aim was to create a legal handbook that was easy to use in legal practice. The *Hexabiblos* became very popular; it was translated into many languages, was edited several times, and was used in legal practice in Greek regions until the middle of the twentieth century.

Text and Context

The fourth title of the second book of the *Hexabiblos* is entitled *Περὶ Καινοτομιῶν* (= *About Building Regulations*) and its pars. 46, 47, 48, 49, and 51³ refer to the protection of the public view of the natural and built environment.

Emperor Zeno (474/475 and 476/491) promulgated a well-known constitution by which he laid down strict rules on the construction of buildings in order to protect the direct and unobstructed view of the sea.⁴ As the constitution points out, the view of gardens or trees was not protected nor had it been protected by earlier legislation.⁵ The law of Zeno concerned building in Constantinople; in 531, Justinian extended its application to the whole of the empire.⁶ It seems that Zeno's measures were not effective enough, since Justinian, in his Novel no. 63 in 538, complained about tricks people used to infringe the laws on the protection of the view of the sea in the Byzantine capital. Justinian was determined to put an end of all such malicious practices. He ordered that the violator had to demolish what he had built and pay a fine of ten pounds of gold.⁷ Justinianic Novel no 165 (undated) also refers to the protection of the view of the sea. These rules were subsequently transmitted in the legal works of the Macedonian period, the *Procheiron*, the

2 Some scholars date the *Procheiron* between 870–879 and others in 907; see in detail Troianos 2011: 246–49, with bibliography; Troianos 2015: 160–62; Troianos 2017: 196–99.

3 Par. 50 refers to the protection of “private space.”

4 C. 8,10,12. The constitution was presumably promulgated between 476 and 479. On the dating see Saliou 1994: 283; on Roman and Byzantine building regulations see Tourptsoglou-Stephanidou 2000 (repr. 2014).

5 C. 8,10,12, 2b: Τὸ γὰρ τῶν κήπων τε καὶ τῶν δένδρων οὔτε περιεληπταὶ τῇ προτέρᾳ νομοθεσίᾳ οὔτε τῇ παρούσῃ προστεθῆσεται. Scheltema suggested that this particular remark “is apparently directed against those who think that the view of gardens and trees was protected.” The fact that these persons thought that the view of gardens and trees was protected indicates that probably there must have been a constitution regulating this view (the *prospectus hortorum et arborum*), but it was not promulgated by Zeno nor by Leo. This constitution, Scheltema suggested, could have been promulgated by the two usurpators, either Basiliscus or Illus. See Scheltema 1946: 354 (repr. 2004: 250–51).

6 C. 8.10.13 (531 CE).

7 In this Novel, as Troianos points out, the malicious obstruction of the view of the sea, which is an incorporeal good, is compared to the robbery of a corporeal good, even if the good is of small value; see Troianos 1998: 40.

Eisagoge, and the *Basilica*,⁸ as well as the works that derived from the *Basilica*.⁹ The law by which Justinian had extended the application of Zeno's constitution throughout the empire has also been transmitted in the *Basilica*, but in the latter we find that an exception is made for the rules concerning the protection of the view of the sea: these will only be applied in the Byzantine capital.¹⁰ As Pitsakes has shown brilliantly, Harmenopoulos deliberately omitted this last piece of information from his collection, so that the rules concerning the protection of the view of the sea could be applied everywhere, including Thessaloniki, the city in which he lived.¹¹

Paragraph 46 of the fourth title of the second book of the *Hexabiblos* derived from this constitution of Zeno, which was amended by the Justinianic Novels, and then incorporated in the *Procheiron*.¹² In particular, for paragraph 46 Harmenopoulos used the *Procheiron* 38.5 and 38.6 and the *Synopsis Maior Basilicorum* K 9, 40.12 A minimum distance of 12 feet had to be kept between two buildings and the neighbor's direct view of the sea must not be obstructed. The neighbor must be allowed to enjoy such a view irrespective of whether "he is standing or sitting" in his house. If, however, a distance of 100 feet is kept between both houses, obstruction of the neighbor's view of the sea is permitted. The provision is extremely detailed. A distinction is made between two categories of views of the sea that you could enjoy from your house: (i) the view from the main part of the house, and (ii) the view from the secondary spaces of the house, such as the kitchen, lavatory, staircase, and corridors. The view of the sea for the second category is not protected: a person who builds within a distance of 100 feet is allowed to obstruct the view of this category, but in all cases, the 12-foot gap should be kept. Moreover, servitudes that allow the obstruction of the view should be observed. The last sentence of paragraph 46 is identical to what has been preserved of Justinianic Novel no 165 and clarifies that the protection of the view of the sea, with the 100-foot separation, should not only be applied to the direct

8 *Procheiron*, 38.5–6 in Zepos, *Jus II*, 206; *Eisagoge*, 39.3–4 in Zepos, *Jus II*, 353 (the *Eisagoge* is named in this edition as *Epanagoge*) and *Basilica*, 58.11.11 = C. 8.10,12–*Basilica*, 58,11,15 = Nov. 165 (BT 2666/22–2670/8). For the legal works of the Macedonian period see Lokin and van der Wal 1985: 78ff., Troianos 2011: 213ff., with bibliography; Troianos 2015: 137ff.; Troianos 2017: 168ff.

9 For example, the *Synopsis Maior Basilicorum*, K. 9, 35–40 in Zepos, *Jus V*, 337–44, which was an alphabetical work aimed to make the *Basilica* easy to consult. For an overview of the Byzantine legal sources on the protection of the view of the sea see Troianos 1998: 38–43.

10 *Basilica*, 58,11,12 = C. 8,10,13 (BT 2668/7–11): Ἐπειδὴ δὲ αὕτη ἡ Ζήνωνος διάταξις ἡ περὶ τῶν δουλειῶν ἐπὶ τοῖς Κωνσταντινουπολίταις ἐστὶ, θεσπιζομεν πανταχοῦ γῆς τὰ αὐτὰ κρατεῖν πλην τῆς ἀπόψεως τῆς θαλάσσης· ἐκείνη γὰρ ἐν μόνῃ τῇ πανευδαίμονι Κωνσταντινοπόλει καὶ τῇ ταύτης περιοικίδι κρατεῖ. [= Because this constitution of Zeno about servitudes is applied to the citizens of Constantinople, we order that the same rules will be valid everywhere, except for the protection of the view of the sea; for that (= the protection of the view of the sea) is valid only in the all-blessed city of Constantinople and its suburbs]. This *Basilica* fragment (from Θεσπιζομεν up to κρατεῖ) has also been transmitted into the *Synopsis Maior Basilicorum*, which is the main work that Harmenopoulos used instead the *Basilica* since presumably he did not have in his possession the text of the *Basilica*. See on this Pitsakes 1971: λγ'–λε'.

11 Pitsakes 1998: 147–50.

12 I thank Dr. Marios Tantalos for letting me consult his unpublished work *Identifikation aller von Harmenopoulos in der Hexabiblos (1345 p.C.) benutzten Quellen des byzantinischen Rechts*. Athens/Frankfurt/Groningen 2019 conducted for the Max-Planck-Institut für Europäische Rechtsgeschichte, Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen.

view of the sea – as the constitution of Zeno had regulated –, but also to the side view of the sea (οὐ μόνον κατ' εὐθείαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐκ πλαγίου ὀφείλει εἶναι ἀκαινοτόμητος).¹³

For paragraphs 47, 48, 49, and 51 of the section on building regulations (*Hexabiblos* 2,4) Harmenopoulos used the treatise of Julian of Askalon. In fact, this treatise was one of the main sources that Harmenopoulos used for this title. Julian was an architect who lived in sixth-century Askalon in Palestine and, presumably between 531 and 533, wrote a treatise entitled *On the Laws or Customs in Palestine*, which consisted of the rules on the construction of buildings in the area.¹⁴ Harmenopoulos paid a great tribute to the architect Julian by including the whole of Julian's treatise in his *Hexabiblos* with the exception of its first two introductory paragraphs. According to Julian's treatise, and therefore according to the *Hexabiblos*, there are three important views that are protected by law: the view of the sea, of gardens, and of public depictions (*Hexabiblos* 2,4,47: Φασὶ μὲν γὰρ νόμους τρεῖς εἶναι ἀπόψεως: θαλάσσης, κήπων, γραφῆς δημοσίας).¹⁵

Paragraph 47 begins with a short introduction on all views and then focuses on the view of the sea. According to this paragraph, the sea can be seen from 40 miles, a garden, plants, and parks from 20 miles, and a public depiction from at least 200 cubits. There are three categories of views: direct (κατ'εὐθείαν ἀπόψεις), side (πλάγια), and constrained views (βεβιασμένοι). According to Julian, it is only the direct view of the sea that is protected, not the side or constrained ones.¹⁶ The following two distinctions of sea views are then made: (i) a view of the harbour, the beach, etc., and (ii) a distant view of the sea. The first view should not be hindered because there is great pleasure in seeing such a view (ἱκανὴ γὰρ ἢ ἀπὸ τούτων ψυχαγωγία τοῖς ὄρωσιν). The distant view of the sea is not protected since the sea can be seen from very far.

Paragraph 48 refers to the view of gardens. Julian has already mentioned that gardens, plants, and parks can be seen from 20 miles. In this paragraph he sets out the legal restrictions: one should not hinder such a view below 50 feet. There is, in general, a balance between protecting, on one hand, the right to a beautiful view and, on the other hand, being reasonable and practical. In this case, this means that while gardens can be seen from 20 miles, there has to be a limit on the protection of such a view. That is why the distance of 50 feet is legislated here.

Paragraph 49 sets out the rule for protecting the view of a public depiction (δημοσίας γραφῆς ἄποψιν). Paragraph 47 already mentioned that a public depiction could be seen from at least 200 cubits; however, in paragraph 49 the distance is further defined using a new criterion, very different from the one about the view of the sea or of gardens. The criterion here is not a calculated distance but the possibility of recognizing the

13 Justinian's Novel no. 165, which survives in fragments, has also been included in the *Synopsis Maior Basilicorum*, K. 9, 40 in Zepos, *Jus V*, 344; for servitudes, see the Commentary, n. 3.

14 Troianos 2011: 144–45; Troianos 2015: 84–85; Troianos 2017: 104. Edition and transl. in French of Julian's treatise in Saliou 1996.

15 According to par. 51 it is added that the view of the mountains is also protected.

16 This contradicts the last sentence of par. 46, which included Justinian's Novel no 165. Julian's treatise was written before the promulgation of Justinian's Novels no. 63 in 538 and no. 165 (although undated, it is placed after Novel no. 63, so after 538); see also the Commentary, n. 8.

depicted (mythological or historical) events. If a person can see the public depiction from his house and can recognize its story or the persons depicted, then such a view is not to be obstructed. The examples that are given for such depictions are those of Achilles and Ajax. This information is an indication that Homeric themes were a popular theme for decoration in sixth-century Palestine, since this passage is taken from Julian's treatise.¹⁷ Harmenopoulos uses this passage without changing the examples. This, however, should not be interpreted as an indication that Homeric figures remained a favorite theme for public depictions in the fourteenth century. References to Homeric elements remain omnipresent but we have no information about public depictions of Homeric figures in the Middle Byzantine period. According to paragraph 49, if the content of the depiction cannot be identified, then no protection of the view is necessary as there is no legally relevant view or, as Julian states – and Harmenopoulos repeats – there is no pleasure to obstruct. Julian expresses this vividly in a form of a rhetorical question (τίς καί ποίαν ἔχει ἀπὸ ταύτης τέρψιν ὁ τὸν οἰκοδομοῦντα κωλύων;).

Paragraph 51 of the fourth title of the second book of the *Hexabiblos* is well known for referring to an excerpt from Papinian, which had not been included in the *Digest*.¹⁸ Julian uses Papinian's argument to justify his own point of view on the matter. Julian's intention is to apply the law by analogy and to use the construction rules about the view of the sea for the view of mountains as well "because the sight of the mountain is pleasant, just as that of the sea" (ἐπειδὴ τερπνὴ τις ἢ θέα τοῦ ὄρους, ὡσπερ τῆς θαλάσσης).

A difference between the treatise of Julian of Askalon and the constitution by Zeno is that the former included rules not only on the protection of the view of the sea, but also the view of trees, gardens, public depictions, and mountains, while the latter did not. Harmenopoulos decided to adopt these passages from the treatise of Julian and, by doing so, Julian's treatise received a second life, which proved to be very successful if one considers the afterlife of the *Hexabiblos* in the following centuries. Because of its simplicity, the *Hexabiblos* became an influential text in the eastern part of Europe¹⁹ but it also received much attention in Western Europe, as is proven by the number of critical editions and translations.²⁰

17 For testimonies and examples of public depictions see the observations of Saliou 1994: 246–47, with bibliography.

18 The *Digest* or *Pandects* was one of the four parts of Justinian's legislation, promulgated in 529 and consisted of legal opinions of the known Roman jurists mostly of the second and third century C.E. There has been a lot of discussion on this passage of the *Hexabiblos*. For a general overview of most of the opinions see Rodger 1972: 132–40; see also Pitsakes 1971: 129 n. 1.

19 The *Hexabiblos* was rendered many times into Modern Greek and it has been reprinted several times in Greece; it was used up to the promulgation of the first Greek civil code in 1946. The *Hexabiblos* has also been translated into Slavic languages and was spread throughout the Balkan region. See Pitsakes 1998: 87–90, with bibliography; Pitsakes 1971: σ'–σθ'.

20 As Pitsakes notes, there are thirteen editions of the *Hexabiblos* in the West in the original, in Latin or in German translation; see Pitsakes 1998: 87–88. The sixth book of the *Hexabiblos* which deals with criminal law was also transl. in English by E. H. Freshfield and pub. in Cambridge in 1930. On information about the *Hexabiblos* and its influence in general see Pitsakes 1971: ζ'–ρiα', especially πγ'–ρiα' and Troianos 2011: 390–91, with bibliography; Troianos 2015: 260–61; Troianos 2017: 321.

Text²¹**46. ΠΕΡΙ ΑΠΟΨΕΩΣ**

Ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ εὐδαίμονι πόλει ἀπόψει τοῦ γείτονος δώδεκα μόνους ἀπαιτῶν πόδας μὴ ἀφαιρείσθω ἐξ εὐθείας ὄρα ἢ τὴν θάλασσαν, ἐστῶς ἐν τοῖς ἰδίους οἴκοις ἢ καθήμενος ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ μὴ ἀναγκαζόμενος παρατρέπειν ἑαυτὸν εἰς πλάγιον, ἐφ' ᾧ ἴδειν θάλασσαν. Ἐὰν δὲ ἑκατὸν ποδῶν ἐν μέσῳ τῶν δύο οἴκων εἴῃ διάστημα, ἐξέστω ἀκωλύτως κτίζειν τῷ βουλομένῳ καὶ τὴν ἐπὶ θάλασσαν ἄποψιν ἀφαιρεῖν τοῦ γείτονος. Εἰ δὲ τις ἀπὸ μαγειρείου, ἢ ἀπὸ ἀφεδρῶνος, ἢ κλιμακῶνος [κλιμακεῶνος Ο], ἢ ἀπὸ βαστερνίων, ἤγουν τῶν λεγομένων παρόδων ἦτοι διαβατῶν ἄποψιν ἔχει ἐπὶ θάλασσαν [ἄποψιν ἐπὶ θάλατταν ἔχει Ο], τὴν τοιαύτην ἄποψιν καὶ ὁ ἑκατὸν ποδῶν ἐντὸς [ἐντὸς ποδῶν Ο] οἰκοδομῶν [οἰκοδομίαν Ο] ἀκωλύτως ἀφαιρεῖται, εἰ μόνον δώδεκα πόδες εἰσὶ μεταξύ τῶν [δύο add. Ο] οἴκων. Εἰ δὲ καὶ σύμφωνόν ἐστιν ἐπιτρέπον τινὶ τὴν οἰκοδομήν, κρατεῖτω τὸ σύμφωνόν, εἰ καὶ βλάπτει τὸν γείτονα περὶ θαλάσσης ἄποψιν, εἴτε αὐτὸς ὁ νῦν δεσπόζων τοῦ οἴκου συνεφώνησεν, εἴτε οἱ προκτησάμενοι αὐτοῦ τὸν οἶκον οὐδὲ γὰρ προσήκει τὰς ὑπαρχούσας [ὑπάρχουσας Ο] τινὶ δουλείας διὰ τῶν γενικῶν νόμων ἀναιρεῖσθαι. Ἡ ἐπὶ θάλασσαν ἐντὸς ἑκατὸν ποδῶν οὔσα ἄποψις οὐ μόνον κατ' εὐθείαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐκ πλαγίου ὀφείλει εἶναι ἀκαινοτόμητος· τοῦτο γὰρ προστίθησιν ὁ παρῶν τύπος φυλάττων τὴν Ζήνωνος διάταξιν καὶ τὴν νεαρὰν ἐρμηνεύων.

47. Ἐπαρχικὸν ΠΕΡΙ ΑΠΟΨΕΩΣ ΘΑΛΑΣΣΗΣ

Ἡ ὁρατικὴ δύναμις, πασῶν τῶν αἰσθήσεων ὀξυτάτη οὔσα, ἀπὸ πλείστου διαστήματος τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἔχει, ὅθεν οὐ χρὴ ἀπλῶς οὐδὲ ὡς ἔτυχε περὶ ταύτης ἀποφάνεσθαι, ἀλλ' ἐνθέντας μέτρα τούτοις στοιχεῖν. Φασὶ μὲν γὰρ νόμους τρεῖς εἶναι ἀπόψεως θαλάσσης, κήπων, γραφῆς δημοσίας· πάντας [ταύτας Ο] δὲ ἀορίστως τιθέντες τοῖς κτίσοισι [πολλὴν ὄχλησιν add. Ο] τίκτουσιν· ὄραται μὲν γὰρ ἡ θάλασσα [γὰρ θάλασσα Ο] ἀπὸ μιλίων πολλακίς τεσσαράκοντα, καὶ περαιτέρω· ὄραται δὲ [καὶ add. Ο] κήπος καὶ φυτὰ καὶ ἄλση ἀπὸ μιλίων εἴκοσιν· ὄραται δὲ καὶ δημοσία γραφὴ ἀπὸ πήχεων οὐχ ἦττον διακοσίων, καὶ εἰ ταύταις ἐστοιχοῦμεν ταῖς ἀπόψεσιν, οὐκ ἂν οἰκία ἢ κώμη ἢ πόλις ἐκτίζετο. Εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ ἄλλαι ἀπόψεις οὐ κατ' εὐθείαν ὁρῶσαι, ἀλλὰ πλάγια καὶ βεβιασμένα καὶ ταύτας ἀπόψεις οὐ φημί. Χρὴ οὖν τὸν θαλάσσης ἀπόψει ἐν τῷ οἰκοδομεῖν ἐπιπροσθοῦντα, κατ' εὐθείαν οὔση καὶ μὴ πλαγίαν ἐχούση τὴν θέσιν, ἀφεστᾶναι τοῦ τὴν ἄποψιν κατ' εὐθείαν ἔχοντος καὶ μὴ πλαγίαν καὶ βεβιασμένην. Εἰ μὲν ὄρα λιμένα καὶ αἰγιαλὸν [λιμένα ἢ αἰγιαλὸν Ο] κᾶν ἀπλῶς τῇ κώμῃ, ἢ πόλει [τῇ πόλει ἢ κώμῃ Ο], ἢ στάσει [στάσεις Ο] πλοίων²² τελεῖον [τέλειον Ο] μὴ ἐχούση λιμένα, τὸ παράπαν μὴ κωλύειν μήτε ἀφαιρεῖν τὴν τοιαύτην ἄποψιν· ἰκανὴ γὰρ ἡ ἀπὸ τούτων ψυχαγωγία τοῖς ὁρῶσιν. Εἰ δὲ ἀπωτέρω καὶ πελάγη ὄρα, ταύτην οὐδεμίαν λογίζομεθα ἄποψιν· καθὼς γὰρ εἴρηται, καὶ ἀπὸ τεσσαράκοντα μιλίων τὸ τῆς θαλάττης [θαλάσσης Ο] ὄραται μέγεθος, καὶ οὐ δίκαιον ἀπὸ τοσούτου ἐμποδίζεσθαι τοὺς οἰδοκομεῖν ἐθέλοντας διαστήματος.

21 Additions and emendations to the current edition on the basis of MS Vatican City, BAV, Ottob. gr. 440 (= O) are noted inside brackets.

22 In the edition of Julian's treatise by Saliou, the Greek is as follows: Εἰ μὲν ὄρα λιμένα ἢ αἰγιαλόν, κᾶν ἀπλῶς τῇ πόλει ἢ τῇ κώμῃ ἢ στάσεις πλοίων ..., Saliou 1996: 73.

Translation

46. Regarding the view

In this wealthy city [i.e. Constantinople] if one keeps a distance of only 12 feet from one's neighbor, it is not permitted that one be obstructed from viewing the sea directly, whether he is standing or sitting in his own place, and he should not be forced to move himself to the side in order to see the sea.¹ But if there were a distance of 100 feet between the two houses, it must be permitted for the one who wishes to do so to build without restrictions and to obstruct his neighbor's view of the sea. But if someone has a view of the sea from a kitchen or the lavatory or the staircase or the "basternia,"² the so-called alleys or passages, then even the person who builds within 100 feet is allowed to obstruct such a view unhindered, provided that the distance of 12 feet between the buildings is observed. If, however, there is an agreement that allows someone to build, then this agreement will be observed, even if it harms the neighbor in respect of his view of the sea, [and irrespective of] whether it was the present owner of the house who made the agreement himself, or the former owners of the house; for it is not right to cancel by general laws existing servitudes³ in favor of someone. The view of the sea at a distance of less than 100 feet should be protected, not only if it is direct, but also if oblique; this is what is added by the present regulation, which observes the constitution of Zeno and explains the Novel.⁴

47. *Eparchikon*⁵ regarding the view of the sea

The sense of sight, being the sharpest of all senses, is activated from a very long distance. For this one should not take decisions about it at random or haphazardly, but specify measurements and stick to them. It is said that there are three laws about views: regarding [the view of the] sea, gardens and public depictions; But dealing with all of these indiscriminately, they create <great disturbance>⁶ for those who want to build anything; for the sea is often visible from a distance of more than 40 miles; yet a garden and plants and parks [are visible] from 20 miles; and a public depiction is visible from at least 200 cubits;⁷ and if we respected these views, no house or village or city would be built. There are also other views which are not seen directly but from sideways or constrained; but I will not talk about these views. So it is necessary that he who blocks the view of the sea by erecting a building, if it is a direct and not a side view, will keep a certain distance from the person who has the view that is direct and not oblique or constrained.⁸ If he has a view to a harbor and a beach or even simply the village or a city or anchorage grounds – if there is not a complete harbor⁹ – then he may absolutely not hinder or block such a view; because a great pleasure derives from them for the spectators. If, however, he sees the pelagic sea in the far distance, we do not consider this as any view; because, as stated, the greatness of the sea is seen even from 40 miles and it would not be right to prevent those who want to build from such a great distance.

48. Ἐπαρχικὸν ΠΕΡΙ ΑΠΟΨΕΩΣ ΚΗΠΩΝ [ΚΑΙ ΦΥΤΩΝ add. Ο].

Καὶ τὸ τῶν κήπων καὶ τῶν φυτῶν χωρίον ἀπὸ τοῦ ῥηθέντος ὀραῖται διαστήματος καὶ οὐ πάντως ἀπὸ τοσούτου χρή τοὺς οἰκοδομεῖν ἐθέλοντας ἐμποδίζεσθαι· ἀλλὰ δεῖ τὸν ἀπὸ ταύτης τῆς ἀπόψεως κωλύοντα κωλύειν οὐχ ἀπλῶς, οὐδ' ὡς ἔτυχεν, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ ποδῶν πενήκοντα.

49. Ἐπαρχικὸν ΠΕΡΙ ΑΠΟΨΕΩΣ ΔΗΜΟΣΙΑΣ ΓΡΑΦΗΣ

Ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἀφεστάναι χρή τὸν κτίσαι [κτίσαι Ο] βουλόμενον καὶ δημοσίας γραφῆς ἄποψιν ἀπὸ τοῦ γείτονος ἀφελεῖν ἐφ' ὅσον τι τῶν ἐγγεγραμμένων τῇ ἱστορίᾳ γνώριμον ὀραῖται· οἷον εἴ τις αὐτὴν θεωρῶν τὴν γραφὴν ἐπιγινώσκει καὶ ὀρᾷ τοὺς ἐγγεγραμμένους ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτοῦ οἰκίας Ἀχιλλέα ἢ Αἴαντα, ἢ τοιοῦτόν τινα· τότε γὰρ χρή αὐτὸν κωλύειν τὸν ἀφαιρεῖν βουλόμενον ταύτην τὴν γραφὴν τῆς ἀπόψεως· εἰ δὲ μήτε γνώριμόν τι τῶν ἐγγεγραμμένων εἶη, μήτε μὴν αὐτὴν ὀρᾷ τὴν ἱστορίαν, τίς καὶ ποῖαν ἔχει ἀπὸ ταύτης τέρψιν ὁ τὸν οἰκοδομοῦντα κωλύων;

51. Ἐπαρχικὸν ΠΕΡΙ ΑΠΟΨΕΩΣ ὈΡΩΝ

Τὴν ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη ἄποψιν οὐ δύναται τις κωλύειν, ὡς εἶπεν ὁ Παππιανὸς ἐν τῷ τρίτῳ βιβλίῳ τῶν κοινιστιῶνων ἐν τῇ τελευταίᾳ τοῦ τίτλου κοινιστιῶνι. Ἡ δὲ διάταξις Ζήνωνος ἔχει, ὅτι ἐὰν ἑκατὸν πόδας [ὅτι ἑκατὸν πόδας ἐάν] ἀπέχη ὁ γείτων, οὐ κωλύεται βουλόμενος οἰκοδομεῖν διὰ τὸ ἀφαιρεῖσθαι τὴν ἄποψιν τὴν ἐπὶ θάλασσαν· τοῦτο δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ ὄρους ἔλκειν δυνάμεθα, ἐπειδὴ τερπνὴ τις ἢ θέα τοῦ ὄρους, ὥσπερ τῆς θαλάσσης, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ὁμοίων τὰ ὅμοια τέμνειν δεῖ· καὶ ταῦτα μὲν πάντα ὑπομνήσεως ἕνεκα συνῆκται· εἰ δὲ τι παρεμπέσοι [παραμπέσει Ο] παρὰ τὰ εἰρημένα, ἀπὸ τῶν ὁμοίων τὰ ὅμοια σκοπεῖν. Βλάβας μέντοι ὠμολογημένας καὶ μὴ κατὰ φθόνον μεμηχανημένας δεῖ ἀναιρεῖν σκοποῦντας, εἰ δι' αὐτὸ βλάπτεται τι τὸ δι' ἐναντίας μέρος, καὶ οὕτω κριθήσεται ταῦτα παρὰ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.

48. *Eparchikon* regarding the view of the gardens [and the plants]

The space of gardens and plants should also be seen from the mentioned distance¹⁰ and those who want to build from that distance should certainly not be prevented from doing so, but we must stop the person who hinders such a view not randomly or haphazardly, but from the distance of 50 feet.

49. *Eparchikon* regarding the view of public depictions

The one who wishes to build and obstruct his neighbor's view of a public depiction has to be prohibited [from doing so], if elements that can assist the identification of the subject of the depiction are not visible; for instance, if someone by looking at that depiction from his house recognizes and sees the depicted persons as being Achilles or Ajax or someone similar, then he should prevent the person who wishes to exclude him from the sight of the depiction; if, however, there is nothing recognizable in the depiction and he does not even see the subject [of the depiction], then who can stop the one who wishes to build and what kind of pleasure would he derive from this?

51. *Eparchikon* regarding the view of the mountains

No one can obstruct a view of the mountains, as Papinian¹¹ has said in the third book of the *Quaestiones* [and specifically] in the last *Quaestio* of that title. Also the law of Zeno orders that if the neighbor is at a distance of 100 feet, the one who wishes to build there may not be prohibited [from doing so] by the fact that he blocks the view of the sea; however, we can apply this even to [the view of] mountains, because the sight of the mountain is pleasant, just as [is] that of the sea, and similar decisions should be taken on the analogy of similar cases. All¹² this has been assembled as a reminder; but if something else should take place that does not fit in what has been said, similar decisions should be taken on the analogy of similar cases. The damages, however, that we have to stop must be unmistakable, and not contrived out of spite, [but] by considering if the other party suffers any damage because of it. This is how these issues will be decided among men.

Commentary

1. The Greek is problematic. Heimbach states in his critical apparatus that instead of ἀπόψει we should read ἄποψιν, which we encounter in *Procheiron* 38,5–6.²³ Heimbach moreover mentions that Reitz in his edition of the *Hexabiblos* (The Hague, 1780) reads ἀποστᾶς instead of ἀπαιτῶν.²⁴ I follow the interpretation of Meijering who, taking into account palaeographical arguments and other evidence (fragments of Anatolius), conjectures ἀπόψει as ἀπό (τοῦ γείτονος) and ἀπαιτῶν as ἀπεχῶν.
2. Το βαστέρνιον was a corridor, a passage.²⁵ The word is transcribed from the Latin “basterna” which means “a litter,” a vehicle in which people were carried.²⁶ In Byzantine Constantinople, as Saliou mentions, the word βαστέρνιον was used to describe “an overhang, probably closed, used as a gallery or passage.”²⁷
3. In property law, servitudes are rights that are exercised over the property of someone else (*iura in re aliena*).²⁸ The owner of the serving estate has either to tolerate an act of the holder of the servitude²⁹ or to abstain from performing an act.³⁰ In this paragraph of the *Hexabiblos* it is stated that if servitudes exist that allow building they are valid, even if they obstruct the view because general laws cannot annul existing servitudes. A servitude that allowed building was the servitude *ius altius tollendi* which gave the beneficiary the right to build higher and was a counterpart of the *servitus altius non tollendi*. The servitude *ius altius tollendi* is not a typical example of a servitude and there is much discussion about its nature.³¹
4. This must be Novel no. 63 of Justinian. This sentence of the *Hexabiblos* is identical to the Justinianic Novel no. 165, which is also inserted in the *Basilica* and the *Synopsis Maiorum Basilicorum*.³²
5. The *Eparchikon* (Ἐπαρχικὸν Βιβλίον), the *Book of the Eparch* is a tenth-century collection of regulations concerning the organization of guilds in the Byzantine capital.³³ This collection is addressed to the *eparch*, the prefect of Constantinople who was responsible for the function of guilds in the Byzantine capital. The treatise of Julian of Askalon, which Harmenopoulos uses for this part of his *Hexabiblos*, has been transmitted as part of the *Book of the Eparch*. This information can explain why the word

23 Heimbach 1851: 270–71.

24 *Constantini Harmenopuli Manuale Legum, item Leges Agrariae, ex variis codicibus manuscriptis, emendavit atque auxit, nova versione latina adornavit, notasque et observationes complurium eruditorum tam editas quam ineditas ut et suas adjecit, nec non Jo. G. Sammet diatribam de hypobolo subjunxit, Gul. Otto Reitz iuris consultus [= Supplementum Novi Thesauri juris civilis et canonici ex collectione et museo Meerமானiano (= tomus VIII)]* (The Hague, 1780).

25 LBG: “Durchgang, Passage.”

26 LSJ: “Lat. *basterna*, closed litter.”

27 Saliou 2007: 203.

28 For a basic description of servitudes in Roman law and their distinctions see Nicholas 1975: 140–48.

29 A typical example of such a servitude is the right of passage over the serving state (*servitus itineris*).

30 For example, the servitude of not building higher than a specific height (*servitus altius non tollendi*).

31 See, e.g., Buonamici 1913; Perret 1924; Lee 1999.

32 B. 58, 11, 15 = Nov. 165 (BT 2670/5–8) and *Synopsis Maior Basilicorum*, K. 9, 40 in Zepos, *Jus V*, 344.

33 See Troianos 2011: 301–05, with bibliography; Troianos 2015: 199–202; Troianos 2017: 244–48. Last edition by J. Koder.

Ἐπαρχικόν is included in some manuscripts in the titles of the paragraphs of the *Hexabiblos* that are taken from the treatise of Julian of Askalon.³⁴ Pitsakes has made a “practical” edition of the *Hexabiblos*. This is not a new critical edition of the *Hexabiblos*, as the author notes in his introduction. Pitsakes uses the edition of Heimbach (Leipzig, 1851, repr. Aalen, 1969) and corrects it so that it becomes better and easier to use. He corrects typographical and spelling mistakes of the edition of Heimbach, omits or changes the position of some scholia that are included in Heimbach’s critical apparatus depending on their type, i.e. whether they were originally inserted in the *editio princeps* or added by later scholars.³⁵ Pitsakes has no differences with Heimbach in these paragraphs on the protection of views except from the fact that Pitsakes omits the word Ἐπαρχικόν from the titles in pars. 47, 48, 49, and 51 and that he uses the word ὀρέων instead of ὈΡΩΝ in the title of par. 51.³⁶

6. The edited text is defective here. Both Heimbach and Pitsakes posit a *lacuna*, which should be filled with something like “a difficult situation,” “a problem.”³⁷ The solution is confirmed in the transition of Julian’s treatise, ed. Saliou: Ταύτας δὲ ἀορίστως τιθέ- ντες τοῖς κτίσουσιν ἀμφιβολίας τίκτουσιν.³⁸ Indeed in manuscript O we read here the words πολλήν ὄχλησιν.
7. Πῆχυς (= cubit), a measure of length which is equal to a distance from the point of the elbow to that of the middle finger.
8. This contradicts what is mentioned in the last sentence of par. 46; see footnotes 13 and 16.
9. The Greek is problematic. In the edition of Julian’s treatise by Catherine Saliou the Greek is slightly different; see footnote 22.
10. That would be the 20 miles mentioned above.
11. Papinian (142–212 CE) was one of the most famous Roman jurists.³⁹ This particular passage has not been preserved elsewhere.
12. The sentences that follow form a kind of a general conclusion to all the above passag- es. In the edition of the treatise of Julian of Askalon the sentences from καὶ ταῦτα μὲν up to the end (παρὰ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις) form a separate paragraph, no 57 and after the word σκοποῦντας is added καθὼς ἐν προοιμίῳ εἶρηται (= as it has been mentioned in the preface).⁴⁰ These last sentences reflect Julian’s goal in finding a fair solution for all parties when a change takes place in the building environment.⁴¹

34 See in detail Pitsakes 1998: 73–81; Scheltema 1946: 248–49.

35 See in detail Pitsakes, 1971, πρῶ–πγ’.

36 Pitsakes 1971: 128–30.

37 Heimbach 1851: 272 n. 49; Pitsakes 1971: 128 n. 2.

38 Saliou 1996: 73.

39 On Papinian and his work see *Handbuch der lateinischen Literatur der Antike*, eds. R. Herzog and P. L. Schmidt, vol. 4, *Die Literatur des Umbruchs von der römischen zur christlichen Literatur 117–283 n. Chr.*, ed. K. Sallmann (Munich, 1997): 117–23, with bibliography.

40 Saliou 1996: 77.

41 Hakim 2001: 8–10; Hakim 2014: 9.

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I.8.9 Theodore Metochites (1270–1332)

Theodore Metochites on the Beauty of Nature (Excerpts from the *Miscellanea*)

IOANNIS POLEMIS

Ed.: K. Hult, *Theodore Metochites on the Human Condition and the Decline of Rome, Semeioseis Gnomikai 27–60. Critical Edition with Introduction, Translation, Notes, and Indexes*, Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia LXX (Goteborg 2016), 96–105

MSS.:¹ Vienna, ÖNB, Philologicus graecus 8 (s. XVI)

Paris, BnF, Graecus 2003 (s. XV)

Other Translations: None

Significance

The importance of chs. 42–44 of the *Miscellanea*, which repeat what has already been pointed out in Metochites' *Ethikos*, for an evaluation of aesthetical ideas in late Byzantium is obvious. In ch. 42 Metochites fixes his eyes on the earth, while in ch. 43 he lifts his gaze up to the sky, and in ch. 44 he describes the beauty of the sea in lyrical tones. In any case, the perspective of his earlier treatise *Ethikos* remains unchanged. He gives the theoretical background of the investigation of nature and its beauties, underlining its importance for understanding the mysteries of creation and for coming nearer to God. According to Metochites, therefore, the pleasure of inspecting creation provides another way of reaching God. This opens the door for the growth and development of natural sciences. But it was too late for Byzantium.

The Author

See I. Polemis, I.8.1 in this volume.

Text and Context

The *Semeioseis Gnomikai* was published in the early nineteenth century under the title *Miscellanea*. Three chapters from these *Miscellanea* are translated below. The date of the composition of this corpus of essays is uncertain, but it seems that Metochites wrote them at the end of his career, i.e. between 1321 and 1328.² This can be inferred from the fact that he incorporates into them several extracts, slightly paraphrased, from his earlier works.

¹ Not consulted.

² See Hult 2002: xiv; see also Agapitos *et al.* 1996: 15–16.

This is the case with ch. 42 of the *Miscellanea* which is clearly an adaptation of ch. 32 of one of Metochites' most important treatises, the so-called *Ethikos*, written early in his life, around 1305.³ In ch. 32 of the *Ethikos*, the author endeavors to convince a younger addressee of the advantages of learning and of recognizing the superiority of the contemplative life. A short analysis of the relevant passage of the *Ethikos* will help us understand the meaning of ch. 42 of the *Miscellanea*. In the *Ethikos*, after praising the life of the philosopher, who is devoted to his studies and not distracted by other concerns, Metochites describes vividly the pleasures of private study. I quote here the relevant passage and offer a free translation:

Πάντα τᾶλλα κατὰ τὸν βίον ἐν δευτέρῳ ποιησαμένη, ἑαυτῇ ζῆ μόνη καὶ τῇ τῶν ὄντων ἀσχόλῳ θεωρίᾳ, ὡς οὐδὲν τίποτ' ἄλλο γένοιτ' ἂν κατ' ἀνθρώπους ἥδιον, ὅταν τις ἑαυτοῦ γενόμενος ὄλος καὶ τῆς ἐν ταῖς βίβλοις καὶ σοφίᾳ νεύσεως καὶ τρυφῆς καὶ συνουσίας καὶ συναγαγῶν ὡς οἶόν τέ ἐστι τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων εἰς ἀκλόνητον καὶ ἄσχετον καθάπαξ ἀπάντων καὶ ἀνέκδημον καὶ ἀμέριστον ἐδρασμόν καὶ μονὴν ἐλευθέραν τε καὶ ἀτύρβαστον, ἔπειθ' οὕτω παντάπασι ἀδετον καθάπερ ἐν μοναυλίᾳ ὥσπερ ἀφ' ὑψηλῆς τινος σκοπιᾶς ἀπόλυτον ἐπόπτην ἀφήση πρὸς ζύμπαντα τὸν κόσμον καὶ τὴν ἄπλετον οὐσίαν τὸν νοῦν, καὶ περισκοποῖτο διαίρων ὁμαλῶς καὶ ἀλύπως τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ πάντα ἐξῆς, καταθεώμενος τὰς ἀμυθήτους ἀρμονίας τῶν ὄντων καὶ συμπλεκόμενος καὶ μακαρίαν ὄντως καὶ θειοτάτην ἐπαφὴν ἐφαπτόμενος, μὴ κατορρωδῶν ἀμέλει, μὴ κατοκλάζων, οἶμαι, μὴ κάμνων, μὴ ξυμπίπτων μὴ καθάπαξ πρὸς τὸν ἀπέραντον διάυλον, ἀλλ' οἶόν τινα πομπὴν ἀκύμονά τε καὶ ἔμμουσον ταύτην καὶ πορείαν ἐκδημῶν ἀείποτε ἀνήνυτον μὲν, ἄπνον δέ, καὶ ἀόριστον μὲν, ἡδίστην δὲ καὶ μετὰ γαλήνης τῶν ἔξωθεν, καθάπερ ἐν ἀστασιάζτω τινὶ καὶ ἡρεμαίῳ πελάγει τῇ τοῦ κόσμου παντὸς οὐσίᾳ, κουφίσας τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων καὶ τὰ τῆς θεωρίας ἀναπετάσας λαίφῃ, τὸ τῆς διανοίας σκάφος ἐφήσει, περιπλέων πάνθ' ἕκαστα καὶ ἐπιξενούμενος καὶ κατατρυφῶν, ἄττα ἂν δοκῆ καὶ ἄ βέλτιστα καὶ τὰς ἀμυθήτους τῶν ὄντων ἀσπασζόμενος καλλονάς, κᾶπειθ' οὕτω καθ' αἴρεσιν πᾶσαν ἐν ἑαυτοῦ κάλλιστος ἀπὸ καλλίστων, φασίν, ἐπανιῶν οἴκαδε, ζητῆ καὶ σκέπτηται κὰν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ συνεδρίῳ καὶ βουλευτηρίῳ τῆς διανοίας γιγνόμενος, τᾶληθές ἐν αὐτοῖς ἰχνηλατῆ καὶ ἀνορύπτῃ, καὶ τὸν ἐφ' ἐκάστοις σύγκρατον νοῦν τε καὶ λόγον ἀναλαμβάνων, τελευτῶν ἄρα καταπλήττηται καὶ θαυμάζει τὸν εὐρετὴν καὶ τεχνίτην ἐν ὄντως ἀρρήτῳ τῇ συναισθήσει, ἄρρητον αὐτίκα αὐτόθεν γλυκυθυμίαν ἀποφερόμενος.

The man devoted to the study of the intellect, if he is virtuous, too, regards everything else in life inferior to knowledge and lives only for himself and for the uninterrupted study of this world (τῇ τῶν ὄντων ἀσχόλῳ θεωρίᾳ). Nothing is more pleasant for man than to be absorbed in reading and in the delightful study of wisdom. After removing himself, as far as he may, from all other concerns, and securing a good seat, which cannot be shaken, providing

3 On *Ethikos* see also I. Drpić, I.2.1 in this volume.

him with absolute freedom from any disturbance, he will let his own mind, as from some commanding post (ὡσπερ ἀφ' ὑψηλῆς τινοῦ σκοπιᾶς), unbounded by any distractions, view the whole world and its boundless essence. Thus, he will be able to see everything, turning his eyes in all directions in succession, without any labor or pain. He will examine the ineffable harmony of nature (καταθεώμενος τὰς ἀμυθήτους ἀρμονίας τῶν ὄντων), participating in it and coming into contact with something divine. Thus, he will experience neither pain nor weariness; he will not fall down during his journey. Quite the opposite: each time he sets out on this journey, he leaves as if for a feast, or for a pleasant voyage in a calm sea. While this journey is without end, it nevertheless has no pains, is most happy and tranquil, without any cares. The essence of the whole world is like an open sea, which is calm and quiet. The philosopher lets his mind sail on it, as if it were a small boat, which he unloads of everything else and on which he hoists the sails of contemplation (θεωρίας). In this way, he is able to visit and to take advantage of everything he considers useful, admiring the ineffable beauty of the universe. Afterwards, having become beautiful himself after contemplating things so beautiful, he returns in order to think about them. He goes into the council-chamber of his own mind in order to study there attentively all the experience he has gathered during his journey, trying to discover the truth (κὰν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ συνεδρίῳ καὶ βουλευτηρίῳ τῆς διανοίας γιγνόμενος, τἀληθὲς ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἰχνηλατῆ). He grasps the inner meaning of everything and, in the end, he comes to admire, in reverent silence, the one who has created all these things, experiencing an ineffable delight.⁴

Metochites repeats the old argument about the utility of the study of nature, which can lead to a knowledge of God. The study of nature is a legitimate way of approaching God, according to most church fathers. However, Metochites is not willing to proceed any further, in contrast to some ascetic authors who speak of the *physike theoria*, which stresses that the search for the mysteries of creation is not in itself enough to approach God, but has to be accompanied by divine illumination, which comes from the grace of God. Metochites' approach is quite different: no mention of anything else except for the study of the *onta*, of creatures, is to be found either in the passage quoted above or anywhere else in the *Ethikos*. One might argue that Metochites is not a spiritual writer, and that it is futile to seek such matters in his works. However, such an argument loses something of its force, if we take into consideration the fact that in Byzantium the contemplation of nature *had* to be accompanied by an affirmation of its inadequacy, of its limited value, and of the need to be combined with divine illumination, which far surpasses it. This is a doctrinal matter, if we may use the term. Such an affirmation, however, is lacking in Metochites' text.

4 Polemis 2002: 142, 18–144, 28.

Therefore, one may conclude that Metochites employs the term *theoria*, which is prominent in the passage we have just quoted, in the ancient sense of the study of nature and the universe, not in a mystical sense. Metochites secularizes, if that verb is permitted in this particular case, the Christian *theoria*. A.-J. Festugière has thoroughly studied the religious aspect of the scientific study of the universe in antiquity.⁵ The origins of the theory that the study of the universe may lead the human mind to a better grasp of divinity can be traced back to Diogenes of Apollonia, Plato, *Xenophon*, and the young Aristotle. Stoicism made use of this theory and successfully disseminated it to the Graeco-Roman world, presenting it as an argument in favor of divine providence. Many Christian theologians drew on this theory. *La religion cosmique*, as Festugière aptly describes this phenomenon, is a powerful trend in the spirituality of Late Antiquity, which was very slow to die. In the passage under discussion which, generally speaking, is an adaptation of the theme of the journey of the soul in Plato's *Phaedrus*, Metochites is in all probability copying two extracts from Philo Judaeus, one from the third book of his treatise *On the special laws* and the other from his essay on the Therapeutai of Egypt, entitled *On contemplative life*. The first runs as follows: "There was a time when I had leisure for philosophy and for the contemplation of the universe and its contents, when I made its spirit my own in all its beauty . . . And then I gazed down from the upper air, and straining the mind's eye beheld, as from some commanding peak, the multitudinous world-wide spectacles of earthly things (καὶ τείνων ὡσπερ ἀπὸ σκοπιᾶς τὸ τῆς διανοίας ὄμμα κατεθεώμην τὰς ἀμυθῆτους θεωρίας τῶν ἐπὶ γῆς ἀπάντων), and blessed my lot in that I had thereupon escaped by force from the plagues of mortal life."⁶ The second runs as follows: "At sunset they (the Therapeutai) ask that the soul may be wholly relieved from the pressure of the senses and the objects of sense and sitting where she is, a consistory and council-chamber to herself, pursue the quest for truth (ἐν τῷ ἑαυτῆς συνεδρίῳ καὶ βουλευτηρίῳ γενομένην ἀλήθειαν ἰχνηλατεῖν)."⁷ Philo lets his mind ascend into the heavens, from where he looks down on earthly things. Metochites changes Philo's *the multitudinous world-wide spectacle of earthly things* into the simple and all-encompassing *everything*, which of course implies the contemplation of both what is on earth and what is in the heavens, i.e. the stars. The philosopher Metochites does not let his mind ascend to heaven merely, as Philo did, to fix his gaze upon the earth from above; on the contrary, his flight is mainly the product of his ardent desire to escape from earthly things altogether and to be able to see the beauty

5 See Festugière 1949: 153–95, where the intellectual background of this trend of Hellenistic spirituality is explained.

6 Philo Judaeus, *On the Special Laws* III.2, ed. Cohn and Wendland, 128, 15–17; see also Festugière 1949: 551–53: Ἦν ποτε χρόνος, ὅτε φιλοσοφία σχολάζων καὶ θεωρία τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ τὸν καλὸν καὶ μακάριον νοῦν ἐκαρπούμην . . . τότε δὴ τότε διακύπτων ἄνωθεν ἀπ' αἰθέρος καὶ τείνων ὡσπερ ἀπὸ σκοπιᾶς τὸ τῆς διανοίας ὄμμα κατεθεώμην τὰς ἀμυθῆτους θεωρίας τῶν ἐπὶ γῆς ἀπάντων καὶ εὐδαιμονίζον ἑμαυτὸν ὡς ἀνὰ κράτος ἐκπεφευγὸτα τὰς ἐν τῷ θνητῷ βίῳ κῆρας.

7 Philo Judaeus, *On the Contemplative Life* 27, ed. Cohn and P. Wendland, 37, 15–16: δις δὲ καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν εἰώθασιν εὐχεσθαι, περὶ τὴν ἔω καὶ περὶ τὴν ἑσπέραν, ἡλίου μὲν ἀνίσχοντος εὐημερίαν αἰτούμενοι τὴν ὄντως εὐημερίαν, φωτὸς οὐρανοῦ τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν ἀναπλησθῆναι, δυσόμενου δὲ ὑπὲρ τοῦ τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ τῶν αἰσθήσεων καὶ αἰσθητῶν ὄχλου παντελῶς ἐπικουφισθεῖσαν, ἐν τῷ ἑαυτῆς συνεδρίῳ καὶ βουλευτηρίῳ γενομένην ἀλήθειαν ἰχνηλατεῖν.

of the whole universe, including the heavenly bodies which, though not specifically mentioned, are implied in that passage. The perspective of the Philonean text is changed, at least partially. I think that the word *harmonia* used by Metochites most probably implies the plan of the universe, its harmonious order. We should bear in mind that harmony is a term frequently associated with the stars in other texts of Graeco-Roman Antiquity, which draw their inspiration from Plato's *Timaeus*, and refers to the laws governing their movements and their relations to each other.⁸ Since these laws are everlasting and not subject to any alteration, a harmonious order prevails in the sky, which has nothing to do with the disorder of the earth where change and constant movement are dominant. This is a key idea for Plato. One needs to bear in mind that Metochites renewed the study of astronomy in Byzantium. A few years after the composition of the *Ethikos*, Metochites wrote an extensive introduction to astronomy, based on a new and rigorous study of the works of Claudius Ptolemaeus. Thus, one would not be far from the truth were one to argue that Metochites had already attempted in the *Ethikos* to present the study of the universe as a way of approaching God.

8 Festugière 1949: 110–14.

Text

[p. 262] Κεφ. ΜΒ'. "Ὅτι σφόδρα ἡδὺ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐποπτεία τῆς κτίσεως

"Ἡδιστον, εἰ δὴ τι καὶ ἄλλο τῶν θεαμάτων, ἢ τῆς κτίσεως ἐποπτεία, καὶ τὸ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς διῖέναι τῶν ὀρωμένων ἀπάντων, καὶ ὡσπερ ἐν ἐκάστων τάχιστ' ἐπιδημεῖν, καὶ ἀπρόσκοπον τῇ πομπῇ ταύτῃ καὶ διόδω τῶν καλλίστων ὡς ἀληθῶς γίνεσθαι, ῥαστώνῃν οἷαν ἐμποιεῖν πέφυκε καὶ διάθεσιν τρυφῆς κομιδῇ τῇ ψυχῇ. φιλοθεάμων γὰρ εὖ μάλ' ἢ ψυχὴ φύσει καὶ πάσης ἐν ἔρωτι τῆς αἰσθητικῆς χρήσεως, καὶ μάλιστά γε τῆς κρείττονος καὶ τελεωτέρας αὐτῆς ἄρα τῆς ὀπτικῆς. καὶ τοῦτο κατὰ πάντων ὁμοῦ τῶν ζώων, οὐκ ἀνθρώπων μόνων, ὡς ῥᾶστ'¹ ἔξεστι συλλογίζεσθαι, καὶ πρὸς ὀρατὰ βελτίω πάντως οὐκ ἂν εἴη τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς χρήσασθαι τῶν τῆς κτίσεως θεαμάτων. ἀνθρώπων δὲ τοῦτό φημι, καὶ ᾧ γε μάλιστ' εὐγενῶς ἢ ψυχῇ πέφυκε, καὶ μὴ βίον ἀναίσθητον, ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἐν αὐτῷ [p. 263] ταῖς τῶν αἰσθήσεων χρήσεσι ζῆ, καὶ τὸν βοσκηματώδη τρόπον ἄγεται, ἀλλ' ἐμπορεύεται τι καὶ τῇ λογικῇ ψυχῇ πρὸς χρῆσιν οἰκείαν καὶ θεωρίαν ὑπὸ τῆς ἀλόγου καὶ κατ' αἴσθησιν² χρήσεως. καὶ φύσει γὰρ ἄνθρωποι τοῦ εἰδέναι τὴν ἔφασιν, Ἀριστοτέλης φησὶν, ἔχουσι, καὶ τοῦτου γε σημεῖον ποιεῖται τὴν τῶν αἰσθήσεων ἀγάπῃσιν καὶ ἐνέργειαν ἐν ἡδονῇ. ὦν ἄρα δὴ καὶ πολὺ τοῦτο δῆλον, τὰ πρῶτα φέρεται καὶ κατὰ πάντων ἔστι βελτίων ὄρασις, καὶ τελεωτέρα, τὴν οἰκείαν χρῆσιν καὶ τὰ κατ' αὐτὴν αἰσθητὰ, καὶ πρὸς ἀντίληψιν ὑποκείμενα πολὺ τῶν κατὰ τὰς ἄλλας τῶν αἰσθήσεων ἀμείνωνος εἰσὶν ἕξω. καὶ τοῦτο μὲν γε οὕτω, καὶ φέρει γε πάντως καὶ αὐτὸ πρὸς τὸν νῦν τοῦ λόγου σκοπόν. μάλιστα δ' ὅπερ ἠβουλόμην, ὡς ἡδὺ πάνυ τοι, καὶ μεγάλην ἐνίησι καὶ φέρει τῇ καρδίᾳ ῥαστώνῃν αὐτίκα αὐτόθεν, ὁπότε τις τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν ἀπόλυτον ἐπόπτῃν ἀφίησιν ἐπὶ πάσης τῆς τῶν αἰσθητῶν καλλονῆς, καὶ πάντα τῇ ὄψει κατατρέχει τὰ τῆς κτίσεως θεάματα, ἄνω τε καὶ κατὰ γῆς, καὶ κύκλῳ τὰ περὶ αὐτὸν, ἐκχεόμενος ὡς ῥᾶστα καὶ διαρρέων τὸν ἀπέραντον τόνδε τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν δρόμον ὡς τάχιστα, μὴ ξυμπίπτων ὀπηροῦν μὴ κάμων τὴν ἄπλετον³ ταύτην κατὰ πάν [p. 264] των ἐνέργειαν, καὶ ἐπαφῆν, ἀλλ' ἄπασαν τὴν τῆς γενητῆς φύσεως ἑορτὴν καὶ θαυματοποιῖαν κάλλιστ' ἐμπανηγυρίζων, καὶ χρώμενος καθ' αἴρεσιν, καὶ μὴ ποθ' ὑπ' οὐδεμιᾶς ἀντιπράξεως καὶ τυραννίδος, τῆς αυτοκρατορικῆς ταύτης ἀδεΐας αὐτοῦ, καὶ τῶν καλλίστων ἀπολαύσεως εἰργόμενος, καὶ ταῖς τελεταῖς ἐμβακχεύων τῆς δημιουργικῆς καὶ προνοητικῆς ἐπὶ τοῖς οὐσι θείας σοφίας, καὶ τέρπων ἀμυθητῶ γλυκυθυμίας, καὶ τρυφῆς ἀμέμπτω καὶ ἀκύμονι διαθέσει, τὸ παθητικὸν τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ ἄλογον, ᾧ πᾶσα ἀνάγκη χρῆσθαι, καὶ οὐκ ἐκκοπτέον ἡμῖν οὐδ' οἶόν τε, τῆς φύσεως, χρηστέον δὲ ἐν προσήκουσι, καὶ οἷς μὴ ζημία τις, μὴ νέμεσις ἔπεται. εἰ δὲ καὶ τῷ λογικῷ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐντεῦθεν ἐστὶ τρυφᾶν, καὶ κέρδη πορίζεσθαι, καὶ συμπεραίνειν εἰς σύνεσιν, καὶ ἔστι γε πάντως, οἷς ἄρ' ἐστὶ κατασυλλογίζεσθαι τοῖς παροῦσι τὰς περὶ θεὸν ἐννοίας, ἢ πάσχειν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς τὴν τῶν νοητῶν καὶ θείων ἐπαφῆν, καὶ ἐνοποιὸν κοινωνίαν, καὶ συνδιάθεσιν, ἀγαπῶν ἄν· ἄλλος δ' οὐκ οὖν τοῦτο λόγος, καὶ ἴσως ἑατέον νῦν γε εἶναι περὶ τούτων.

Translation

[p. 262] Ch. 42. That the contemplation of the Creation is very pleasant to men

The contemplation of creation is the most pleasant spectacle of all. Passing through all those things seen [by us] with the help of our eyes and visiting each one of them quickly, not encountering any difficulties during [our] procession and [our] way through all those really most beautiful things, creates a certain natural ease and a sentiment of comfort in the soul. By its nature the soul is very fond of spectacles and loves to make use of all the senses, [p. 263] especially the best and most perfect [among them], vision. That applies to all living beings, not only to men; we may easily come to that conclusion. We can direct our eyes to no better sight than the spectacle of creation. This I call [the most important privilege] of man, and especially [of a man] whose soul finds itself in its natural nobility and who does not live by employing his senses alone, leading an insensitive life, so to speak; he is not carried off like a beast, but like a merchant takes advantage of the irrational activity of the senses, utilizing it to his own profit for the sake of the contemplation of his rational soul. Aristotle says that by their nature men have an appetite for knowledge. As a sign of that he adduces the affection [we feel] for our senses⁹ and the joy [we feel] when we bring them to operation. It is most evident that vision has the first place and it is the best and most perfect of all as far as its employment is concerned. The sensible objects that belong to vision and those which come to its perception are of a much better quality than [those] of the other senses. This is so, and [it contributes] to the purpose of my present discourse too.

But what I wanted [to stress] was that this is very pleasant and it immediately brings a great joy to his heart, when somebody lets his eye free to look over all the beauty of perceptible things and inspects with his visual organ the whole spectacle of creation, above and below the earth, and around him: he lets himself run in a most easy manner and passes on quickly, following that road of his eyes that has no end, neither falling down somewhere, nor being exhausted from this activity that knows no limits, when he comes into contact with all things; [p. 264] he rejoices over that feast and those marvelous achievements of created nature, employing it at will, not being prevented from acting freely like an emperor and enjoying those beautiful things by any opposition or tyrannical rule; being in a bacchic frenzy, he takes part in the ceremonies of the creative and providential wisdom of God [that works] in [all] beings and cheers the passive and irrational part of his soul, [creating in it] an ineffable sweetness of mind and a happy disposition that is blameless and calm.¹⁰ It is necessary to make use of that [part of our soul] and we should not [try to] eradicate it from [our] nature, but we should make use of it in suitable circumstances, when neither harm nor punishment can arise. I would be happy if it were thus possible for the rational part of our soul to obtain pleasure too and to gain advantage from it, drawing conclusions [that enrich] its knowledge; and there is indeed [such a possibility] for those who draw conclusions concerning our notions of Godhead from what is in front [of them], or may have an experience and grasp of things divine and intellectual, coming into a unifying communion and intercourse [with God]. But this is another matter; it is better to leave that aside for the time being.

Κεφ. ΜΓ'. "Οτι ἥδιστον ἢ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῶν κατ' οὐρανὸν ἐποπτεία

Οὐρανὸς δ' αὐτὸς καὶ τὰ κατ' αὐτὸν ἀστράπτοντα αἴγλη πάση κάλλη καὶ θεάματα, τίς [p. 265] ἔρεϊ, ὅσην ἐμπαρέχεται τοῖς ἐφορωμένοις τὴν ἡδονὴν, καὶ ὅσην ἄρ' ἐν αἰθρίας ὥρα τοῖς περιχορεύουσιν ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτὰ πάνθ' ἕκαστα πάντοθεν σὺν τῷ θαύματι τὴν τέρψιν καὶ⁴ μετὰ τοῦ θειασμοῦ τὴν ἰλαρύνουσαν καὶ καταγλυκαίνουσαν τῆ καρδίᾳ διάθεσιν; οὐ γὰρ ἀξιώματος μὲν καὶ θάμβους μέτεστι, καὶ πάνυ τοι πλεῖστον τοῖς φαινομένοις, ὥρας δ' οὐ, οὐδ' ἀγάλλει μὲν τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ὀρώμενα, καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτὴν μάλιστ' ἔσω, καὶ θέλγει καὶ διυγραίνει ταύτην εἰς ἡδονὴν οἷαν ἄρρητον, οὐκ ἐκπλήττει δέ γε τὸν νοῦν αὐτόθεν, καὶ σωφρόνως ἔχειν κατὰ πᾶσαν ἀνάγκην πείθει τοῖς ἐποπτεύουσιν ὑπὸ τοῦ θαύματος· ὡς ἄρ' ἔοικεν ἐπὶ τῶν μεγίστων καὶ ὑπερφυῶν δὴ τινων ἐμπρέπειν· καὶ τὰ μὲν ἀλλ' ἔῶ, καὶ ὅσην αὐτόθεν πράττεται τῶν ὀρώντων ξυναίσθησιν, καὶ λογισμῶν κίνησιν κατὰ πόθον τῆς αὐτῶν ζητήσεως, ἅττά ποτ' εἰσὶ καὶ ὅπως ἄγεται τῷ πάντ' ἔχοντι καὶ ἄγοντι, καὶ κινουῦντι κατὰ χρεῖας δὴ τινας τῷ παντὶ συμφώνους, καὶ ἀρρήτους [p. 266] αἰτίας καὶ ἀρμονίας τῷ πρώτῳ πάντων αἰτίῳ. καὶ παρήμι νῦν γε εἶναι καὶ τὸν θαυμαστὸν Πλάτωνα, διδάσκαλον αὐτὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὰ κατ' αὐτὸν ὀρώμενα, καὶ πάσης αὐτουργὸν σοφίας ἀνθρώποις ὑπὸ φιλοπραγμοσύνης ἐξ ἀνάγκης τῆς περὶ αὐτοῖς κάλλιστ' εἰρηκότα, καὶ καθ' οὓς ἄρα τοὺς λόγους μανθάνειν ἔστιν ἐκ τῶν ἐκείνου. ἀλλ' ἔγωγ', ὡς ἔφην, παρέρχομαι νῦν περὶ τούτων. ἀτὰρ γε δῆθ' ὡς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἅπαντας τὰ ἐν οὐρανοῖς πρὸς ἑαυτὰ μεθ' ἡδονῆς ἀνέλκει, καὶ πολὺ γε πάντες τῶν οὐρανοῦ θεαμάτων ἥδιστ' αἰθριάζομεν ἐπόπται καὶ πομπέουμεν κατ' ὄψιν ταῖς αὐτοῦ χάρισιν, ἥνικ' ἂν ἐξείη καὶ ὥρα διδωσι, τίς ἀγνοεῖ, τίς οὐ τῷ λόγῳ παραχρῆμα ἐν μνήμῃ γίνεται, καὶ ξυνήσιν εὖ μάλα καὶ αὐτὸς πάσχων ὅστισοῦν ἐκάστοθ' οὕτω καὶ συντίθεται καὶ μαρτυρεῖ τοῖς λεγομένοις, ἦν ἄρα μὴ βούλοιο πᾶσαν ἀπάθειαν καὶ πᾶσαν ἀναισθησίαν τῶν βελτίστων καθ' ἑαυτοῦ πάντας συμπεῖθειν ἐπιψηφίζεσθαι, καὶ φύσεως, ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἀνθρωπίνης καθάπαξ ἀλλοτριότητα; καὶ μόνος γὰρ τοῦτ' ἀνθρωπος τῶν ἄλλων ζῶων ἴδιον ἔχει τῆ φύσει, καὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐντεῦθεν παρωνομάσθαι δοκεῖ τὸ βλέπειν ἄνω, καὶ τὰν οὐρανοῖς ἐπισκέπτεσθαι, καὶ [p. 267] ἥδεται πᾶν ἕκαστον εὖ μάλα τῷ κατὰ φύσιν ἰδίῳ, καὶ ᾧ πλεονεκτεῖ τῶν ἄλλων. καὶ τοίνυν ἀνατεινόμενος οὕτω δὴ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀνθρωπος ἄνω καὶ τῶν οὐρανίων ἐφαπτόμενος, μάλιστα δῆλος ἐστὶν ἥδιστα τῆ τοιαύτῃ τῆς αἰσθήσεως ἐνεργείᾳ χρώμενος. καὶ προσορῶμέν γε ἅπαντες ποθοῦντες ἐν τέρψει τοὺς οὐρανίους κόσμους, καὶ τὰς τῶν ἄστρον χορείας, καὶ τὰς ἀστραπτούσας ἐκεῖθεν χάριτας, καὶ μάλιστ' ἔχοντες ταῖς νυξὶν ἀπροσκόπτως χρῆσθαι, καὶ δίχα παντὸς ἀχλυώδους καὶ ζοφώδους ἐπιτειχίσματος, τὰς ἐκ τῶν ὀμμάτων ἀναπέμπειν ἀκτῖνας, καὶ ἀντιπέμπειν ταῖς φερομέναις ἄνωθεν ἐς⁵ ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς τῶν ἀστέρων καὶ τῆς τῶν οὐρανίων αἴγλης τὲ καὶ λαμπρότητος, καὶ τὴν ἐντεῦθεν ῥαστώνην τὲ καὶ τρυφήν τῆ κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς χρήσει πάσχειν ἔστι μάλιστα καὶ ξυναισθάνεσθαι, οἷς ἄρα τῶν αἰσθήσεων ἢ χρήσις εὐγενῶς ἔχει, ἢ διηγεῖσθαι καὶ τρανοῦν ἐν λόγοις καὶ καταλογίζεσθαι, πρὸς οὓς ἂν τις βούλοιο, ὅτι γε δὴ καὶ καθόλου τὰ τῶν αἰσθήσεων πάθη καὶ πείρα πεφυκάσι παραδιδόναί ταῖς καρδίαις, ἢ λόγων ἀνιστορήσεις⁶ καὶ τύποι μὴ χαρακτηρίζειν πεφυκότες, καὶ προδεικνύειν εὖ μάλα τῷ νῷ, ἃ τῆς ὑλικῆς ἐστὶν ἐπαφῆς, καὶ [p. 268] μετὰ τῆς ὕλης γνώριμα καὶ ταύτης καθάπαξ οὐκ ἔχει τέμενεσθαι.

Ch. 43. That the inspection of heaven and heavenly things is very pleasant

But who can say what a delight heaven and all its beautiful spectacles, [p. 265] shining with all their brightness, offers to those who observe them? [Who can say] what a wonder combined with delight and what an uplifting and very sweet disposition combined with frenzy each one of those [spectacles] creates in the heart in all respects. Those spectacles have a great share in dignity and amazement indeed, but they have beauty, too. Their sight delights our eyes and especially our soul within us, bewitching and drenching it thoroughly, [leading it] to an ineffable joy, but it amazes our mind at once as well, out of necessity persuading it to behave in a prudent manner for the sake of those who contemplate, [being filled] with amazement; that seems to be fitting for some great and supernatural things. I leave aside all the others: the awareness it creates in those who inspect [the heavenly things] and the mobilization of their thoughts, caused by their desire to investigate them, [and to find out] what they are and how they are moved by the one who keeps them [under control], governing and moving them because of some hard and fast rules, which function in accordance with the universe, and because of some ineffable [p. 266] causes and laws, which work in accordance with the first cause. I also now pass over the admirable Plato, who said most aptly that the sky and all the spectacles in it [act as] a teacher,⁹ creating all human wisdom through the necessary inquisitiveness about itself. [I also omit] the reasons for that, which we can learn [if we read] the writings of this man. As I said, I leave all these aside. But who is unaware that the spectacles in the skies draw to themselves all eyes in a pleasant manner, since all of us expose ourselves to the air most happily, being inspectors and following with our eyes the procession of the sky's beauties,⁹ when it is possible and weather permits? Who is not reminded [of that] by [my] speech, realizing very well that he himself experiences that each time? He agrees and testifies that what I am saying [is true], unless he wants to persuade all people to accuse him of being totally unfeeling and insensitive of all good things and of being totally alien to human nature, so to speak. Of all animals, only man has this particular feature in his nature and his name seems to be derived from his ability to look high up,¹² inspecting the heavenly things.¹³ [p. 267] Each being takes pleasure in his special advantage, and in the characteristic by which he surpasses all others. In this way, it is evident that man, lifting up his eyes and touching the things of the sky, enjoys activating that sense. We all inspect the good orders of the sky, the circling motion of the stars and the beauties shining out of it, being filled with love, especially when we have the possibility to inspect these things at night, not [encountering] any obstacle; not [coming across] any misty and dark barrier, we send up the rays coming out of our eyes, in order to meet the shining rays of the stars and the sky. [Thus] those who keep the use of the senses in a noble state experience and feel an easiness of temper and a pleasure through the use of their eyes. They can also narrate [those experiences] and describe them loudly in their speech, giving an account of them to all they wish, since those passions and experiences of our senses deliver more

9 I translate χάρις as beauty.

Κεφ. ΜΔ'. Ὅτι ἥδιστον θέαμα ἢ θάλαττα

Ἄλλ' ἄρα δὴ καὶ τὸ τῆς θαλάττης ἥδιστον κομιδῆ θέαμα, ὅτε φρίττει γαληνῶσα, καὶ ὑπτιάζουσα διαλλάττεται ταῖς ἀκταῖς καὶ μετ' εἰρήνης ἀσειστως τὲ καὶ ἀσοφητὶ προσφέρεται ἢ τέως βαρύβρομος ἐκ τῶν ποιητικῶν λόγων καὶ σφόδρα ἀγριαίνουσα⁷ καὶ καταβροντῶσα ταῖς ἀκοαῖς, καὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐκτρέπουσα τῷ φοβερῷ, καὶ παντάπασιν ἀπέλαστός τε καὶ ἄαπτος σωφρονοῦσα, κεχυμένη χάριτος εἰρηνικῆς θέατρον, καὶ φιλάνθρωπα μεταλλάττουσα δράματα, μικροῦ γε ἀκίνητοῦσα, καὶ προσπλεκομένη τοῖς αἰγιαλοῖς ἀτεχνῶς ἀνή [p. 269] κόω φλοίσβω, καὶ ὥσπερ δὴ τισιν νηπιώδεσιν⁸ ἀμυχαῖς ἐπιδραττομένη, καὶ κατὰ τῆς ἄμμου σιωπηλὰ κόπτουσα καὶ προσπαίζουσα, καὶ προσβάλλουσα σὺν ὦρα δὴ τι, καὶ παλιννοστοῦσα ἐρωτικαῖς δὴ τισι ταῖς κοινωνίαις πολὺ τὸ τέρπον ἐχούσαις, καὶ πολὺν τινὰ τὸν πόθον τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς, ὡς ἂν δὴ καθορᾶν, καὶ τὴν ἡδονὴν αὐτόθεν ἐμποιοῦσα. τίς γὰρ ἐξ ὑπερτέρων ὄρων, τίς δ' ἐξ ἰσοπέδων οὐ μάλα τοι κηλεῖται καὶ διαχέεται πως αὐτῇ, καὶ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐπιβαίνει καθάπαξ ἐρραστωνευμένως, καὶ συμφύεται, καὶ πᾶσαν ἀκύμαντος ἔπεισι, πνεύματι καρδιακῆς εὐφορίας ἀλύπῳ καὶ γλυκυθυμίᾳ πομπεύων, καὶ στελλόμενος τοῖς ὄμμασιν οὖρια, καὶ δι' εὐπλοίας ἀνύτων οὐκ ἄπονα μόνον, [p. 270] ἀλλὰ καὶ πάσης ἐν ἀπολαύσει καὶ μετουσίᾳ τρυφῆς καὶ διαθέσεως εὐξυμβλήτου τῇ ψυχῇ. καὶ μὴν κἄν ὅπως ἄρα ποτ' ἔχοι καὶ ἰλαρότητος δηλαδὴ καὶ ὀργῆς καὶ ταραχώδους ἢ θάλαττα φρυάγματος καὶ σεισμῶν οὐκ ἄμικτα τὰ κατὰ τὴν αὐτῆς ἐποπτεῖαν πρὸς τῇ ἡδονῇ, καὶ θάμβους δὴ τινος, καὶ τοῦ μεγάλους δὴ πᾶσιν ἐπιπρέποντος σεμνοῦ. καὶ εἴσω συστρέφει, καὶ τοῖς καθορῶσιν ἐν ἐκχύσει τρυφῆς τὸν νοῦν ὅμως βάθη κρύπτουσα τῆς φύσεως οὐκ εὐληπτα πως οὐδ' ἀνύποπτα, οὐδ' οἷα μετ' εὐκολίας τῇ χρήσει τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν, καὶ τοῖς λογισμοῖς καθάπαξ ἐκκείμενα, ἀλλ' αἰδοῦς αὐτόθεν καὶ θαυμασμῶν ἀξιούμενα, καὶ μὴ ῥᾶστ' εὐπεριφρόνητα πρὸς τὴν ἐντυχίαν, κἄν εἰ πάνυ, τοι τὸ γαληνὸν ἐπανθῆ τῇ κινήσει ταύτης, [p. 271] καὶ χάριτες ἑορτάσιμοι τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀπ' αὐτῆς ἀπαντῶσιν, ἀλλὰ δεῖ καὶ οὕτω τοῖς ἐποπτεύουσιν αἰδοῦς αὐτῇ, δεῖ θάμβους, δεῖ λογισμῶν σωφρονικῶν, ὡς ἐπὶ καλλίστου μετ' ὄγκου δὴ τινος καὶ μεγαλοφυῆς θεάματος.

accurate [information] to [our] hearts than oral narrative and impressions, which cannot give any characterization, and show in advance to the mind in a perfect way what belongs to the world of matter, [p. 268] which cannot be divided from what is material.

Ch. 44. That the sea is a very pleasant spectacle

But the sea is a very pleasant spectacle as well, when it glistens [gently] and is calm, falling back and becoming subservient to the shores: it behaves in a peaceful manner, not shaking [the land] and making no noise, although it was formerly loud-roaring, as the poets say,¹⁴ and very wild, thundering down our ears and turning round our eyes because of fear, being unapproachable and invincible. It behaves prudently and lays [in front of us] as a gracious, peaceful spectacle. It changes and acts in a man-loving manner, being almost motionless. It embraces the beach, making an imperceptible noise, [p. 268] laying hold of the shore as if making a scratch on it, resembling a baby. It collides with the sand without making any noise and plays with it.¹⁵ It strikes with a certain grace and comes back, coming into communion with the shore because of love in a pleasing manner. It fills our eyes with a great desire to see it and [gives them] an immediate delight. Who of those inspecting the sea from a high observation post, who of those inspecting it from an area which is flat, is not bewitched by it, having a sentiment of relaxation because of it? He walks upon it with his eyes, having an absolutely easy temper. He embraces it and traverses the whole [space] of it, undisturbed by any waves. His heart is full of happiness and he leads the procession [accompanied] by a gentle breeze, which [gives] joy to his heart, and he sets off on that journey with his eyes with a fair wind. [p. 270] He has a good voyage, not only experiencing no pains, but enjoying and taking a share in all sorts of pleasures and delights convenient to his soul. The sea may be gentle or angry, shaking [everything] like an earthquake with its violent foaming. Be that as it may, the spectacle of it is not devoid of delight; it also [creates] astonishment, having the solemnity that distinguishes all great things. It collects the mind of those inspecting it inside itself through that outpouring of emotions. But [at the same time] it conceals the depths of its nature, which cannot be grasped and seen; they are not exposed [and cannot] be easily seen by the eyes and [grasped] by our thoughts. However, they are deemed worthy of respect and admiration at once; no one can despise them easily if he comes across them. Even if calmness blossoms on the surface of the sea that is moving [p. 271] and beauties fit for a festival come upon our eyes out of it, those who inspect it must treat it with reverence and awe, entertaining prudent thoughts in front of such a beautiful spectacle, which is combined with a magnificence and greatness of nature.

Commentary

1. Cod. Paris, BnF, Graecus 2003; ῥᾶστα in Müller's edition.
2. οἰκείων–αἴσθησις in the Parisian manuscript; omitted by Müller.
3. Cod. Paris, BnF, Graecus 2003; ἄπλεκτον in Müller's edition.
4. Omitted by Müller.
5. Omitted by Müller.
6. Ms. Paris, BnF, Graecus 2003; ἀνεστορήσεις in Müller's edition.
7. Ms. Paris, BnF, Graecus 2003; ἀγριούνουσα in Müller's edition.
8. Ms. Paris, BnF, Graecus 2003; ἠπιώδεσις in Müller's edition.
9. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 980a21–22.
10. To the discussion of the true nature of sensual pleasure Metochites devotes a long section of his *Ethikos*.¹⁰
11. Ps.-Plato, *Epinomis*, 978d.
12. According to an ancient etymology, the word ἄνθρωπος means ἄνω θρώσκων (the one who looks up).
13. Metochites' idea that vision is the most important sense of man and it is this sense that is the basis of philosophy is ultimately derived from Plato, *Timaeus* 47a.
14. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 190.
15. Cf. Gregory of Nazianzos, *Oration* 26, 8–10, ed. Mossay and Lafontaine, p. 242–44.

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¹⁰ See Polemis 2002: 105*–20*.

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I.8.10 Author Unknown (1274–1282)

Dialog between a Roman Cardinal (the Azymite) and Constantine (Panagiotes)

VASILEIOS MARINIS

Ed.: N. Krasnosel'tsev, "Спор между Панагиотом и Азимитом по новым греческим рукописям," in *Летопись историко-филологического общества при Новоросскийском университете* VI.3 (Odessa, 1896), 295–344; alternative edition: A. Vasil'ev, ed., *Anecdota graeco-byzantina: pars prior* (Moscow, 1893), 179–88

MSS.:¹ Athens, EBE, MS 472 (s. XVIII)

Mt Athos, Moni Panteleimonos MS 842 (s. XV–XVI, both used by Krasnosel'tsev)

Vienna, ÖNB, Theol. gr. 244 (s. XVI), ff. 79–83v (used by Vasil'ev)

Other Translations: None

Significance

This excerpt from the dialog offers an intriguing insight into what were popular ideas about the universe, paradise, and natural phenomena, specifically how lightning is produced. Several explanations are given for how lightning comes about, including a semi-scientific one. The author evidently believes that the earth is flat with the sky serving as a cover. Paradise, although noetic, is part of the earth and the residence of the divinity. Many of these elements are reflected in post-Byzantine depictions of Christ in Paradise or Paradise itself, as in compositions of the Last Judgment and icons of the hymn "All of creation rejoices in you." The insistence on numbers in this section and elsewhere in the Dialog is likely a gentle mockery of Latin Scholasticism.

The Author

See Text and Context, below.

Text and Context

This anonymous text is a fictional dialog between a certain Byzantine called Constantine and Euphrosynos, a Roman Catholic cardinal. Composed some time between 1274 and 1282, it constitutes a fascinating example of the anti-unionist propaganda pamphlets that circulated in Constantinople after the Second Council of Lyons (1274), at which

¹ Not consulted.

representatives of emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos accepted the papal positions on all issues contested between the Byzantine and the Roman Churches, including papal primacy and the *filioque*.

Constantine is said to be a disciple of Manuel Holobolos (d. between 1310 and 1314), a rhetor and noted anti-unionist. Constantine is also called Panagiotes, a name deriving from Panagia (“the all-holy”), one of the epithets of the Virgin Mary and a clear reference to Constantine’s moral standing. Euphrosynos, on the other hand, is nicknamed with the derogatory Azymites (lit. “the unleavened breader”), a not-so-subtle allusion to the Roman eucharistic practice and one of the main points of disagreement between the Orthodox and the Catholic Churches. Euphrosynos is one of the twelve cardinals that Pope Gregory X supposedly sent to ensure the enforcement of the union.

The dialog takes place in front of the emperor, the patriarch John Bekkos, a group of pro-unionist Byzantines, and the delegation of cardinals. Its first half contains a miscellany of topics, including trinitarian theology, symbology, biblical history, natural phenomena, and the fate of souls after death. In the second part Constantine details the “errors” of the Latins, such as calling the Theotokos simply Saint Mary, eating bears and turtles, and having only celibate clergy (who, according to Constantine, habitually keep concubines on the side). Bekkos, realizing that Constantine has won the debate and has embarrassed the Latins and their sympathizers, persuades the emperor to execute him. Thus, Constantine dies a martyr for the “correct” faith.

The Dialog became very popular, as attested by the numerous manuscripts that include it. As is often the case with popular texts, the Dialog was augmented, summarized, updated, and otherwise altered throughout the centuries. Consequently, it is exceedingly difficult to produce a standard critical edition and much research remains to be done on the relations between the manuscripts. The two available editions, by Krasnosel’tsev and Vasil’iev, differ quite significantly in some instances. In this translation the former was used because of its completeness.

Text

[Kr. P. 317: V. 182] ὁ ἄζυμίτης· πρῶτον [Kr. p. 318] ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἢ τὴν γῆν;—ὁ παναγιώτης· πρῶτον τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐποίησεν, ἔπειτα τὴν γῆν καθὼς λέγει ὁ προφήτης· ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν, ὡς καὶ ὁ χρυσοῦς τὴν γλώτταν Ἰωάννης λέγει· πᾶς κτίστης πρῶτον θεμελιώνει εἶτα σκεπάζει, ὁ δὲ Θεὸς πρῶτον ἐσκέπασε εἶτα ἐθεμελίωσε. ὁ ἄζυμίτης· ποῖόν ἐστι πλέον, ὁ οὐρανὸς ἢ ἡ γῆ; ὁ παναγιώτης· ὁ οὐρανὸς, διὰ τὸ μὴ βραχῆ καὶ χαλάση τὸ θεμέλιον. ὁ ἄζυμίτης· πλέον εἶναι ἡ γῆ ἢ ἡ θάλασσα; ὁ παναγιώτης· ἡ γῆ ἢ στερεὰ ἐστὶν μερὶς μία, ἡ ἔρημος ἑτέρα μερὶς, τὸ σκότον ἕτερον καὶ ἡ θάλασσα τέσσαρες μερίδες καὶ ὁ παράδεισος διπλοῦς. ὁ ἄζυμίτης· ὁ παράδεισος φθαρτὸς ἐστὶ ἢ ἄφθαρτος; ὁ παναγιώτης· ἄφθαρτος, νοητός, χορταροειδής, ζυγὸς βουνῶν, ὁμαλὸς τὸ ὕψος ὡσάν τὸ ἀνέβη ἄνθρωπος ἔτη γ' καὶ τὸ κατέβη χρόνος β' καὶ γύρωθεν τοῦ παραδείσου εἶναι κάλαμος καὶ ἔντοσθεν τὰ ἀγαθὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἃ ὀφθαλμὸς οὐκ εἶδε καὶ οὐς οὐκ ἤκουσε καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἀνέβη καὶ μέσον τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς τουτέστιν ἡ θεότης. ἐγγίζει δὲ καὶ ἡ κορυφή τοῦ δένδρου ἕως τὸν οὐρανόν. εἶναι δὲ αὐτὸ χρυσοειδὲς καὶ σκεπάζει ὅλον τὸν παράδεισον καὶ ἔχει ἀπὸ τῶν ὄλων φυτῶν τοῦ παραδείσου τὸ ξύλον κολλημένον ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀπὸ κορυφῆς ἕως τῆς ρίζης τοῦ δένδρου, εὐθύς ἐξέρχονται βρύσες δύο, ἢ μία ῥέουσα μέλι καὶ γάλα. ἡ δὲ ἑτέρα ἢ ἀθάνατος πηγὴ, ἐξ ἧς ἐξέρχονται ποταμοὶ δ'. Γεῶν, Φεισῶν, Τίγρης καὶ Εὐφράτης καὶ μερίζονται ταῦτα τὰ δ' εἰς τριάκοντα ἔξη, οἵτινες μετὰ τῶν μητέρων τῶν βρύσεων γίνονται μ'. τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ περικυκλοῦν ἕξωθεν τοῦ παραδείσου ἔχει διάστασιν ἑκατέρωθεν περὶ τῆς γῆς μίλια ρ' διαχωρίζουν μερίδια τεσσαράκοντα, γίνονται ἀμέτρητα. ὁ ἄζυμίτης· καὶ ὁ κεραυνὸν ἤγουν ἡ ἀστραπή [Kr. p. 319] πόθεν γίνεται; ὁ παναγιώτης λέγει· ὁ προφήτης φησὶν· "φωνὴ τῆς βροντῆς σου ἐν τῷ τροχῷ· ἔφθαναν αἱ ἀστραπαὶ σου τῇ οἰκουμένῃ." ζωγραφίζουσιν καὶ οἱ ἱστοριογράφοι πρόσωπα τέσσαρα· ἀνθρώπου, ἀετοῦ, ταύρου καὶ λέου ὡς λέγουσιν οἱ τέσσαροι εὐαγγελισταὶ καθὼς Ἰερεμίας λέγει ἄδοντα, βοῶντα, κεκραγόντα καὶ λέγοντα· διὰ τοῦτο ἄδει ἀετός, βοᾷ ὁ ταῦρος καὶ κράζει ὁ λέων καὶ λέγει ὁ ἄνθρωπος. λέγει δὲ καὶ ἡ σοφικὴ τέχνη· δύο νεφῶν συγκρουομένων καὶ ἀγαλλομένων ἐξέρχονται δύο ἄνεμοι, ψυχρὸς καὶ θερμὸς, καὶ τούτων συγκρουομένων γίνεται κτύπος, λέγει γοῦν ῥητορικὴ τέχνη, Ἑρμογένης ὁ ῥήτωρ· ἵνα τε τὸ ὕδωρ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἀποκόπτεται καὶ κρούει εἰς ἕτερον τόπον. καὶ τῶν δύο συγκρουομένων γίνεται κτύπος. λέγει δὲ γραμματικὴ τέχνη, τῶν δώδεκα σχεδίων Δημοσθένους καὶ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως ὁ λόγος, ὅτι ἕως τ' ἄγγελοι κρατοῦσι τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ δώδεκα στύλοι καὶ δώδεκα καμάραι. Καὶ τριακόσιοι ἄγγελοι κρατοῦσι τὸν κάθε στύλον καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καλεῖται ὁ οὐρανὸς δωδεκάφωνος. τὴν ἀστραπὴν κρατοῦσιν τριακόσιοι ἄγγελοι καὶ τὴν βροντὴν ὁμοίως. ὅταν δὲ γίνηται ἡ ἀστραπή κατὰ λοιπὸν συγκρουομένων αὐτῶν τῶν ἀγγέλων καὶ ἀγαλλομένων αὐτῶν ἐκ τῆς ἠχῆσεως γίνεται βροντὴ καὶ ἀστραπή.

Translation

[Kr. p. 317; V. 182]

The Azymite [hereafter, A]: Did God first make the sky or the earth? [Kr. p. 318]

Panagiotis [hereafter, P]: First he made the sky, then the earth, as the prophet says “In the beginning God made heaven and earth.”¹ Also the Golden-Tongued John² says every builder first lays the foundation then he covers it, but God first covered [= created the sky], then laid the foundation [= to support the sky].³

A: What is bigger, the sky or the earth?

P: The sky, so that the foundation does not get rained upon and be destroyed.

A: What is bigger the earth or the sea?

P: (On the earth) the land is one portion, the desert another portion, the darkness [the dark part of the earth?] another; but the sea <is> four portions and Paradise twice as big.

A: Is Paradise perishable or non-perishable?

P: Non-perishable, noetic, grassy, with a pair of mountains, even in height, like a man ascending for three years and descending for two. There is reed around Paradise and inside God’s eternal things, which “no eye has seen and no ear has heard and no human mind has conceived,”⁴ and in the middle is the wood of life, that is the divinity. The peak of the tree reaches up to the sky. It appears like gold and covers all of Paradise and the wood of all the plants of Paradise is connected to it. And from the top to the root of the tree come forth two springs. From one flows honey and milk. From the other, the immortal spring, come four rivers: Geon, Pheison, Tigris, and Euphrates.⁵ And these four are divided into thirty-six which, along with the sources of the springs, become forty. The water that encircles Paradise on the outside has a size on either side of the earth of one hundred miles. The streams divide <the earth> in forty small parts, which then become uncountable.

A: And the thunderbolt, that is the lightning [Kr. p. 319], how is it produced?

P: The prophet says: “The voice of your thunder was in the circuit, your flashes of lightning gave light to the world.”⁶ Painters also depict four faces: that of a man, of an eagle, of a bull, and of a lion, which they call the four evangelists who, according to Jeremiah “Sing, proclaim, cry out, and speak”;⁷ and, accordingly, the eagle sings, the bull proclaims, the lion cries out, and the man speaks. And then the philosophic art says: “when two clouds collide and rejoice two winds (one cold, one warm) come out, and when these two collide, a bang is produced”; which is also stated by the art of the rhetoricians, [specifically] Hermogenes the rhetorician:⁸ “so that the water of the sky is cut off and strikes in another place. And when the two collide, a bang is created.” And the art of the grammarians says:

“the meaning of the twelve drawings of Demosthenes and Achilles [is] that up to three hundred angels hold the sky and the twelve pillars and the twelve arches; three hundred angels hold each pillar and that is why the sky is called ‘twelve-born’.” The flash of lightning is held by three hundred angels, likewise the thunder. And when the lightning flashes [it is because] these angels collide and rejoice and the thunder and the flash of lightning are the result of this sound.

Commentary

1. Gen. 1:1.
 2. I.e. John the “Chrysostom” (meaning “golden-mouth”).
 3. Cf. PG 59: 56.
 4. 1Cor. 2:9, quoting Is. 64:4.
 5. The description of paradise is partially based on Gen. 2.
 6. Ps. 76 (77): 18.
 7. Ez. 1:10; Rev. 4:7.
 8. Hermogenes (160–before 230) was a rhetorician and an author of handbooks on rhetoric.
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I.8.11 Niketas Eugenianos (d. after 1158)

Ekphrasis of a Meadow: An Excerpt from *Drosilla and Charikles*

ELIZABETH JEFFREYS

The translation was first published in Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 305–497 at 352–53

Ed.: F. Conca, *I romanzo bizantino del XII secolo* (Turin, 1994), 305–497 at 310–12 = *Drosilla and Charikles*, 1.76–119

MSS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 412 (s. XIII)

Paris, BnF, Graecus 2908 (s. XV)

Vatican City, BAV, Urbinius graecus 134 (s. XV)

Florence, BML, Aquisiti e doni 341 (s. XV)

Other Translations: J. Burton, *A Byzantine Novel: Drosilla and Dosikles by Niketas Eugenianos* (Wauconda, Ill., 2004); F. Conca, *I romanzo bizantino del XII secolo* (Turin, 1994), 305–497 (Italian); K. Plepelits, *Niketas Eugenianos, Drosilla und Charikles* (Stuttgart, 2003) (German)

Significance

This is an example of a neatly crafted description (or *ekphrasis*) of the beauty of nature embedded in a longer narrative to ornament the story and to demonstrate the author's mastery of rhetorical techniques.

The Author

Niketas Eugenianos was one of the many in mid twelfth-century Constantinople who hired out their literary skills to the city's elite households to celebrate domestic events. Texts attributed to him include epigrams, *epithalamia* (wedding songs), and monodies (funerary laments), as well as the novel *Drosilla and Charikles*. Little is known of his life and circumstances, although it appears from the monodies that Niketas may have been taught by Theodore Prodromos and in turn himself taught the *mezas droungarios* Stephanos Komnenos (d.1156/7).²

1 Not consulted.

2 On the author see also N. Zagklas, I.3.10 in this volume.

Text and Context

Drosilla and Charikles, the novel from which this passage is taken, is modeled on Theodore Prodromos' *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, and is part of a brief fashion in the 1140s and 1150s for imitating the novels of Late Antiquity, especially Achilles Tatius' *Leukippe and Kleitophon*. One of the features of the Komnenian novels was their use of rhetorical set-pieces, such as *ekphraseis* of people or objects; another descriptive passage from *Drosilla and Charikles* can be found in I.8.15. Niketas' version of a garden-like meadow, reflecting perhaps Sosthenes' garden in Makrembolites' *Hysmene and Hysmenias* (at 1.4–6), has its ultimate origins in descriptions in Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* (Bk 4) and Achilles Tatius' *Leukippe and Kleitophon* (1.15). The flower-buds guarded within the garden's protective greenery can be read as symbols of the heroine's carefully guarded virginity.

Text

Λειμών γὰρ ἦν ἡδιστος αὐτῆς ἐν μέσῳ,
 οὐ κυκλόθεν μὲν ἦσαν ὠραῖαι δάφναι
 καὶ κυπάριττοι καὶ πλάτανοι καὶ δρύες,
 80 μέσον δὲ δένδρα τερπνὰ καὶ καρποφόρα.
 πῶα τε κρίνων καὶ πῶα τερπνὴ ῥόδων
 πολλὴ παρῆν ἐκεῖσε, λειμῶνος μέσον·
 αἱ κάλυκες δὲ τῶν ῥόδων κεκλεισμέναι
 ἢ μᾶλλον εἰπεῖν μικρὸν ἀνεωγμέναι
 85 ταύτην ἐθαλάμειον ὥσπερ παρθένον.
 τούτου δὲ πάντως αἰτίαν λογιστέον
 θερμαντικὴν ἀκτῖνα τὴν τοῦ φωσφόρου·
 ὅταν γὰρ αὕτη—καὶ καλῶς οὕτως ἔχει—
 μέσον καλύκων φλεκτικῶς ἐπεισβάλοι,
 90 γυμνοῦσιν αὐτὰ τὴν ῥοδόπνοον χάριν.
 καὶ νᾶμα πηγιμαῖον ἦν ἐκεῖ ῥέον,
 ψυχρὸν διειδὲς καὶ γλυκάζον ὡς μέλι.
 κίων δὲ τις ἀνεῖχε τῆς πηγῆς μέσον,
 ἔσωθεν οὕτω τεχνικῶς γεγλυμμένος·
 95 σωλῆνι μακρῷ δῆθεν ἐξεικασμένος,
 δι' οὗ τὸ ῥυτὸν ὑπανήκετο τρέχον·
 πλὴν ἀετός τις τοῦτο προσδεδεγμένος
 — χαλκοῦς γὰρ ἦν ἄνωθεν ἐστῶς εὐτέχνως —,
 ἐξῆγε τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ καταρρέον.
 100 λευκῶν δὲ πετρῶν τῆς καλῆς πηγῆς μέσον
 ἀγαλμάτων ἔστηκεν εὐξέστων κύκλος·
 οἱ δ' ἀνδριάντες ἦσαν ἔργα Φειδίου
 καὶ Ζεύξιδος πόνημα καὶ Πραξιτέλου,
 ἀνδρῶν ἀρίστων εἰς ἀγαλματοουργίαν.
 105 τῷ δεξιῷ δὲ τοῦ παραδείσου μέρει
 ἔξωθεν αὐτῶν τῶν ξυλίνων θριγγίων
 βωμὸς κατεσκεύαστο τῷ Διονύσῳ,
 οὗ τὴν ἑορτὴν εἶχον ἄνδρες Βαρζίται,
 καθ' ἣν τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἀθέσμων βαρβάρων
 110 ἄφνω παρεισέπνευσε τοῖς ἐγχωρίοις,
 φυλακτικῶν ἔξωθεν οὕσι τειχέων
 ὁμοῦ μετ' αὐτῶν τῶν γυναικῶν καὶ τέκνων
 καὶ τὴν ἑορτὴν τοῦ θεοῦ Διονύσου
 ἐκεῖ τελοῦσι καὶ συνεστιωμένοις

Translation

In the midst of the plain was a most delightful meadow,
 around which were beautiful bay-trees,
 cypresses, planes and oaks,
 80 while within it there were delightful fruit-trees.
 There were lily-plants and delightful rose-bushes
 in great numbers, within the meadow.
 The buds of the roses, which were closed,
 or, more accurately, just slightly opened,
 85 kept the flowers in seclusion like a maiden.
 One must surely understand the reason for this
 to be the warming ray of the sun.
 For when it – and this is quite proper –
 thrusts its way with its heat into the buds,
 90 they lay bare their rose-scented charms.
 There was also spring-water flowing there,
 cold, clear, and sweet as honey.
 There was a column rising in the middle of the fountain,
 carved very skillfully on the inner surface.
 95 It was, as it were, a long tube,
 through which the liquid rose and flowed.
 But an eagle received this –
 it was made with careful artistry in bronze and was perched up above –
 and made the water flow out from its mouth.¹
 100 Amidst the white stones of the beautiful fountain
 there stood a circle of well-sculpted statues:
 the figures were creations of Pheidias,
 and the work of Zeuxis and Praxiteles,²
 the best craftsmen in the art of sculpture.
 105 On the right-hand side of the garden
 outside the wooden fences themselves,
 an altar had been constructed to Dionysos,³
 whose festival the people of Barzon were keeping.
 It was during this that the host of lawless barbarians
 110 suddenly fell upon the local people
 when they were outside the protective walls
 together with their wives and children,
 and were celebrating there the festival
 of the god Dionysos, and feasting

115 σκηνοραφικῶν ἔνδοθεν στεγασμάτων.
δι' ἦν ἑορτὴν καὶ Δροσίλλα παρθένος
σὺν ταῖς κατ' αὐτὴν καὶ κόραις καὶ παρθένοις
τὸ τεῖχος ἤδη τῆς πολίχνης ἐξέδου,
χοροῦ καλὴν τὸρνωσιν ἐνστησαμένη.

115 within coverings of the tent-makers' craft.
It was for this festival that the maiden Drosilla, too,
with the girls and maidens who were her companions,
had already left the wall of the city
and started the fair circlings of the dance.

Commentary

1. For an even more complex fountain in a garden, see *Hysmine and Hysminias*, ed. Marcovich, 1.4–7; cf. I.3.11. This image resonates also in the fourteenth-century *Libistros and Rhodamne*, ed. Agapitos, 2580–95.
 2. Pheidias, Zeuxis, and Praxiteles, amongst the most renowned sculptors of classical Greece, were frequently cited by Byzantine writers as paradigms of artistic excellence.
 3. Dionysos, in classical Greek mythology the god of wine, provides motivations for the plot development in this novel.
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I.8.12 ?Andronikos Komnenos Doukas Branas
Angelos Palaiologos (c.1261–c.1310)

The Bath-House in the Garden of the Dragon's Castle
from *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*

KIRSTY STEWART

Ed.: M. Pichard, *Le Roman de Callimaque et de Chrysorrhoe* (Paris, 1956), 11–13

MS.:¹ Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversitet, Scaligeranus Graecus 55 (s. XV), ff. 1r–57v

Other Translations: G. Betts, *Three Medieval Greek Romances* (New York, 1995), 42–43

Significance

The extract presented here portrays later Byzantine concepts of beauty, art, and the natural world. Nature is made more beautiful by the human hand, but the man-made is also augmented by nature. That the description lasts for more than a few lines highlights the importance of the garden, indicating that it is not present simply for descriptive purposes.

The Author

The romance is generally attributed to Andronikos Palaiologos, the cousin of Emperor Andronikos II (r.1282–1328) and nephew to Michael VIII (r.1259–82). Like the other Palaiologan romances, however, the text is anonymous in the manuscript. We know that this Andronikos did indeed write a romance as we have a poem by the court poet, Manuel Philes, entitled *Epigram on a Book of Love by the Emperor's Cousin* praising the work.² On the basis of plot similarities, some scholars believe the poem described to be *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe*, though there are several plot differences and the romance genre utilized a number of set plot motifs, so that the attribution is still debated.³ Nevertheless, Philes' poem indicates that individuals like Andronikos were capable of writing such poetry and that it was appreciated within the Byzantine court milieu of the time. Andronikos is known to have produced two other works, a dialog *Against Jews* dated to 1310 and moral *Kephalaia* on good and ill.⁴

1 Not consulted.

2 Martini 1896: 460; on Manuel Philes see A. Rhoby and M. Bazzani, I.4.2 in this volume.

3 Knös 1962: 274–95; Betts 1995: 33; Agapitos *et al.* 1992: 55–56.

4 *PLP* 21439, v. 9, 84–85.

Text and Context

Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe was probably written in Constantinople around the beginning of the fourteenth century.⁵ As such, it may be the earliest of the Byzantine vernacular romances produced in the late thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. The vernacular language used for *Kallimachos* is far closer to the spoken Greek of the day than most written texts, though there are several earlier works that use such language, *Digenis Akritis* being particularly significant.⁶ *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe* is written in a fifteen-syllable meter, or political verse, most commonly used for vernacular verse.

The romance begins with the three sons of a powerful king, all of whom are equally deserving of his crown. He sends the three young men into the world to prove themselves: the one who acts in the most regal manner and achieves the greatest prize will then be his heir. They travel through deserted areas, mountains, a meadow, and some uninhabited cliffs before eventually reaching the Dragon's Castle.⁷ Only the third son, Kallimachos, will enter this golden, unassailable, and wild place; his brothers seek adventure elsewhere. The castle and its garden are described in great detail, being very impressive and opulent, by alternating narrative and description, so that the *ekphrasis* is integrated into the story itself.⁸ After a few brief lines on the pleasures of the courtyard garden, the author focuses in on the lovely bath, with its opulent decoration. The garden contrasts with the mountains the brothers have traversed, as well as with the imposing walls of the castle which resemble the intimidating dragons within them. This garden is similar to others found in the Palaiologan romances, namely those of *Livistros and Rodamni*, *Velthandros and Chrysandza*, and the *Achilleid*, in its description of an artistic object as a central point for the garden, as well as in the types of plants and the enclosing wall. Such features are also attested for real, rather than literary, Byzantine gardens.⁹ The Palaiologan romances draw on works from the Second Sophistic and the Komnenian novels, but their garden descriptions are more detailed, highlighting the importance of the setting for the text, as well as providing an opportunity for the author to show his ekphrastic abilities. Indeed, this particular garden space is returned to by *Kallimachos*' author, so that he may present his heroine in all her beauty.¹⁰

5 Pichard 1956: xxv–xxviii.

6 See the discussion of earlier texts in Beaton 1989; on *Digenis Akritis* see E. Jeffreys, I.8.15 in this volume.

7 Beaton 1989: 111 translates the term δράκων as “ogre” and thus refers to the Ogre's Castle; “dragon” seems more appropriate for a number of reasons, an outline of which can be found in Betts 1995: 35.

8 Agapitos 1990: 264.

9 Littlewood 2013: 31–113.

10 See also K. Stewart, I.8.16 in this volume.

Text

Ἐκφρασις πανεξαίρετος καὶ τοῦ λουτροῦ τοῦ κάστρου

- Ἐντὸς τοῦ κήπου τοῦ καλοῦ καὶ τοῦ περιβολίου
λουτρὸν εὐρέθη πάντερπνον, ὄλον ὠραιωμένον,
ἐξαίρετον, πανθαύμαστον, χάριτας γεμισμένον.
295 τί πρῶτον εἶπω τοῦ λουτροῦ, τί δὴ καὶ γράψω πρῶτον,
τὸ μῆκος τὴν λαμπρότητα, τὴν ἐκ τοῦ κάλλους χάριν
ἢ τὴν ὀλόφωτον αὐγὴν ἢ τῶν φυτῶν τὸ ξένον;
ἀπέσω γὰρ παρέκυπτεν εἰς τοῦ λουτροῦ τὸ πλάτος
ἀνθῶν καὶ φύλλων καὶ φυτῶν εὐώδης παρὰ φύσιν·
300 ὁ γὰρ τεχνίτης τοῦ λουτροῦ μετὰ πολλῆς τῆς πείρας
θυρίδας ὑπετέχνωσε μετὰ τῶν σφαλισμάτων,
καὶ τῶν θυρίδων τεχνικῶς ἐξεπανοιγομένων
εὐθύς ἐντὸς παρέκυπτον τὰ τῶν εὐόσμων φύλλα.
ἀντὶ δὲ τῶν πολυτελῶν ὀρθομαρμαρωμάτων
305 εἶχεν καθίρπτας τὸ λουτρὸν καὶ τὰς ἀρμόσεις τούτων·
ἐκ μηχανῆς δὲ τεχνικῶς καὶ ταύτης παραξένου,
ὁ τοῦ λουτροῦ καὶ τοῦ θερμοῦ παχὺς ἀτμὸς νεφώδης
οὐκ ἐπεσκέπαζε ποσῶς ἐκείνους τοὺς καθίρπτας,
οὐδὲ τῶν λίθων ἤμβλυσε τὸ τηλαυγὲς ἐκείνων·
310 ἀλλ' εἶναι ὑπερνέφελος ἢ τοῦ καθίρπτου φύσις
καὶ νέφος οὐκ ἐσκέπαζεν τὴν τοῦ λυχνίτου χάριν.
ἤνικα γὰρ παρέκυψες ἐκ τοῦ λουτροῦ τὴν θύραν,
εἰς τὸν καθίρπτην ἔβλεπες καὶ τὸ λουτρὸν ἐθώρεις·
καὶ δένδρων φύλλα καὶ καρπῶν καὶ περιβόλιον ὄλον
315 ἐδόκει βλέπειν ἐκ παντὸς εἰς τοὺς καθίρπτας πάλιν.
ὁ τροῦλλος ἦν ἀπὸ χρυσοῦ μετὰ λιθομαργάρων,
ὁ δὲ τεχνίτης τὸν χρυσὸν εἰς δένδρον μεταπλάττει,
ἀντὶ καρπῶν δὲ τεχνικῶς ἐνέθηκεν τοὺς λίθους.

Ἐκφρασις τοῦ κοσμήτου

- Ὁ δὲ κοσμήτης τοῦ λουτροῦ πλοκὴν ἐπλάκη ξένην·
320 θαυμάζω χεῖρας τεχνιτῶν καὶ τοῦ χρυσοῦ τὴν φύσιν,
πῶς ὁ χρυσὸς ὡς ἄμπελος τῆ σμίλα συνεπλάκη
καὶ ταῖς χερσὶ τῶν τεχνιτῶν ὑπεδουλώθη τόσον.
ἂν γὰρ πολλάκις ὀφθαλμούς ἀπῆρας ἀποκεῖθεν,
εἶδας μεγάλην ἠδονήν, ἄλλο τι θαῦμα μέγα.
325 ἔγμε τὸ ῥοδόσταμα, ἐδόκει κυματίζειν,

Translation*An exquisite description of the castle's bath as well*¹

Inside this lovely garden, inside this paradise,²
 was found a bath, all-delightful, completely beautiful,
 exquisite, all wondrous, full of charms.
 295 What first shall I say of the bath, what also shall I first write,³
 of its size, its brilliancy, of the grace of its beauty
 or its luminous glow or its exotic plants?
 On the inside, along the length of the bath, poured forth
 extraordinarily fragrant flowers and leaves and plants;^{4,5}
 300 The crafter of the bath had fashioned
 with great mastery⁶ partitions with shutters,
 and when these are artfully opened,
 sweet-smelling leaves immediately poured inside.
 Instead of extravagant walls lined with marble slabs
 305 the bath had fitted mirrors.
 Through some artful device, equally extraordinary,⁷
 the thick steam cloud from the bath and the warm water
 did not cover these mirrors at all,
 nor did it dull the luminosity of the precious stones;⁸
 310 The mirrors were such that they were not affected by the steam
 and the steam did not hide the beauty of the rubies.
 When you peered through the doors of the bathhouse,
 and looked into the mirror, you beheld the bath;
 and the leaves and fruit of the trees and the entire garden⁹
 315 you really seemed to see again in the mirrors.
 The dome was made from gold with precious stones and pearls,
 the artist moulded a tree in gold,¹⁰
 and artfully put precious stones in place of fruit.

A description of the cornice

The cornice of the bath was twisted like an exotic wreath;
 320 I was amazed at the hands of the artists and the nature of the gold,
 how the gold had been chiseled to look like a vine¹¹
 and had been completely mastered by the hands of the artists.
 If perhaps you looked elsewhere
 you would see more pleasure, another great marvel.
 325 The pool was full of rosewater, which seemed to ripple,

ἐκόχλαζεν, ἐκάπνιζεν καπνὸν ὀκάτι ξένον,
 καπνὸν φρικτόν, δυνάμενον σαλεύειν τὴν καρδίαν.
 ἀπὸ δὲ στόματος χρυσοῦ καὶ κεφαλῆς ἀνθρώπου
 ἐκεῖνο τὸ ροδόσταμαν φρικτῶς ἀποκενοῦτο.
 330 ἄν εἶδες ἐκ παντὸς εἰπεῖν ζῶντος ἀνθρώπου στόμα,
 οὕτως καὶ τοῦτο τεχνικῶς ὁ χρυσοχὸς ἐκεῖνος
 ἀπὸ χρυσοῦ μετέστησεν εἰς κεφαλὴν ἀνθρώπου.

Ἐκφρασις τῶν θυρῶν

Αἱ θύραι πάλιν τοῦ λουτροῦ σύγκρουσμα μέγα, ξένον·
 ξύλον ὑγρὸν ἐκ τῆς Ἰνδῶν καὶ τῆς Ἀράβων χώρας
 335 καὶ μόσκον ἅμα σύμμικτα μετὰ τοῦ ξύλου τούτου.
 καρδία γὰρ αἰσθητικὴ τὴν ἀπὸ τούτων χάριν.

Ἐκφρασις τοῦ βηλοθύρου

Εἰς δὲ καὶ πάλιν τοῦ λουτροῦ τὴν ἐνδοτέραν θύραν
 βηλόθυρον ἐκρέμετο πρὸς τὸ λουτρόν ἀρμόζον.
 καὶ γὰρ ἦν τὸ βηλόθυρον κρίνων καὶ ρόδων ἄνθη·
 340 τῆς τέχνης τὸ παράξενον οὐ συνεχῶρει βλέπειν.
 ἀλλὰ καὶ τί πολυλογῶ καὶ κατὰ μέρος γράφω;
 ἀπλῶς ἄν εἶδες τὸ λουτρόν, λιποθυμήσω, πέσω
 καὶ ζήσω λιποθύμημα καὶ χάριν ἀνασάνω.

bubble, emit some strange vapor,
 an astonishing vapor, able to shake the heart.
 From a golden mouth and a human head,
 that rosewater poured forth awesomely.

330 If you saw it you would say that it was entirely the mouth of a living man,
 so artfully had the goldsmith also
 changed the gold into a human head.

A description of the doors

The doors of the bath-house were a grand arrangement, remarkable,
 made from wavy-grained wood from India and the country of the Arabs¹²
 335 and musk was at the same time mingled with this wood.
 The heart was affected by the grace of them.¹³

A description of the curtain

Moreover, on the inner doors of the bathhouse there also
 hung a curtain that was apt for the bath.
 And the curtain was made of the flowers of lilies and roses;¹⁴
 340 the extraordinariness of its art was too much for the eyes to take in.
 But why should I talk a lot and write in much detail?
 Simply to see the bath, I will fade, I will fall,
 and experience fainting and breathe its charm.

Commentary

1. This passage follows on from a general description of the garden. The italicized sentences represent the rubrics included in the manuscript. Betts has argued that they are a later addition to the work, not adding to the understanding of the poem and occasionally interrupting it.¹¹
2. The terms used here are κήπου and περιβολίου. Other terms frequently used were λειμών, λιβάδιον, ὄρχατος, and παράδεισος. The differences between the gardens and parks which these terms referred to are now somewhat hard to define, even if they were not at the time.
3. The authorial interventions in this section of the poem are often used to express how inexpressible the beauty of individuals, objects, and landscapes is, adding to the fairy-tale-like nature of the characters and setting.
4. The term φύσις in these extracts can be translated as nature, meaning the qualities of the objects or people it is used to describe. The term also literally means nature and is used by the author to indicate how exceptional, and beyond natural expectations, the garden, its contents, and the heroine truly are.
5. The author utilizes the audience's senses to add to the effect of his description. The sense of smell is highlighted several times through the fragrance of the plants, the rosewater, and the wood of the doors.
6. The skill of the craftsman, or craftsmen, is often stressed in Byzantine romances. Their work is beautiful beyond compare and so fine that it can make the artificial look real. Nature itself is also termed an artist, the natural and the man-made thus competing to produce the most beautiful items.¹²
7. *Automata* and mechanical devices of various forms were not uncommon in Byzantium, their use appearing almost magical.¹³
8. Again, using the sense to full effect, the notion of light is significant. Not only is the emperor a symbol of light, like Christ himself, luminosity was a prized trait of beauty in the medieval world and a common feature of panegyric.¹⁴
9. The romantic garden, like the garden of Eden, is always in full bloom and full of fruit. In this way it is always a symbol of fertility.
10. Here art is imitating nature, and almost surpassing it in that a tree of gold with fruit of precious stones is not affected by the seasons. Even if the garden is currently in bloom, the implication is that it will not always be so, whereas the bath-house and its golden tree will always be a place of sexuality and fertility.
11. The vine often appears in romantic contexts symbolizing the entwined lovers in the same way as the vine circles the tree.
12. The author is using geography to stress how exotic and expensive this wood is.

11 Betts 1995: 35–36.

12 For more on the role of the “artist” (τεχνίτης in the text) see 1.2 in this volume.

13 Brett 1954 provides an excellent discussion.

14 Heller 2001; for a discussion on light and value in the Byzantine world see Kalavrezou 2012.

13. This phrase is difficult to express in English as αἰσθητική relates to sense-perception and sensitivity. Clearly there is an emotional response being described, but a specific term such as “awe” would not fit with the text itself. The beauty of the doors as perceived by the heart, rather than the eyes, thus seems best expressed simply as an undefined effect.
 14. The rose and the lily appear regularly in descriptions of beauty, partly due to their colors. The classical association of the rose with Aphrodite also continues into the Byzantine period.
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I.8.13 Euthymios Malakes (c.1115–before 1204)

Verses Written on the Bath of Choumnos which is in the Middle of a Garden

PETER VAN DEUN

Ed.: K. G. Bonis, *Εὐθυμίου τοῦ Μαλάκη μητροπολίτου Νέων Πατρῶν (Υπάτης) (δεύτερον ἡμῖσι β' ἔκατ.) τὰ σωζόμενα*, Θεολογική Βιβλιοθήκη 2 (Athens, 1937), 37, which simply reproduces the older edition by A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Noctes Petropolitanae: Sbornik Vizantijskich tekstov XII–XIII věkov* (St. Petersburg = Leipzig, 1913/1976), 89–90, while adding a serious error absent from the Papadopoulos-Kerameus edition

MS.:¹ St. Petersburg, RNB, Gr. Φ 906, graecus 250 (Granstrem 454), f. 81v, the only witness of this poem; this famous manuscript was copied in the mid-thirteenth century by the scribe Nikandros, monk at the Mesopotamon monastery in Epirus

Other Translations: None

Significance

The bath in the garden of a member of the Choumnos family offered Euthymios Malakes the opportunity to deal with a well-known *topos* in Byzantine literature in general and Byzantine poetry in particular: the fragility of human life and the ephemerality and transience of earthly possessions. This poem does not describe many physical features of the bath, only mentioning the presence of a furnace for heating the water.

The Author²

Information on the author of this poem is scarce. Euthymios Malakes was born around 1115 in the Greek city of Thebes; shortly before 1166 he was elected to the metropolitan bishopric of Neopatras, the ancient city of Hypate in Thessalia. He was related to various famous members of the Tornikes family: Euthymios Tornikes, his nephew, and George Tornikes, for example. He played an influential role at the court in Constantinople, especially in the intellectual circles of the Patriarchal school of the capital. Several works circulate under his name: thirty-six letters of different length; a funeral speech for his friend Eustathios of Thessaloniki; the poem translated in this chapter; rhetorical discourses in honor of Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–81), glorifying the military achievements of the emperor; most probably also three other speeches that in the manuscripts are attributed to

¹ Consulted.

² See also F. Leonte, I.7.3 in this volume.

Euthymios Tornikes (the first addressed once again to the emperor Manuel I; the second was an *epitaphios logos* for Nicholas Hagiotheodorites, who died in 1175 in Athens; the third praises Alexios Kontostephanos, one of the most important generals of Manuel I); the nine rhetorically elaborated Ὑπομνήστρια διαφόρων ὑποθέσεων. Despite his rich literary work, Malakes did not enjoy great popularity in the Byzantine and post-Byzantine periods: only six manuscripts containing his works have come down to us and the large majority of his texts are only preserved in one single codex. Euthymios Tornikes wrote a funeral oration for Malakes, who passed away before the fall of the capital in 1204.

Text and Context

A poem containing twenty-two dodecasyllables, with accentuation on the antepenultimate syllable of each verse and a caesura after the fifth or the seventh syllable. The only attestation for the poem's initial context is provided by its title and nothing more is known about its function.³

³ On baths in Byzantium see Berger 1982; Mundell Mango 2015.

Text

Τοῦ μακαριωτάτου μητροπολίτου Νέων Πατρῶν κυροῦ Εὐθυμίου τοῦ Μαλάκη στίχοι
 γραφέντες εἰς τὸ λουτρόν τοῦ Χούμνου, μέσον ὄν κήπου

Καλὸν τὸ λουτρόν· ῥύψις ἐστὶ σαρκίου.
 ἡδὺς ὁ λειμῶν· τέρψις ἐστὶν ὀμμάτων,
 θέλγει δὲ καὶ δώματος ἢ ποικιλία·
 πλὴν ἀλλ' ὁ τούτων τῶν τριῶν σὺ δεσπότης,
 5 μὴ πάντα τὸν νοῦν ἐγκεχηνῶς τοῖς κάτω
 στήσης τὸ φιλόκαλον ἐν τούτοις μόνοις·
 παρέρχεται γὰρ ἡ παροῦσα λαμπρότης
 καὶ τέρψις οὐδὲν ἐστὶν ἐκ τῶν ἀστάτων.
 ὄρῳ τὸ λουτρόν, τὴν κάμινον δ' οὐ βλέπεις
 10 καὶ τὴν ὑποσμήχουσαν ἐν ταύτῃ φλόγα·
 δέδοικα μὴ λυθῶσι τὰ θέλγοντά σε,
 οἴκου περιφάνεια, λειμῶνος χάρις,
 τὸ λουτρόν αὐτό, καὶ τὸ πῦρ μίμνη μόνον,
 τὸ τοῖς πονηροῖς συμφλέγον σε πρακτέοις.
 15 καίνιζε λουτρόν, ὃ ψυχῆς πλύνει ῥύπον.
 λειμῶν ἐκεῖνος ἐννοεῖσθω σοι μόνος,
 οὗ χεῖρ φυτουργὸς ἢ κρατοῦσα τὴν κτίσιν.
 ἀντὶ δὲ λαμπρῶν καὶ περικλύτων δόμων
 μικρὰν καλιὰν πῆξον ἐν πόλου πλάτει.
 20 τοιαῦτ' ἔμαυτῶ καὶ παραινῶ καὶ γράφω
 Χοῦμνος σεβαστός, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦργον δίδου,
 σῶτερ, θελητὰ τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας.

Translation

A poem on the bath of Choumnos in the middle of the garden, written by kyr Euthymios Malakes, the most blessed metropolitan of Neopatras

The bath is beautiful and purifies the flesh.
 The meadow is sweet and a pleasure to the eyes.
 The ornamentation of the house is also full of delight.
 But you, who are the lord of these three [properties],
 5 do not stare at¹ these inferior things with all your mind
 as you seek the love of beauty in them alone;
 because the splendor that is here now passes away
 and pleasure is worthless, being of unstable origin.
 When looking at the bath, don't you see the furnace
 10 nor the flame that smolders² in it?
 I fear that what delights you will be dissolved,
 the conspicuousness of the house, the charm of the meadow,³
 the bath itself, and that only the fire will remain,⁴
 consuming you together with your evil deeds.
 15 Renew the bath, which washes away the filth of the soul.
 You should understand the meadow as only
 belonging to the hand of the gardener,⁵ master of the creation.
 Instead of brilliant and noble houses,
 build a little dwelling in the wide sky.
 20 This is my advice, this is my written message to you,
 venerable Choumnos;⁶ at least try your utmost,
 savior, you who want me to be saved.

Commentary

1. ἐγκεχρηώς: the manuscript has ἐκκεχρηώς, justly corrected by Papadopoulos-Kerameus and Bonis (there appears to be no attestation of the verb ἐκχαίνω in Greek literature).
2. ὑποσμίχουσαν: Bonis has the non-existent verb ὑποσμίχουσαν (which ended up in the *TLG*); Malakes seems to have used the same verb in one of his speeches for the emperor Manuel I.⁴
3. The expression λειμῶνος χάρις can also be found in the funeral oration of Malakes for Eustathios of Thessaloniki.⁵
4. The verb μίμνω is a poetical variant of μένω.
5. The image of God or Christ as a gardener is well known.
6. Choumnos: On the Choumnos family, see, e.g., Verpeaux 1959a: 27–33; Verpeaux 1959b: 252–66. The identity of the owner of this bath remains unclear. No other member of the Choumnos family is mentioned in the oeuvre of Malakes. Evidently, this Choumnos cannot be identified with the famous scholar Nikephoros Choumnos (c.1250/1255–1327), as Albrecht Berger suggested.⁶ Vassilios Kidonopoulos and Photini Kolovou have formulated the hypothesis that the Choumnos in Malakes' poem should be identified with Theodoros Choumnos, who in Malakes' days operated in the imperial chancellery in Constantinople.⁷ Should this hypothesis be correct, one may locate the bath in the capital itself.

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4 Ed. Bonis, II, p. 21 [525], 25; unfortunately, we only read //σμουχομένου at the end of a lacuna in the manuscript [Vienna, Vind. Phil. Gr. 321].

5 Ed. Bonis, I, p. 81, 10.

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I.8.14 Digenis Akritis (c.1140)

Description of the Young Digenis

ELIZABETH JEFFREYS

The translation printed here with some emendations was printed first in E. Jeffreys, *Digenis Akritis, The Grottaferrata and Escorial Versions* (Cambridge, 1998) at 79–81

Ed.: E. Jeffreys, *Digenis Akritis, The Grottaferrata and Escorial Versions* (Cambridge, 1998) at 78–80, G 4.219–45; other editions: E. Legrand, *Les exploits de Digenis Akritis d'après le manuscrit de Grottaferrata* (Paris, 1892); J. Mavrogordato, *Digenes Akrites* (Oxford, 1956); E. Trapp, *Digenes Akrites, synoptische Ausgabe der ältesten Versionen* (Vienna, 1971)

MS.:¹ Grottaferrata, Biblioteca Statale del Monumento Nazionale, Z.a.XLIV (444) (s. XIII), ff. 1r–73r

Other Translations: J. Mavrogordato, *Digenes Akrites* (Oxford, 1956); D. B. Hull, *Digenis Akritis: The Two-Blooded Border Lord* (Athens, Oh., 1971); C. Jouanno, *Digénis Akritis, le héros des frontières: une épopée byzantine* (Paris, 1998) (French); P. Odorico, *Digenis Akritis, poema anonimo bizantino* (Florence, 1995) (Italian)

Significance

A literary depiction of elite garments known from lists in, e.g., the *The Book of Ceremonies* and images in, e.g., the Madrid Skylitzes manuscript.

The Author

See E. Jeffreys, I.5.11.

Text and Context

This passage is taken from the Grottaferrata (G) version of *Digenis*.² The G version, in the oldest surviving manuscript of *Digenis*, presents overall a more coherent narrative than that in the Escorial (E) manuscript, which dates from the late fifteenth century, though in many ways *Digenis* G is more prosaic than *Digenis* E; E has a lacuna which extends from G 4.163–253.

Digenis has just taken part successfully in his first hunt, at the age of twelve, under the guidance of his father and uncle and arrays himself for his triumphant return.

¹ Consulted.

² On *Digenis* see E. Jeffreys, I.5.11 in this volume. The bibliography on *Digenis* is vast, covering textual formation, historical contexts, and much else. For surveys of recent work, in addition to the references in the editions cited here, see Jeffreys 2012; Jeffreys 2014.

Text

Ἦλλαξε δὲ καὶ τὸ παιδίον τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐσθῆτα·
 220 βάλλει πτενὰ μαχλάμια διὰ τὸ καταψυχῆσαι,
 τὸ μὲν ἐπάνω κόκκινον μὲ τὰς χρυσὰς τὰς ρίζας,
 αἱ δὲ ρίζαι τοῦ χυμευταὶ μετὰ μαργαριτάρων,
 τὸν τράχηλόν τοῦ γεμιστὸν ἄμβαρ ὁμοῦ καὶ μόσχον·
 τρανὰ μαργαριτάρια εἶχεν ἀντὶ κομβίων,
 225 τὰ δὲ θηλύκια στρεπτὰ ἐκ καθαροῦ χρυσοῦ.
 τουβία ἐφόρει ἐξάκουστα, γρύψους ὠραϊσμένους,
 τὰ περνιστήρια πλεκτὰ μετὰ λίθων τιμίων·
 ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων τῶν χρυσῶν εἶχε λυχνίτας λίθους.
 πάμπολλα δὲ ἐσπούδαζε τὸ εὐγενὲς παιδίον
 230 εἰς τὴν μητέρα ἀπελθεῖν μὴ δι' αὐτὸν λυπῆται,
 καὶ ἠνάγκαζεν ἅπαντας εἰς τὸ καβαλλικεῦσαι.
 ἵππον ἐμετεσέλλισεν ἄσπρον ὡς περιστέριν,
 ἦτον ὁ σγόρδος τοῦ πλεκτὸς μετὰ λίθων τιμίων
 καὶ κωδωνίτζια χρυσὰ μέσον τῶν λιθαρίων,
 235 πάμπολλα κωδωνίτζια, καὶ ἦχος ἐτελεῖτο
 ἐνήδονος καὶ θαυμαστός, πάντας ὑπερεκπλήττων·
 πρασινορρόδιον βλαττὶν εἶχεν εἰς τὸ καπούλιν
 καὶ τὴν σέλλαν ἐσκέπαζε νὰ μὴ κονιορτοῦται·
 τὸ σελλοχάλινον πλεκτὸν μετὰ χρυσῶν σβερνίδων,
 240 τὰ ὅλα ἔργα χυμευτὰ μετὰ μαργαριτάρων.
 ἦτον ὁ ἵππος τολμηρὸς καὶ θρασὺς εἰς τὸ παίζειν,
 τὸ δὲ παιδίον εὐθελὸν εἰς τὸ καβαλλικεῦειν·
 πᾶς ὁ βλέπων ἐθαύμαζε τὸν ἄγουρον ἐκεῖνον,
 πῶς μὲν ὁ ἵππος ἔπαιζε κατὰ γνώμην τοῦ νέου,
 245 πῶς δὲ αὐτὸς ἐκάθητο ὥσπερ μῆλον εἰς δένδρον.

Translation

And¹ the young boy changed his garments.
 220 He put on thin robes to cool himself;
 the upper one was red, with golden hems,
 and its hems were embroidered with pearls,
 its neck was full of ambergris together with musk;²
 it had large pearls in place of buttons
 225 and its buttonholes were twisted from pure gold.
 He wore resplendent leggings,³ ornamental griffins,
 spurs which were plaited with precious stones;
 on the gold work he had glowing red stones.
 The high-born boy made great haste
 230 to return to his mother, so that she should not be upset about him,
 and he urged everyone to ride back.
 He put his saddle on another horse as white as a dove;
 its forelock was plaited with precious stones
 and there were little golden bells amongst the gems,
 235 very many little bells, and the sound they made
 was pleasant and marvelous, astonishing everyone.
 It had a green and rosy silk on its rump
 and this covered the saddle so that it should not get dusty;
 the saddle and bridle were plaited with golden points,
 240 the whole work was set with pearls.
 The horse was bold and lively in its exercises,
 the boy was quick in his horsemanship.
 Everyone who saw him was amazed at that youngster,
 how the horse pranced in response to the young man's wishes,
 245 how he himself sat like an apple on a tree.

Commentary

1. This account can be compared to those of the glittering accoutrements of both horse and rider in the description of the female warrior Maximou, at G 6.551–56 and E 1485–96. The pearl-encrusted outer robes worn by Digenis have analogies in tenth- and eleventh-century imperial garments.³ Similar descriptions of the male hero appear in fourteenth-century vernacular romances: *Achilleis* (N 1186–205, eds. Agapitos, Hult, and Smith 2005; L 797–814, ed. Hesselning, 1919); and *Imberios and Margarona* (105–08, ed. Kriaras, 1955).
2. Ambergris, from the guts of sperm whales, was a traditional ingredient in perfume. Musk, an oil usually of animal origin, was also used in perfume manufacture.
3. Cloth, and silken leggings are listed frequently in the tenth-century *The Book of Ceremonies*.

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Parani, *Reconstructing*.

³ Parani, *Reconstructing*, 119.

I.8.15 Niketas Eugenianos (d. after 1158)

Ekphrasis of Drosilla

ELIZABETH JEFFREYS

The translation was first published in Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 305–497 at 355–56

Ed.: F. Conca, *I romanzo bizantino del XII secolo* (Turin, 1994), 305–497 at 312–14,

Drosilla and Charikles, 1.120–58

MSS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus 412 (s. XIII)

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Other Translations: J. Burton, *A Byzantine Novel: Drosilla and Dosikles by Niketas*

Eugenianos (Wauconda, Ill., 2004); F. Conca, as above (Italian); K. Plepelits, *Niketas*

Eugenianos, Drosilla und Charikles (Stuttgart, 2003) (German)

Significance

Niketas Eugenianos' description of Drosilla is typical of the images of young girls presented in the novels and occasional poetry of mid twelfth-century Constantinople.

The Author

See E. Jeffreys, I.8.11.

Text and Context

The novel from which this passage is taken is modeled on Theodore Prodromos' *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, and is part of a brief fashion in the 1140s and 1150s for imitating the novels of Late Antiquity, especially Achilles Tatius' *Leukippe and Kleitophon*. One of the features of the Komnenian novels was their use of rhetorical set-pieces, such as *ekphrasis* of people or objects, as can be seen from the passage in I.7.6 taken from Theodore Prodromos' account of a spectacularly carved goblet. Niketas' *ekphrasis* of Drosilla, the central female character in his novel, has many parallels with that of Rhodanthe in Theodore Prodromos' *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, at 1.39–60; both draw on Komnenian clichés of youthful beauty (bud-like lips, red and white complexion, flowing curls, etc.) which are also found in *epithalamia* and occasional verse of the period, notably in that of Manganios Prodromos (d.c. 1162).

¹ Not consulted.

Text

120 Ὡς οὐρανὸς γὰρ ἦν ἕναστρος ἡ κόρη,
 χρυσοῦν, φαινόν, λευκοπόρφυρον φάρος
 πρὸς τὴν ἑορτὴν δῆθεν ἠμφιεσμένη.
 εὐρυθμος ἦβην, λευκοχειροσαρδόνουξ,
 χεῖλη, παρειὰς ἐξέρυθρος ὡς ῥόδον·
 125 ὀφθαλμὸς αὐτῆς εὐπερίγραφος μέλας,
 πυρσὴ παρειά, ῥίς γρυπὴ, στιλπνὴ κόμη,
 ναὶ καὶ χλιδῶσα καὶ διευθετισμένη,
 κάλυξ τὰ χεῖλη, σίμβλον ἀνεωγμένον,
 θυμῆρες ἐκρέοντα τοῦ λόγου μέλι,
 130 γῆς ἄστρον ἐξαστράπτον, οὐρανοῦ ῥόδον·
 εὐρυθμος ὁ τράχηλος ἐκτεταμένος,
 τὰ πάντα τερπνὰ· κυκλοειδεῖς ὀφρύες,
 καὶ πυρσὸν ἀστράπτοντα λευκερυθρόχρουν
 αἱ τῶν παρειῶν ἐξέπεμπον λαμπάδες,
 135 χιῶν δὲ τᾶλλα τοῦ προσώπου τῆς κόρης·
 ὁ βόστρυχος χρύσειος, αἱ πλοκαμίδες
 ξανθαί, μελιχραί, χρυσοειδεῖς, κοσμίαι,
 τεταμέναι τε καὶ πνέουσαι τοῦ μύρου·
 ἡ γνάθος, ὁ τράχηλος ἐστιλβωμένα,
 140 τὸ χεῖλος αὐτῆς νέκταρ ἦν ἀπορρέον,
 τὸ στέρνον ἄλλην εἶχεν ὀρθρίαν δρόσον,
 ἦβης τὸ μέτρον ὡς κυπάριττος νέα,
 εὐτορνος ἡ ῥίς, τῶν ὀδόντων ἡ θέσις
 ὡς σύνθεσις τις μαργάρων λευκοχρῶων,
 145 τὰ κυκλοειδῆ τόξα τὰ τῶν ὀφρῶν
 ὡς τόξον ἦν Ἔρωτος ἐγκεχαρμένου,
 ἔοικεν ὡς ἔμιξε γάλα καὶ ῥόδα,
 καὶ συνδιεχρώσατο καθὰ ζωγράφος
 ταύτης τὸ σῶμα λευκέρυθρον ἡ φύσις·
 150 θάμβος γὰρ αὕτη συγγορευούσαις κόραις
 λειμῶνος ἐντὸς τοῦ νεῶ Διονύσου.
 οἱ δάκτυλοι δὲ καὶ τὰ τῶν ὠτων ἄκρα
 ἄνθρακας εἶχον, ὡς τὸ πῦρ ἀνημμένους,
 χρυσῶ καθαρῶ συμπεπηγότας λίθους·
 155 ἦστραπτον αὐτῆς χεῖρες ἐκ τοῦ χρυσίου,
 ναὶ μὴν σὺν αὐταῖς ἀργυροσκελεῖς πόδες.
 οὕτω τοσαύτην ἡ Δροσίλλα παρθένος
 καινὴν ἐπευτύχησε καλλονῆς χάριν.

Translation

120 The girl was like a star-studded heaven,
 clad, indeed, for the festival
 in a golden, shining, white and purple cloak.¹
 Her youthful movements were graceful, her hands white as sardonyx;
 her lips and cheeks as crimson as a rose;
 125 her eyes black and well outlined,
 her cheek flaming, her nose arched, her hair gleaming,
 yes, it was lustrous and well groomed;
 her lips were a pursed bud, an opening hive,
 pouring out the pleasant honey of her speech;
 130 a flashing star of the earth, a rose of heaven;
 a long neck gracefully poised,
 everything was delightful – her curved eyebrows,
 flashing fires of white and red color radiated
 from the torches of her cheeks,
 135 though the rest of the girl's face was snow-white;
 her locks were of gold, her curls
 blonde, honey-sweet, golden-colored, orderly,
 long and redolent of musk;
 her jaw and neck were gleaming,
 140 her lip dripped nectar,
 her breast had the fresh dew of another dawn;
 in her youthful vigor she was tall as a young cypress,
 her nose was well-formed, the setting of her teeth was
 like a string of white-hued pearls,
 145 the circular arches of her eyebrows were
 like the bow of joyful Eros;
 she seemed a mixture of milk and roses
 and it looked as though nature, like a painter,²
 had colored her body white and red;
 150 she was astonishing to the girls who danced with her³
 within the meadow of the temple of Dionysos.
 Her fingers and the tips of her ears
 were bright with rubies, flaming like fire,
 stones set firmly in pure gold.
 155 Her hands flashed with gold,
 yes, and with them her silvery feet.
 Thus, was the maiden Drossilla blessed with the grace
 of such great and extraordinary beauty.

Commentary

1. Λευκοπόρφυρον, λευκοχειροσαρδόνυξ, λευκερυθρόχρουον (vv. 121, 123, 133) are unusual compound adjectives; this stylistic quirk became a prominent feature of the fourteenth-century vernacular verse romances.
 2. Nature as a painter is also found in *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* 2.250.
 3. Dionysos, in classical Greek literature the god of wine, is used by Niketas as a prime mover of his novel's plot.
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**I.8.16 ?Andronikos Komnenos Doukas Branas Angelos
Palaiologos (c.1261–c.1310)**

**From the Description of the Beautiful Chrysorrhoe
from *Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe***

KIRSTY STEWART

Ed.: M. Pichard, *Le Roman de Callimaque et de Chrysorrhoe* (Paris, 1956), 29–30
MS.:¹ Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversitet, Scaligeranus Graecus 55 (s. XV), ff. 1r–57v
Other Translations: G. Betts, *Three Medieval Greek Romances* (New York, 1995), 52–53
(English); M. Pichard, as above (French)

Significance

This extract extends the earlier description of the bath-house presented in I.8.12 in this volume, so that the description of the heroine mirrors those earlier lines. The natural imagery, and its man-made control in the form of the enclosed garden and bath-house, serves to unite the garden and the heroine in their beauty and status, both being ideals beyond the reach of normal society.

The Author

See K. Stewart, I.8.12 in this volume.

Text and Context

For a summary of the text see I.8.12 in this volume.

Upon entering the Dragon's Castle, the hero Kallimachos finds a lovely garden containing a beautiful bath-house. After a description of this, in perhaps the most famous passage of this romance, Kallimachos enters the Dragon's chamber, a handsome painted room, and finds Chrysorrhoe hanging by her hair in the middle of the room.² After Kallimachos has defeated the dragon, rescued Chrysorrhoe, and heard her story, the two exchange vows of love and, in a euphemistic passage, consummate their relationship. The author then returns to a discussion of the bath and an *ekphrasis* of Chrysorrhoe herself, which forms the extract below. Her beauty has been prefigured by the description of the garden, and specifically here by the bath-house in which she now bathes with Kallimachos.

The author plays with the natural descriptions to create sensual imagery, hinting at the sexual consummation of the relationship between Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe.

¹ Not consulted.

² This passage has been translated by Constantine: Constantine *et al.* 2010: 344–46.

Descriptions of nature, with their traditional associations of fertility, were one way to describe such a relationship without having to be explicit. It also allowed for the type of spiritual interpretation we encounter in Philes' poem on Andronikos' romance.³ For Philes, the hero's father symbolizes God, the heroine as the beloved represents the hero's soul, while the dragon killed by the hero is obviously an image of the Devil. Admittedly this difference of presentation, exchanging fantasy and eroticism for spirituality, may have been entirely manufactured in order to make the romance, and the reading of it, acceptable to the audience of Philes' poem, or indeed to the poet himself.⁴ However, it also connects the romance with a contemporary religious work, Theodore Hyrtakenos' *Description of the Garden of St. Anna*, which utilizes the garden space as a depiction of feminine fertility.⁵ This sexuality was more overt in the Palaiologan romances than it had been previously, returning to the more explicit nature of the Second Sophistic novels. Like those earlier works, these romances made full use of landscape and vegetal imagery in the process.

By tying the *ekphrasis* of Chrysorrhoe with that of the bath-house and the garden more generally, the author here reintegrates her into the man-made and, thus, society, restoring her position from prisoner to lady of importance. The restorative waters of the bath also renew her beauty after her mistreatment by the dragon. The bath-house nevertheless allows for the discussion of beauty in terms of the nature that surrounds it. In doing so, the author indicates that Chrysorrhoe is as beautiful as nature, and like nature, becomes more so when cared for. However, the garden appears as her space through the connected descriptions, and Kallimachos' role as bath-servant in this episode indicates that the heroine has some power of her own, and that she remains more than a simple object to be tended.

3 On Philes' poem see p. 1028, above.

4 Hagiography had previously combined the thrill of adventure with spiritual romance between mankind and God. The prose romance *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, which was probably translated into Greek in the tenth century, provided a spiritual lesson using the romance genre, but it does not feature the erotic imagery we find in *Kallimachos*.

5 Dolezal and Mavroudi 2002: 105–58.

Text

- 785 Σύν Χρυσορρόη τῇ καλῇ Καλλίμαχος ὁ νέος
τουφῶσι, σινευφραίνονται καὶ χαίρουνται ἐντάμα.
Καὶ Χάριτες ἐδούλευσαν τὰ τῆς ὑπηρεσίας
καὶ συνελούσθησαν ἐκεῖ μετὰ τῆς κόρης τότε·
καὶ τὰς ἐρωτοχάριτας ἅπας ἐξεθαμβήθη.
- 790 τίς γοῦν <ποτε> καὶ ποταπὴ γλῶσσα τὴν χάριν εἶπη;
οὐδεὶς τοσαύτας χάριτας ἀπαριθμήσει λέγων·
ἀλλ' ἂν πολλάκις ἔτυχες εἰς τὸ λουτρὸν ἐκεῖνον,
ἄλλην μεγάλην ἡδονὴν καὶ ξένην εἶδες τότε.
οὕτως τὸ σῶμα πάντερπνον εἰς τοῦ λουτροῦ τὴν χάριν·
- 795 σῶμα καὶ γὰρ πανεύγενον καὶ κρυσταλλώδης σάρκα
τὴν χάριν καὶ τὴν ἡδονὴν εἰς τὸ λουτρὸν αὐξάνει.
ἐξέβηκαν ἐκ τοῦ λουτροῦ· εἰς τοῦ λουτροῦ τὰ χεῖλη
εὐρέθη στρῶμα κείμενον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς στρωμένον.
τὸν τοῦ λουτροῦ τὸν ποταμὸν ὀλόχρυσον ἂν εἶπης,
- 800 ἀλλὰ καὶ τί πρὸς τοῦ χρουσοῦ τὴν καλλονὴν τοῦ πάτου;
εὐρέθη στρῶμα κείμενον, ἀλλὰ πολλὰ ποικίλον,
ὅπερ ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος αὐτῆς ἐχαριτώθη·
καὶ τὰς ἐκείθεν ἡδονὰς τὰς οὐσας ἐν τῷ στρῶμα
τίς εἶπη, τίς ἐξηγηθῆ καὶ τίς λεπτολογήσει;
- 805 ἦσαν λοιπὸν οἱ βασιλεῖς τοῦ χρυσοκάστρου τούτου
ζῶντες μεθ' ὄσης ἡδονῆς, μετὰ χαρίτων τόσων.

Ἔκφρασις πανεξαίρετος κόρης τῆς Χρυσορρόης.

- Ἦν γὰρ ἡ κόρη πάντερπνος, ἐρωτοφορουμένην,
ἀσύγκριτος τὰς ἡδονὰς, τὸ κάλλος ὑπὲρ λόγον,
- 810 τὰς χάριτας ὑπὲρ αὐτὴν τὴν τῶν χαρίτων φύσιν.
βοστρύχους εἶχεν ποταμούς, ἐρωτικούς πλοκάμους·
εἶχεν ὁ βόστρυχος αὐγὴν εἰς κεφαλὴν τῆς κόρης,
ἀπέστιλβεν ὑπὲρ χρυσοῦν ἀκτῖναν τοῦ ἡλίου.
σῶμα λευκὸν ὑπὲρ αὐτὴν τὴν τοῦ κρυστάλλου φύσιν·
- 815 ὑπέκλεπτεν τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τοῦ σώματος ἢ χάρις.
ἐδόκει γὰρ σὺν τῷ λευκῷ καὶ ῥόδου χάριν ἔχειν.
ἂν μόνον ἀνενδράνισες, τὸ πρόσωπον ἂν εἶδες,
ἐσείσθης ὄλην σου ψυχὴν, ὄλην αὐτὴν καρδίαν·
ἀπλῶς τὴν κόρην ἀγαλμα τῆς Ἀφροδίτης εἶπες
- 820 καὶ πάσης ἄλλης ἡδονῆς, ὅσας ὁ νοῦς συμπλέκει.
τί δὲ πολλὰ πολυλογῶ, τί δὲ πολλὰ καὶ γράφω
τάχα πρὸς τὸν καλλωπισμὸν τοῦ σώματος τῆς κόρης;
λόγος μικρὸς ἂν ἐξαρκοῖ πρὸς τὸ νὰ τὸ δηλώσῃ·
ὅσας ὁ κόσμος ἔφερε γυναῖκας εἰς τὸ μέσον
- 825 καὶ πρὸ αὐτῆς καὶ μετ' αὐτῆς καὶ τότε ὅσαι ἦσαν,
ὡς πρὸς τὰς χάριτας αὐτῆς μιμῶ πρὸς Ἀφροδίτην.

Translation

785 The beautiful Chrysorrhoe and the youth Kallimachos
luxuriate, rejoice, and take pleasure together
The Graces served as attendants¹
and bathed there together with the girl then;
anybody would have marveled at the graces of love.
790 Who in the world and what tongue could describe the beauty?
No one could say the number of so many charms;
but if you had happened to be in that bath by chance,
You would have witnessed another great and remarkable pleasure.
So lovely was her body, in the charm of the pool;
795 indeed, her noble body and her crystal-like skin
Grew in charm and grace in the pool.²
They came out of the pool; at the edge of the pool
was a couch for resting laid out on the ground.³
You could say the water of the bath was like gold,
800 but what was this compared to the beauty of the golden pavement?
The couch was laid out there, and it was many-colored,
where it was favored by her body;
And of the pleasures they had thence on the couch
who will tell, who will describe, who will recite in detail?
805 They were the rulers of this golden castle from then on,⁴
Living with many delights, with many pleasures.

A description of the beautiful girl Chrysorrhoe

The girl was completely beautiful, inspiring love,
Her graces were unparalleled, her beauty beyond expression,
810 her charms surpassed the nature of the Graces themselves.
her hair was a river of lovely curls;
the hair shimmered on the head of the girl,
Shining brighter than the golden rays of the sun.
Her body was whiter than crystal;^{5;6}
815 the grace of her body beguiled the eyes.
For it seemed to be white endowed with the beauty of the rose⁷
If you only looked, if you saw her face,
it would have shaken your entire soul, your whole heart;
simply you would say the girl is an image of Aphrodite⁸
820 and all other beauties, as many as the mind can bring together.⁹
But why do I talk so much, why do I write such a lot
towards the description of the beauty of the girl's body?
A few words should suffice in order to reveal it;
all the women the world has produced,
825 Those before her and those after her and her contemporaries,
compared to her beauty, are like monkeys compared to Aphrodite.

Commentary

1. The Graces of classical mythology who appear here are heavily influenced by epigrams from the *Anthologia Graeca* compiled by Maximos Planudes for Andronikos II Palaiologos.⁶
2. The beauty of the heroine is augmented by the bath, partly as it is connected with cleanliness and healing, but also due to the symbolic transformation which it performs on her and Kallimachos, their relationship, and the plot.
3. The couch has previously been described as being of gold, pearls, and rubies in ll. 371–73.⁷
4. The golden castle (χρυσοκάστρου) has also been transformed by this episode, having previously been described as the terrible and mighty Dragon's Castle (το δρακοντόκαστρον τὸ φοβερὸν καὶ μέγα) in l. 176.⁸
5. The natural terminology used to describe Chrysorrhoe, namely the river of curls, golden hair, and crystal-white skin, is all traditional and again uses concepts of light and reflection.⁹ Blonde hair, though not necessarily common in the Byzantine empire, was considered far more attractive than dark hair, partly due to the connection with gold and light.
6. The mention of crystal, as opposed to milk or snow, again highlights the translucent and reflective nature of Chrysorrhoe's skin. However, it also implies a rarity and incorruptibility that increases the impression of beauty, making the heroine even more precious through her comparison with precious and costly materials, such as the rock crystal which was commonly used to embellish works of art.
7. This is very much a classical ideal of color. Women's skin at its best was to resemble milk with rose petals, as described by Ovid and Propertius, and many attempted to achieve the effect through the use of cosmetics.¹⁰ This ideal was clearly continued in Byzantium for both men and women.¹¹
8. Aphrodite remains a pinnacle of beauty in the romances. References to the pagan gods tended to use their associations and allegorical meanings in Byzantium, although the physical gods and goddesses do occasionally appear. Eros is a common figure in the Palaiologan romances, and the only male figure closely connected with the garden in those works.¹² Comparisons between heroines and goddesses were common in the Komnenian romances as they were in the novels of the Second Sophistic so that they form something of a motif within this genre.
9. The other beauties which are likely to have sprung to the Byzantine mind are many but would likely have included the classical figures of Helen of Troy and Nausikaa.

6 Agapitos 1990: 270–72.

7 Pichard 1956: 14.

8 Pichard 1956: 7.

9 Hatzaki, *Beauty*.

10 Stewart 2007: 9.

11 Hatzaki, *Beauty*.

12 See also E. and M. Jeffreys, I.3.16 in this volume.

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I.8.17 Manganaios Prodromos (c.1100–after c.1162)

A Synkrisis of a Portrait of the Emperor Manuel with an Imagined Version of a Famous Painting from Antiquity

ELIZABETH JEFFREYS AND MICHAEL JEFFREYS

Ed.: Elizabeth Jeffreys and Michael Jeffreys, *Poems*, no. 4 vv. 534–99; previous edition:

E. Miller, *Recueil des historiens des croisades: historiens grecs*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1881),

744–45, vv. 573–97

MS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus XI.22 (s. XIII ex.), ff. 4r–8v (this passage 7r–v)

Translation: Elizabeth Jeffreys and Michael Jeffreys, *Poems* (forthcoming), no. 4

Significance

The passage quoted here provides a court rhetorician's interpretation of a fashionable painting that might have adorned the imperial private quarters. It is an imaginative reflection of the more pragmatic descriptions of the decorations in aristocratic houses found in many epigrams preserved in the *Anthologia Marciana*² and offers some hints at the forms that imperial portraiture might take.³ The Komnenian picture, for all the glamor which Manuel sought to bring to his court, is very sober and masculine, in comparison with the effeminacy of Alexander's portrayal.

The Author

See E. and M. Jeffreys, I.3.15.

Text and Context

Poem 4 of Manganaios Prodromos is a lengthy *enkomion* of the emperor Manuel written in 1151. Manuel had been successful earlier in the previous year in his land campaigns in Serbia and Hungary, and had recently vanquished a naval force from Norman Sicily;⁴ Manganaios seizes the opportunity to present a self-serving and self-indulgent celebration of the emperor's achievements which includes a detailed depiction of the emperor's heroic physique. In the course of his *enkomion* of the emperor's eyes the poet introduces a *synkrisis* of a portrait of Manuel and his empress with an imagined version of a famous painting from Antiquity that depicted Alexander in the arms of his Persian bride Roxane.

1 Consulted.

2 See the examples quoted in Magdalino and Nelson, "Emperor," 123–83.

3 Magdalino, *Manuel*, 470–77.

4 For an overview of the events of these years see Stephenson 2000: 211–38.

Text

Ἄγε προκύψω τὸ λοιπὸν ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς σου,
 535 καὶ τούτους ἐνοπτρίσομαι καθάπερ ἐν ἐσόπτρῳ,
 κἂν εὐστοχήσω τι μικρόν, κἂν φυσιολογήσω,
 δῶρον καὶ τοῦτο τῶν πολλῶν καὶ ξένων σου χαρίτων.
 ὁπότεν γὰρ κατίδω σου τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν τὴν χάριν —
 μὰ τοὺς ὑπερανέχοντας λόφους τῶν σῶν τροπαίων,
 540 μὰ τὰς ὑπερμεγέθεις σου τρισαριστείας ταύτας,
 τὰς μετρομένας ἐν ὕγροϊς, ἐν νήσοις, ἐν ἠπείροις —
 αὐτὰς αὐτὰς τὰς Χάριτας, αὐτὰς δοκῶ τὰς Ὡρας
 χορεύειν ἐν ταῖς κόραις σου καὶ κύκλῳ περιτρέχειν.
 οὐχ οὕτω τις ἠὔτρεπίσε τὴν μουσικὴν Μαρσύας,
 545 οὐχ οὕτως ἤρμωσε χορδὰς ὁ Θέσπις ὁ Θηβαῖος,
 οὐδ' οὕτω συνεπήξατο πρὸς μίαν ἀρμονίαν,
 οὐδ' οὕτω συνερρῦθμισε πρὸς μίαν συμφωνίαν,
 ὥς Ὡραι σοὶ καὶ Χάριτες συνέταξαν εὐτάκτως
 τῶν ἠθικῶν χαρίτων σου τὴν ξένην εὐταξίαν.
 550 ἀλλὰ γὰρ ποῖα γλῶσσα μοι καὶ τίς ἀρκέσει λόγος;
 μᾶλλον δὲ πόσοι πίδακες πυκνῶν ἐνθυμημάτων
 ἀρκέσουσιν εἰς ἔμφασιν ὑπογραφῆς τοιαύτης;
 ἔξαπορῶ—μὰ τῶν τερπνῶν ὀμμάτων σου τὴν χάριν
 καὶ τῶν χαρίτων τὴν πηγὴν τὴν ἐν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς σου.
 555 ἴστ᾽αὶ τὸ βλέμμα καὶ τὸν νοῦν ἐκ τῶν ψυχῶν ἀρπάξεις,
 ὑπολοξεύεις ὀφθαλμόν, ἀνέσπασας καρδίαν·
 ὑγραίνεται τὸ βλέμμα σου, νέκταρ ἐκρέει πόθου,
 καταμεθύσκον ὀφθαλμοὺς τοὺς ἀντιβλέποντάς σοι.
 Ἔρωσ αὐτὸς αἰδεῖται σε καὶ σβέννυσι τὴν φλόγα,
 560 ἐρᾷ γὰρ τῶν χαρίτων σου καὶ κρύπτει τὴν λαμπάδα,
 τὴν ἦτταν αἰσχυνόμενος καὶ φεύγων τοὺς ἐλέγχους,
 ἔρον γὰρ Ἔρωσ δυστυχεῖ καὶ πάθος ὁ μὴ πάσχων·
 ὁ πρότερον ἀνάλωτος ἐάλω καὶ θαυμάζει,
 καὶ τὸ στερρότερον αὐτοῦ τῶν ὄπλων ἀπορρίπτει,
 565 καὶ φεύγει τὸν χρυσέρωτα λαθραίως ὑπὸ σκότει·
 οὕτω γενναῖος ἀριστεὺς ἐν τόλμῃ καθωράθη.
 ὥς ἔγωγε καὶ γέγηθα καὶ πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων χαίρω,
 οὕτω φέρων ὑπότρομον τὸν φοβερὸν ἐκεῖνον,
 καὶ τὸν κρατοῦντα κρατητὸν καὶ δοῦλον τὸν δεσπότην.
 570 ἔγνω βελῶν γὰρ δύναιμιν ὁ πτερωτὸς τοξότης·
 ἔσχε καὶ πείραν τοῦ πυρὸς ὁ λαμπαδοῦχος Ἔρωσ,
 ἐν σοὶ καὶ μόνῳ διδαχθεὶς ἅ πρότερον ἠγνόει.
 δεῦρο λοιπὸν, ὦ Ἄστιε, βλέπε καὶ σὺ ζωγράφον,
 ἐτέραν ἀντιγράφοντα παρὰ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου

Translation

Well then, I shall move on to your eyes,¹
 535 and will portray them as if in a mirror;²
 and if I achieve some accuracy, if my picture is natural,
 this, too, is the gift of your many wondrous graces.
 For whenever I behold the beauty of your eyes –
 by the lofty mounds of your triumphs,
 540 by these gigantic triple conquests of yours,
 measured out at sea, on islands, and on land –
 I see, yes, I see the very Graces and Hours³ themselves
 dancing in your pupils and circling around.
 No Marsyas⁴ composed his music like this,
 545 no Theban Thespis⁵ tuned his strings like this,
 nor did he unite them like this into a single harmony,
 nor did he combine their rhythm into a single meter,
 as did the Hours and Graces symmetrically put together
 the wondrous symmetry of your moral graces.
 550 But what tongue will suffice me and what speech?
 Or rather how many flashes of deep thought
 will be enough for the reflection of such an illustration?
 I am at a loss – by the delight of your charming eyes
 and the spring of graces in your eyes.
 555 You fix your gaze⁶ and plunder the mind from our souls,
 you give a captivating glance and have stolen our hearts;
 your gaze becomes moist – it drips the nectar of desire,
 intoxicating the eyes that look back at you.
 Eros⁷ himself respects you and quenches his flame,
 560 he desires your charms and hides his torch,
 ashamed at his defeat and avoiding censure,
 for Eros who suffers no desire is distraught with passion;
 he who once was insuperable has been captured and is amazed,
 he throws away the strongest of his weapons,
 565 and secretly, in darkness, runs away from golden passion;
 thus you have proved a noble champion in your daring.
 How happy I am and rejoice before all others,
 seeing that terrifying foe trembling,
 the victor vanquished and the master enslaved.⁸
 570 The winged archer has felt the power of arrows;
 Eros with his torch has had experience of fire,
 taught in your case alone what before he did not know.
 Come then, Astios,⁹ you too should see a painter,
 copying a different picture from that of Alexander,

575 γραφήν αὐτοχρωμάτιστον καταπεποικιλμένην.
 ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ κακόζηλον καλεῖν τὸν παρελθόντα,
 δεῦρ' ἴτε φίλοι μιμηταὶ τῆς τοῦ Ἀστίου τέχνης,
 συγκρίνατέ μοι τὴν γραφήν ἐκείνην καὶ τὴν ἄρτι.
 ἐκείνη τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἐπὶ τῆς κλίνης εἶχεν,
 580 ἐκ δὲ θατέρου τῶν μερῶν τὴν κόρην τοῦ Δαρείου
 καὶ τινὰς ἄλλους ἔρωτας προαγωγούς ἐκείνης.
 αὕτη τὸν αὐτοκράτορα σεμνότερόν σε γράφει
 ὡς ἥλιον ἐν ἄστρασι κατακτινοβολοῦντα,
 ὑπὸ πλευρὰν δὲ παριστᾷ τὴν τῶν Καισάρων γόνον,
 585 σελήνην ἄλλην ἀντικρυς καὶ φῶς ἐπισπωμένην,
 ἡμερινὴν ἀπορροὴν βασιλικῆς ἀκτῖνος.
 αὕτη τὸ σάκκον ἔφαινε, ἐκείνη νεανίσκους·
 αὕτη γενναίους ἀρχηγούς κύκλω παρεστηκότας,
 ἐκείνη κατεκοίμιζε ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ἐκείνον·
 590 αὕτη χρυσοῦν ἀστέρα σε προφαίνοντα δεικνύει,
 ἐκείνη παρυπέγραφε Ῥωξάναν ἐλκομένην·
 αὕτη λαμπρὰν βασίλισσαν ἔντιμον ὑπογράφει,
 θέλει κατακοιμίσει σε καὶ τοῦτο καταγράψαι.
 ἀλλὰ πρὸς ταύτην τὴν γραφήν οὐδ' Ἀπελλῆς ἀρκέσει·
 595 οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτα τῶν γραπτῶν, οὐ ζωγραφοῦνται ταῦτα.
 τίς ὑπογράφει σύνοδον ἡλίου καὶ σελήνης;
 ταῦτα γραφεὺς ἀδυνατεῖ παρυπεγγράφειν λόγος.
 ἔχω τὰ νικητήρια λοιπὸν ἐκ διαμέτρου·
 νενίκηκα, κεκράτηκα καὶ τῆς γραφῆς ἐκείνης.

575 with natural colors and full decoration.
 But since it is bad taste to summon someone from the past,
 come here, dear imitators of Astios' art,
 compare for me that famous picture with this later one.
 The former showed Alexander on the bed,
 580 and on one side the daughter of Dareios
 and some other erotes, her escorts.
 The latter pictures you, the emperor, more solemnly,
 shining brilliantly as a sun in the midst of stars,
 and at your side it portrays the descendant of the Caesars,¹⁰
 585 just like another moon, absorbing your light,
 an emanation in daylight of an imperial ray.
 The latter shows a shield, the former little boys;
 the latter noble commanders surrounding you in a circle,
 the former lulled Alexander to sleep in luxury;
 590 the latter reveals you as a shining star,
 the former depicted Roxana as seductress;
 the latter describes a brilliant and honorable empress.
 She wants to lull you to sleep and to depict this too.
 But not even Apelles¹¹ will be good enough for this picture;
 595 this is not a subject to be drawn, such scenes are not for paint.
 Who can picture the conjunction of sun and moon?
 This a painterly speech is unable to depict.
 So I have won the victory by its opposite:
 I have conquered, I have been victorious even over that picture.

Commentary

1. Manganeios Prodromos is describing the eyes of the emperor Manuel.
2. For a discussion of the role played by mirrors in Byzantine society and literature see Papaioannou 2010.
3. Graces and Hours are mythological figures personifying beauty and the seasons, often depicted in Classical and Late Antique art and constantly introduced by Manganeios Prodromos; see *OCD*, s.v. “Charites” and “Horae.”
4. The satyr Marsyas was renowned for his flute-playing, and for being flayed alive by the god Apollo (*OCD*, s.v. “Marsyas”).
5. Thespis, though more usually accredited as the first playwright and actor, is also recorded as a *kitharodos* (lyre-player) in the *Suda*, and in scholia to Aristophanes’ *Wasps*.⁵
6. The physiology of sight in erotic contexts is explored in Achilles Tatius’ *Leukippe and Kleitophon* (second century), which was much read and imitated in the twelfth century, notably in Makrembolites’ *Hysmine and Hysminias*.⁶
7. Eros is depicted here with his attributes of weapons and fiery torch, conventional since Hellenistic times.
8. Enslavement to Eros, especially with reference to a master enslaved to passion, is a *topos* in the twelfth-century novels.⁷ Here, however, Eros has been overcome by the sight of Manuel’s beauty.
9. “Astios,” which is metrically embedded in the text, is otherwise unknown. The reference must be to Aetion, whose painting of the marriage of Alexander and Roxane is described in Lucian’s *Herodotus* (§§4–6) in the terms used by Manganeios Prodromos in the following lines.⁸
10. Descent from the Caesars (i.e. Julius Caesar) was a polite fiction used of the German and Hungarian kingly families;⁹ here the reference is to Bertha, kinswoman of Conrad III and Manuel’s first wife.
11. Apelles (third century BCE), the best-known painter from the Greek classical world; see *OCD*, s.v. “Apelles.”

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5 *Suida*, Θ 283; *Scholia on Aristophanes’ Wasps*, Koster, l. 1479.

6 Nilsson 2001; Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 179.

7 Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels*, e.g. at 17, 173.

8 For an important discussion of this passage see Magdalino 1992: 197–204, but see Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels*, 161–65, for an alternative position.

9 Hörandner 1974: 231–32.

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I.8.18 Manganeios Prodromos (c.1100–after c.1162)

The Emperor Manuel is Magnificent in a Joust

ELIZABETH JEFFREYS AND MICHAEL JEFFREYS

Ed.: Elizabeth Jeffreys and Michael Jeffreys, *Manganeios Prodromos*, *Poems*, no. 17; previous edition: E. Miller, *Recueil des historiens des croisades: historiens grecs*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1881), 193–94, vv. 1–35; 605, vv. 36–39

MS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus XI.22 (s. XIII ex.), ff. 27v–28

Other Translations: Elizabeth Jeffreys and Michael Jeffreys, in *Manganeios Prodromos*, *Poems*, no. 17

Significance

This text indicates some of the ways in which the emperor Manuel presented himself with flamboyant gestures and the adoption of some non-Byzantine customs, and how these were perceived by members of his entourage.

The Author

On Manganeios Prodromos, see E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, I.3.15.

Text and Context

The poet has been impressed by the sight of the emperor Manuel on horseback wielding a large lance and banner. Similar accoutrements are recorded by the historian Kinnamos² when Raymond of Poitiers was in Constantinople in 1148 and was impressed by the weight of Manuel's armor. A prose *ekphrasis*, possibly by Nikephoros Basilakes, in manuscript Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 1409, ff. 277r–v, also records Manuel involved in jousting.³ Since Manuel conducted jousts throughout his imperial rule, dating is hard. The poem's last lines refer to the infant Maria, Manuel's first child, who was born in March 1152 or 1153. The poem was probably written in the mid 1150s.

1 Consulted.

2 Kinnamos, *Deeds*, ed. Meineke, p. 125.

3 Jones and Maguire 2002: 114–18; see also Jeffreys and Jeffreys 2015: 51.

Text

Εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν αὐτοκράτορα ἐν παιδιᾷ εὐφυῶς δορατίζοντα καὶ γενναίως μετὰ σημαίας ὑπερβολικῆς

- Ἄλλ' οὐδ' Ἀλέξανδρος ἰδὼν τὸν ποταμὸν τὸν Κύδνον
οὕτω γλυκὺν καὶ πότιμον καὶ θέλγοντα τὴν ὄψιν,
οὕτως ἀπλῶς παρέδραμε τὸ περιστίλβον ρεῖθρον,
ἀλλὰ θελχθεὶς ἐλούσατο τοσοῦτον ὡς νοσῆσαι.
5 ἐγὼ δὲ βλέπων ῥέοντα χρυσόρειθρον Ἐφράτην
ἄντικρυς ἄλλον Ἵμηττόν, ἄντικρυς ἄλλο νέκταρ,
παραδραμοῦμαι τὰς ῥοάς, οὐδὲ θαυμάσω ταύτας,
ὡς χρῆ θαυμάζειν μέτοχον παιδεύσεως καὶ λόγου,
οὐδὲ τὸν νοῦν εἰς τὰς ῥοάς τὰς χρυσαυγεῖς ἐμβάλω,
10 καὶ τοῖς Ἐφράτου ῥεύμασι περιχρυσώσω τοῦτον;
καὶ τί μοι τὸ διάφορον πρὸς τὸν χυδαῖον ὄχλον,
ἂν μέχρι μόνου θαύματος τὸ θαῦμα παραδράμω,
μὴ λόγοις τὸν χρυσόρειθρον Ἐφράτην ἐπαινέσας;
ἄγε λοιπὸν ὡς εὐπορῶ θαυμάσω μετὰ λόγου.
15 ἐγὼ καθιππαζόμενον ὄρων σε, μονοκράτορ,
τὸ δόρυ παίζοντα δοκῶ Βελεροφόντην ἄλλον
καὶ νύττοντα τὴν Χίμαιραν, ἀλλὰ τὴν τῶν Ἐρώτων·
οὐ γὰρ κτιννύεις Ἐρωτας καταφρονῶν Ἐρώτων,
ἀλλὰ τὴν καταφρόνησιν ἀποτομὴν νομίζεις.
20 ἂν δὲ τῆς ἵππασίας σου τὸ πνεῦμα κατοπτεύσω
ἐκπεταννύον ὡς πτερὰ τὰ χρυσαυγῆ σου πέπλα,
τὸν ἀφανῆ φαντάζομαι τὸν πτερωτὸν τοξότην·
ἂν εἰς Κελτὸν τὸ δόρυ σου καὶ τοὺς ταρσοὺς κινήσης,
ἐκπλήττομαι τὴν κίνησιν καὶ τὸ καμπύλον τούτων,
25 καὶ συσφαδάζω μετὰ σοῦ καὶ θέλω συνιππεύειν·
ἔνθεν τοι μὴ δυνάμενος πραγματικῶς συμπαίζειν
τῷ καλαμίνῳ μοι κοντῷ κουφότερον συμπαίζω,
κἂν ἐκ φελλοῦ τὸ δόρυ γάρ, κἂν χελωνόπους ἵππος,
καὶ πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ἀφυῆς ἐγὼ καὶ πρὸς τὸ δόρυ.
30 ἄριστοι πάντων οἱ Κελτοὶ πρὸς τὸ συστρέφειν δόρυ,
καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν κουφότεροι πρὸς τὴν ἵππηλασίαν·
ἀλλὰ πρὸς αὐτοκράτορα καὶ πρὸς τοσοῦτον σκύμμον
λαγοὶ δοκοῦσιν οἱ Κελτοὶ καὶ τὴν φυγὴν ζητοῦσι,
καὶ στρέφουσι τὰ νῶτα σοι καὶ νύττουσι τοὺς ἵππους.
35 δεῦτε χρωμάτων κερασταὶ καὶ μιμηταὶ ζωγράφοι,
ἀφέντες τὰ πρωτότυπα τῆς εἰκονογραφίας,
τῆς ἵππασίας πίνακα ποιεῖτε τὸν κρατοῦντα,

Translation

To the same emperor, when he was brilliantly and nobly jousting at sport, with an outsize flag.¹

Not even Alexander, when he saw that the river Kydnos²
 was so sweet and fit to drink and charming in appearance,
 not even he thus simply passed by the glittering stream,
 but he was charmed and bathed so much that he fell sick.
 5 But I, seeing a Euphrates³ flowing with golden water,
 just like another Hymettos,⁴ just like another nectar,
 am I to pass by its waters and not admire them,
 as one who is educated and eloquent should admire them,
 and not plunge my mind in the gleaming golden streams,
 10 and gild it all over with the Euphrates' waters?
 And how am I different from the common herd,
 if I pass by the miracle doing no more than admire,
 without praising in speeches the Euphrates flowing with gold?
 Come then, as far I am able, I will honor it with a speech.
 15 When I see you galloping, sovereign,
 I see another Bellerophon⁵ wielding his lance
 and piercing the Chimaera – but the Chimaera of the Erotes;
 for you do not slay Erotes by despising Erotes,⁶
 but you think contempt is too severe.
 20 And if I look on the spirit of your horsemanship
 spreading your gleaming golden robes like wings,
 I imagine the invisible winged archer.⁷
 If you direct your lance at a Kelt⁸ and dig in your heels,
 I am amazed by the spurring and the prancing,
 25 and I am excited with you and want to ride with you;
 and so being unable to joust with you in reality
 I joust with you more lightly with my lance of reed
 though my spear be of cork and my horse of tortoise speed,
 and I myself naturally unsuited to it and the spear.
 30 The Kelts are best of all for wielding the spear,
 and lighter than all others in horsemanship;
 but in comparison to an emperor, to so great a lion cub⁹
 the Kelts seem like hares and aim at flight,
 and turn their back on you and spur on their horses.
 35 Come, mixers of colors and painters who imitate,¹⁰
 abandon the models of iconography,
 and make the ruler a picture of horsemanship

ὡς αἰχμητὴν ἀσύγκριτον, ὡς πτερωτὸν ἵππότην,
 ἰθύνοντα τανύπεπλον ἐξηρημένον δόρυ.
 40 ἀστεροσκοπὸι δράμετε, φωστήρ γὰρ καθιππεύει·
 ἔχει καὶ τοὺς διάττοντας τοὺς γύρωθεν ἀστέρας.
 ἐκ τούτων τῆς κινήσεως προλέγετε τὸ μέλλον·
 ἀπὸ τοῦ φωτοβρύτου δὲ καὶ χρυσαυγοῦς ἀστέρος
 τὴν τοῦ φωτάρχου δύναμιν τὴν ἄρτι κεχυμένην
 45 ἐπὶ τὴν τετραμέρειαν τῆς ὄλης οἰκουμένης.
 οὕτως ἐγὼ μεμάθηκα συμπαίξιν, αὐτοκράτορ·
 ἐξαίρω τὸ βαθύσκιον καὶ δολιχὸν σου δόρυ,
 τὸ καταψύχον τοὺς ἐγγύς, τοὺς δὲ μακρὰν σκιάζον·
 γεραίρω τὴν παλάμην σου τὴν φέρουσαν τὸ δόρυ
 50 μετὰ παραπετάσματος τοσοῦτου καὶ τοιοῦτου·
 οὕτω μοι τὸ καλάμινον γραφίδιον ἐγγράφει
 τὸν πῆχυν σου τὸν κραταῖόν, τὸν τοῖς ἐχθροῖς φρικώδη.
 μετέδωκάς μοι χάριτος καὶ θαύματος ἵππεύων·
 τὴν χάριν ἀνταμείβομαι κατὰ τὴν δύναμίν μου·
 55 ἰδροῦντι σοι συνίδρωσα, κἄν μὴ συνίππευσά σοι,
 ἵππεύοντι συνίππευσα τῷ πτερωτῷ μοι λόγῳ,
 οὐχ ὅτι λόγον πτερωτὸν ἐκ τέχνης ἐκτησάμην,
 — οὐχ οὕτω μεγαλότολμος ἐγὼ πρὸς τὰ τοιαῦτα —
 ἀλλ' ὅτι φύσει πέφυκε ταχύτατος ὁ λόγος·
 60 οὕτω διδάσκομαι καὶ γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς ῥαψωδίας.
 δέξαι λοιπὸν τὸ σύμπαιγμα καὶ τὴν συνίππασίαν,
 μετὰ τῆς ἰλαρότητος καὶ τῆς χρηστότητός σου·
 ἂν γὰρ ἀπόβλητον αὐτὴν ποιήσης, ἀστεράρχα,
 οὐκέτι συνίππεύσω σοι τῷ δρομικῷ μου λόγῳ·
 65 ἀντεξετάζων γὰρ αὐτὸν πρὸς τὸ πτηνὸν σου κράτος
 πεζὸν πρὸς ἄρμα Λύδιον εὐρίσκω μου τὸν λόγον.
 κράτος τῷ κράτει σου Θεὸς καὶ μῆκος χρόνου δοίη,
 καὶ κύκλῳ τῆς τραπέζης σου νεόφυτα κατίδοις,
 ὡς εὐθηνοῦσαν ἄμπελον περικυκλοῦντα ταύτην
 70 τὴν ἐκ Καισάρων καὶ ῥηγῶν μεγαλουργῶν ἠρώων
 τὴν νῦν μονοχρυσόβοτρυν ἐκ τῆς πορφυροβλάστου.

as an incomparable warrior, as a winged horseman,
 in a flowing robe, wielding an exceptional spear.
 40 Run here, astrologers,¹¹ for a celestial light is riding;
 he has also around him his shooting stars.
 Predict the future from their movement;
 predict, from the bright light and gleaming golden star,
 the power of the ruler of light which has now been shed
 45 on the fourfold division of the whole universe.
 Thus I have learned to joust with you, Emperor;
 I exalt your long spear that casts a lengthy shadow,
 that freezes those who are close and overshadows those far off;
 I honor your strong hand which carries the spear
 50 with such a great and glorious banner.¹²
 Thus does my little reed pen inscribe
 your powerful forearm, which is terrible to the enemy.
 By riding, you inspired in me delight and admiration;
 I repay the delight to the best of my power:
 55 as you sweated, I sweated with you, without riding with you,
 as you rode I rode with you with my winged speech,
 not because I had achieved winged speech by my rhetoric
 – I am not so bold and ambitious over such matters –
 but because speech is very fast by nature:
 60 for this I am also taught by epic singing.
 So accept my jousting and riding with you
 with your cheerfulness and your goodness;
 but if you regard it as worthless, ruler of stars
 I will no longer ride with you with my galloping speech;
 65 for measuring it against your winged majesty
 I find my speech a foot-soldier against a Lydian chariot.¹³
 May God grant power to your majesty and length of time,¹⁴
 and may you see newborn children around your table
 surrounding this girl who is like a flourishing vine,
 70 descended from Caesars and kings, heroes of great achievements
 the solitary golden grape, daughter of the porphyrogenetos.

Commentary

1. See Significance and Text and Context, above.
2. In 333 BCE Alexander fell dangerously ill after swimming in the notoriously cold waters of the Kydnos.⁴
3. Euphrates: fast-flowing rivers are regularly adduced by Manganeios Prodromos as metaphors for generosity. This poem may well have coincided with celebratory largesse for the birth of Maria (see vv. 67–71).
4. Hymettos: mountain behind Athens, proverbially the source of excellent honey.
5. In Greek mythology Bellerophon killed the monstrous Chimaera⁵ assisted, in later versions, by his winged horse Pegasus. Manganeios Prodromos may allude here to the erotic liaisons for which Manuel was notorious.⁶
6. I.e. you have to know your opponents in order to defeat them; in this case, you do not conquer lust by ignoring it.
7. “Winged archer”: i.e. Eros. Images involving Eros were current in the mid twelfth-century in occasional poetry (especially *epithalamia*, wedding songs) and novels (especially *Hysmine and Hysmenias* and *Drosilla and Charikles*).
8. “Kelts”: Manganeios Prodromos’ code term for western troops, French or Norman; here they are commended for their horsemanship (v. 30) but condemned for cowardice (v. 33), in both cases, Manuel gains by the comparison.
9. “Lion cub”: a term frequently used by Manganeios Prodromos for Manuel who, as John II’s youngest son, had needed to establish his credentials as an imperial lion.
10. The summons to painters to record Manuel’s appearance has parallels in the text in manuscript Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 1409, ff. 277r–v, which is considered by Maguire and Jones, with some plausibility, to be an *ekphrasis* of a painting of a joust which took place in Antioch in 1159.⁷
11. Manuel’s interest in astrology was well known.⁸
12. The banner is the feature which associates the events of this poem most closely with Kinnamos’ account;⁹ but see Text and Context, above, for the dating issues involved.
13. “Lydian chariot”: a proverbial expression.¹⁰
14. These lines refer to the birth in March 1152 or 1153 of Manuel’s first child, Maria.¹¹ Maria is the flourishing vine and single golden grape; she is a descendant of the Caesars through her mother as well as the child of the *porphyrogennetos* Manuel.

4 Plutarch, *Alexander*, 19.

5 Homer, *Iliad* 6, 152–202.

6 Magdalino 1992: 201.

7 See Jones and Maguire 2002.

8 See Choniates, *History*, ed. van Dieten, 9.25, 154, 169, 220–21; Magdalino 2006: 109–32.

9 Kinnamos, *Deeds*, 125.

10 Cf. Sappho, fr. 16; Pindar, fr. 206, ed. Maehler.

11 Cf. Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems* no. 29, vv. 34, 36.

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Epigram on a Depiction of St. Mary of Egypt

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, “Επιγράμματα Ἰωάννου τοῦ Ἀποκαύκου,” *Ἀθηνᾶ* 15 (1903), 476 no. 15; repr. in I. Delimaris, *Πατέρες τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικοὶ συγγραφεῖς τῆς δυτικῆς Ἑλλάδος 1: Ἄπαντα Ἰωάννου Ἀποκαύκου* (Nafpaktos, 2000), 475–76; F. Dimitrakopoulos, “Τὰ ποιήματα τοῦ Ἰωάννου Ἀπόκαυκου,” *Ναυπακτικὰ* 10 (2001), 576

MS.:¹ St. Petersburg, RNB, Φ no. 906, Graecus 250 (= Granst. 454) (s. XIII), f. 81r

Other Translations: I. Delimaris, as above, 491–92 (Modern Greek)

Significance

The reference to the work of the painter in the second half of the epigram and the emphasis on the rendered immateriality makes this otherwise formulaic epigram exceptional and of interest for this volume. Poets often refer to the challenge of translating the immaterial into a saint’s likeness using colors. However, to my knowledge, this is the only instance in which this challenge is called a “tortuous thing” (τυραννικὸν πρᾶγμα).

The Author

See T. Tsampouras and F. Spingou, I.2.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

The epigram survives in Apokaukos’ poetic collection and so its original context is uncertain. It can only be inferred from the text that the epigram was attached to a depiction (probably an icon) of St. Mary of Egypt and a reliquary holding her relics.²

The epigram can be divided into two parts. The first part concerns the relic and the myrrh springing forth from it – a property often attributed to holy relics.³ In the second part of the epigram, Apokaukos refers to the depiction and praises the painter for

¹ Consulted.

² On its function as a verse inscription see vv. 1 (reference to a specific time), 18–20 (reference to a specific object).

³ Vv. 1–12.

rendering the immaterial.⁴ At this point, the poem alludes to the tradition of the extreme asceticism of St. Mary of Egypt.

Regarding the style of the poem, the first part contains abundant allusions to Christian and Classical authors, while both parts are characterized by tortuous and obscure connections and metaphors. Moreover, enjambments, that are usually avoided in Byzantine poetry, appear frequently in the text (see vv. 7–8). The frequency of these enjambments, as well as the numerous repetitions, would have been considered “bad poetry” by Apokaukos’ contemporary readers. This is not one of Apokaukos’ best poems, as it contains features of an unfinished draft rather than of a completed poem. Lampropoulos has proposed that all of Apokaukos’ poems are drafts.⁵

⁴ Vv. 13–15.

⁵ Lampropoulos, *Απόκαυκος*, 108.

Text

Εἰς τὴν ὁσίαν Μαρίαν τὴν Αἴγυπτίαν

- Νῦν ἐκ σκότους φῶς, ἐκ δὲ σαπρίας μύρον·
 ὡς ἐκ νεφῶν ἥλιος, ὡς μετὰ σκότος
 ἢ λευκόπωλος φέγγος Ἡμέρα φλέγει.
 Αἴγυπτος ἀμαρτία, σαπρία, σκότος,
 5 μύρον δὲ καὶ φῶς ἢ δραμοῦσα πρὸς μύρον,
 ὁσμὴν φέρον τὴν κοσμικὴν εὐωδίαν
 καὶ πρὸς <τὸ> φῶς τὸ πάντα φωτίζειν θέλον,
 ὅσ' ἔρχεται πρὸς κόσμον ἢ φεύγειν σκότος.
 ἐντεῦθεν αὐτὴ καὶ μυρίπνοος πλέον
 10 εὐωδία φανεῖσα τοῦ Χριστοῦ μόνου
 καὶ φωτὸς ἐγγὺς τοῦ προσώπου Κυρίου,
 καὶ δεύτερον φῶς οὐ βραχὺ παρ' ἀγγέλους·
 ἀσαρκίαν γὰρ ἔσχε τὴν τῶν ἀγγέλων.
 καὶ θαῦμα, πῶς τὸ βρῖθος εἰς σκιάν τρέπει·
 15 καὶ πάχος ἐστὶ καὶ σκιά πάλιν μένει,
 πῶς σωματοῦται τῆς σκιᾶς ἢ λεπτότης,
 εἰς νεῦρα καὶ σύμπηξιν ὀργανουμένη.
 λεπτύνεται δὲ τοῦ βρῖθους ἢ παχύτης,
 ὡς μηδὲν αὐτῆς καὶ σκιᾶς ἔχει πλέον.
 20 τυραννικὸν πέφυκε πρᾶγμα ζωγράφος
 τῶν πνευμάτων τὸ κοῦφον εἰς βρῖθος φέρων
 καὶ φιλονεικῶν τὴν αὐλίαν γράφειν.
 ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν γράφουσι τὴν Αἴγυπτίαν
 ὡς ἀγγέλων ἢ φύσις ὦφθη πολλάκις·
 25 οὐ λείπεται γὰρ κἂν βραχὺ πρὸς ἀγγέλους.

TranslationOn the Holy Mary of Egypt²

On this occasion, light comes out of darkness and myrrh out of corruption;³
 as the sun [appears] out of the clouds, thus, after the darkness,
 Day kindles radiance with her white horses.⁴
 Egypt is sin, corruption, darkness,
 5 [but] the one who rushes to the myrrh is [herself] myrrh, light,
 and fragrance, that carries the universal sweet savior⁵
 and longs for the light⁶ that illuminates everything
 that approaches the world⁷ or escapes darkness.⁸
 Thence she appears even more sweetly scented
 10 than Christ himself,⁹
 and with a light close to the face of the Lord;
 and a second light not smaller than that of the angels
 for she possessed the incarnate nature of the angels.
 What a miracle! How does she transform mass into shadow?¹⁰
 15 And how is she a materiality, although she remains in shadows?
 How do the subtlest shadows become flesh,
 having sinews and a full complexion?
 For the thickness of the mass lessens,
 as it has more of the properties of shadows.
 20 The painter accomplishes a tortuous thing
 by giving weight to the insubstantiality of the spirits
 and by contesting immateriality in depicting [the saint].
 It seems to me that the angelic nature
 is mostly seen through the painting of the Egyptian [i.e. St. Mary of Egypt];
 25 for she lacks nothing of the angels.

Commentary

1. <τὸ> add. Kominis 1966: 59.
 2. On St. Mary of Egypt and her *vita* see Kouli 1996: 65–93.
 3. Cf. Job 25.6.
 4. Aeschylus, *Persai*, 386; Sophocles, *Ajax*, 673.
 5. I.e. Jesus Christ.
 6. Jn. 1:9.
 7. Jn. 3:19; cf. Origenes, *Fragmenta*, fr. 42, 1.6.
 8. 2Cor. 2:15.
 9. Gregory of Nazianzos, *Carmina Moralia*, no. 6.1, col. 644.
 10. The word σκιά (mean., shadow/image/silhouette) is repeated three times in the following verses; here, Apokaukos plays with an immateriality that that is inherent in the word.
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I.8.20 Philagathos of Cerami (c.1080–after 1155)

On the Raising of the Son of the Widow of Nain

MIRCEA DULUŞ

Ed.: G. Rossi-Taibbi, *Filagato da Cerami, Omelie per i vangeli domenicali e le feste di tutto l'anno: Omelie per le feste fisse* (Palermo, 1969), *Homily* 6, 39–43

MSS.:¹ Madrid, Biblioteca nacional de España, Graecus 4554 (s. XII), ff. 90rb–93ra
Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 2009 (s. XIII), ff. 86v–90v²

Other Translations: None

Significance

The text reveals a profound interest in pathos and human feelings and offers a literary example for interpreting the depiction of emotions in Byzantine art. The sermon includes striking depictions of sorrow and mourning while unveiling a rare audience response to the preacher's ekphrastic report.

The Author

See M. Duluş, I.3.7 in this volume.

Text and Context

Philagathos' sermon "On the Raising of the Son of the Widow of Nain" includes a highly rhetorical lament which pairs a wide range of emotions from excessive displays of sorrow to astonishment and great happiness. From the perspective of Byzantine art, this stress on emotions in religious literature dovetails with the new interest in human feelings documented for Late Komnenian art.³ In an important contribution Henry Maguire showed that "the Byzantine traditions of homilies and church poetry can illuminate the depiction of sentiment in art."⁴ Furthermore, he argued that an emphasis on emotions, and especially on sorrow, prefigured the depiction of violent gestures of mourning for New Testament scenes in the paintings of the thirteenth century.⁵ In this sense, Philagathos'

1 Not consulted.

2 For a description of these manuscripts see Rossi-Taibbi 1965: 51–59.

3 Hadermann-Misguich 1965: 429–48.

4 Maguire 1977: 173.

5 Maguire 1977: 172–73.

sermon “On the Widow’s Son” may serve as a witness for the depiction of emotions in twelfth-century art.

Philagathos preached the homily at the Monastery of Christ Savior (San Salvatore) in Messina shortly after the death of the first cantor (*protopsaltes*).⁶ Stefano Caruso explained that, in all likelihood, the first cantor recalled in this sermon is the monk Cyprian who is also mentioned in a document from 1141. Therefore, this homily was delivered shortly after that year.⁷ Moreover, Cyprian was probably one of the twelve monks from Rossano invited by King Roger II shortly before 1130 to inhabit the new monastery of Messina.⁸ Thus, he must have been an old acquaintance of Philagathos, who was himself a monk from the monastery of the Theotokos Hodegetria in Rossano.

The sermon opens with the preacher’s confession of being seized by grief and not being able to withhold his tears as he beholds the empty seat of the first cantor.⁹ The sermon closely adheres to the literary conventions observed in laments or monodies, first by voicing questions of lamentation evoking the departed, later by stating the antithesis between marriage and funeral rites or the contrast between the blissful past and the thwarted hopes for the future. But what distinguishes Philagathos’ sermon is the vivid imagery, the language of emotions and the cinematic perspective on the events leading to the resurrection of the Widow’s son. For instance, the imagery of the weeping mother drenched with blood and tears watching her child slowly expiring; the beauty of the dying son stretched upon the bier like a cypress tree uprooted by the winds; or the dramatic comparison, derived from Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica*, between the wretched mother and the image of a bird watching as a serpent devours her young, too afraid to approach, but unable to desert them. These examples make Philagathos’ account particularly evocative.

Philagathos assumes an *ekphrastic* perspective as if he was participating in the events when stating, “at least then, to me the commemoration aroused such a description, as it seemed to be present in that place, and behold the tragic events.” By this *topos*, the preacher evokes the definition of *ekphrasis* as a “speech placing the thing shown before the eyes,” which aims at turning the speaker and the audience into spectators of the events.¹⁰ As Ruth Webb explained, *ekphrasis* “is a form of language which achieves the linguistically impossible, appealing to the sense of sight, and bringing the referent into the presence of the audience.”¹¹ Indeed, by making the audience feel present at the events described *ekphrasis* elicits an emotional response. In this sense, Philagathos’ evocation was truly effective, for he writes: “But now since I behold your eyes imbued with tears out of compassion and since the intensity of my voice faded out in the remembrance [of the

6 This is indicated in the Italo-Greek branch of the manuscript (Ἐλέχθη ἐν τῇ μεγάλῃ μονῇ τοῦ Σωτήρος Ἀκρωτηρίου ἀποθανόντος τοῦ πρωτοψάλτου – “Pronounced at the Great Monastery of the Savior of the Promontory <in Messina> after the death of the protopsalt”); see Rossi-Taibbi 1969: lv.

7 Caruso 1978: 209.

8 Miller 2000: 637.

9 *Hom.* 6.1, ed. Rossi-Taibbi, 37.

10 On *ekphrasis* see I. Nilsson, Introduction, II.2 in this volume.

11 Webb 2009: 52.

events] ...” This reference to the audience’s weeping represents a rare instance of interaction between preacher and audience in Byzantine homiletics after the sixth century, as Theodora Antonopoulou has already suggested.¹²

Philagathos achieves a powerfully persuasive effect through a consummate use of the literary tradition. He borrows extensively from Gregory of Nyssa’s *On the Making of Man*, promptly acknowledging his debt, “for I would be maddened if I change the words of Nyssa in this place,” Philagathos said in reference to Nyssa’s account of the widow’s lament. Besides, he adorns the text with evocative imagery drawn from Basil of Caesarea’s *Homily on Psalm 44*, Gregory of Nyssa’s *Homilies on the Beatitudes* and *The Life of Saint Macrina*, Gregory of Nazianzos’ *In praise of the Maccabees (Oration 15)*, the *Life and Miracles of St. Nicholas of Myra*, Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica*, Achilles Tatius’ *Leukippe and Kleitophon* and perhaps Pseudo-Nilus of Ancyra’s *Narrations*.

¹² Antonopoulou 1997: 108.

Text

[7.] Ἐράσμιος ἦν καὶ ποθοῦμενος πᾶσιν ὁ παῖς. αἱ παρθένοι ἐπηύχοντο τοιούτων νυμφίων γενέσθαι ὁμόζυγες, αἱ ὑπὸ ζυγὸν τοιούτους ἔχειν υἱούς. οἱ γέροντες τῷ νεανίᾳ προσεῖχον, ὡς οἰκείῳ παιδί. ἡ δὲ χήρα μήτηρ ἔχαιρε θαμινὰ περιπλεκομένη τῷ υἱῷ καὶ φιλοῦσα τὸ ἐπὶ τοῦ χεῖλους ἄνθος καὶ τῆς παρειᾶς τὸ ἐρύθημα, καὶ τοὺς βοστρύχους ποτὲ μὲν ἀναπλέκουσα, ποτὲ δὲ ἀνεῖσα ταῖς αὖραις περισοβεῖν. τάχα που ἡ ἀθλία καὶ νύμφην ἀγαγεῖν ἐφαντάζετο τῷ καλῷ νεανίᾳ καὶ τὰς παρθένους περιεσκόπει ἐκλεγομένη τὴν κρεῖττονα, καὶ τὸν στέφανον ὠνειροπόλει καὶ τὴν πασταδά καὶ τὸν ὑμέναιον. ἦπου καὶ ὄρκος ἦν αὐτῇ ἐν τοῖς τῶν λόγων ἀμφιβάλοις ὁ παῖς· "οὕτως ὀναίμην τοῦ μονογενοῦς μου υἱοῦ, οὕτω τὸν ἐκείνου φιλήσασαι στέφανον, οὕτω παίδων ἐκείνου γενοίμην τροφός, οὕτω ταῖς τοῦ υἱοῦ χερσὶν ἠδέεω ἐναποψύξασαι." [8.] ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν μήτηρ οὕτως ἀνέπνει μονονουχὶ τὸν παῖδα, τὸ μόνον αὐτῇ γλυκὺ παραμύθιον· ὁ δὲ φθόνος ῥαγδαῖος ἐπεισπεσὼν ἐπικόπτει τὰς χρηστοτέρας ἐλπίδας, ἀναρπάσας αὐτὸν τῆς ζωῆς ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ νεότητι βαρὺ δέ τι καὶ τραγικὸν πάθος τῇ μητρὶ συνηέχθη. τίνα γὰρ ψυχὴν ἐσχηκένα νομίζετε τὴν δειλαίαν ἐκείνην μητέρα, εἰ τέως εἶχε ψυχὴν, ὀρώσαν ψυχορραγοῦντα τὸν φίλτατον καὶ τὰ ἔσχατα πνέοντα καὶ μόλις ἐπισκῆπτοντα τῇ μητρὶ τὰ τελευταῖα καὶ συντακτήρια; πῶς παραστήσω τῷ λόγῳ, ὅπως ὁ μὲν νέος τῷ σφοδρῷ πυρετῷ κατὰ βραχὺ ἐμαραίνεται, ἡ δὲ μήτηρ παρίστατο περιδεὴς καὶ ὑπότρομος, ἀπηνθρακωμένη τὰ σπλάγχνα, πεφρυγμένη τὰ χεῖλη, κεκαρμένη τὴν κόμην, γυμνὴ τὰ στέρνα, ἀπαρακάλυπτος τὴν κεφαλὴν, ἐλπίδι καὶ φόβῳ μεριζομένη, ἐνατενίζουσα τῷ παιδί ἀσκαρδαμύκτω καὶ κεληνότῳ βλέμματι, καὶ ὡσπερ αὐτῷ συνεκπνέουσα, ἕως κατὰ βραχὺ, ὑπορρεούσης αὐτῷ τῆς τοῦ σώματος ἕξεως καὶ τῶν φυσικῶν τόνων ἐλαττωμένων καὶ δαπανωμένου τοῦ πνεύματος, ὁ παῖς ἐναπέψυξε. πῶς εἶδε; πῶς ὑπέμεινε; πῶς οὐ συναπῆλθε τῷ τελευτήσαντι; ἐμὲ γοῦν τοσοῦτον ἀνεπτέρωσεν ἡ ἀνάμνησις, ὡς δοκεῖν παρεῖναι τῷ τόπῳ καὶ ὄραν τὰ τοῦ δράματος.

[9.] ἡ μὲν γὰρ πόλις Ναῖν πᾶσα συνέρρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἐκκομιδῇ τοῦ νεκροῦ, καὶ θροῦς ἐγεγόνει πολὺς καὶ θρήνος ἦν συμμιγής, ἀνδρῶν οἰμωγὴ, γυναικῶν ὀλολυγὴ, παρθένων κωκυτός, παίδων κλαυθμυρισμός, πάντα δακρῶν ἀνάμεστα. ὁ δὲ νέος ἔκειτο ἐκταθεὶς ἐπὶ τοῦ σκίμπος ὑπίτιος, οἷα πεύκη τις ὑψίκομος ἢ κυπάρισσος, ἦν ἀνέμων διέσεισε προσβολὴ καὶ αὐταῖς ρίζαις ἐξήπλωσεν, ἔλεινὸν θέαμα καὶ δακρῶν ὑπόθεσις, ἄρτι μὲν τὸν τῆς παρειᾶς ῥόδον μεταβαλὼν εἰς ὠχρότητα, δεικνὺς δὲ καὶ οὕτω τοῦ κάλλους τὰ λείψανα. ἡ δὲ ἀθλία μήτηρ, οἷς ἐποίει καὶ οἷς ἐφθέγγετο, πλέον τῶν εἰς αὐτὴν βλεπόντων ἐπεσπᾶτο τὰ δάκρυα, ὡσπερ τις ὄρνις πορθομένης ὀρώσα τοὺς νεοσσούς, ὄφρα προσερπύσαντος, περιποτᾶται τὴν καλιὰ περιτρύζουσα καὶ ἀμύνειν οὐκ ἔχουσα. καὶ τάχα τὰ τοῦ Μιχαίου ἐν αὐτῇ ἐπεπλήρωτο· "κόμψεται καὶ θρηνησεί, περιπατήσεται ἀνυπόδητος καὶ γυμνή· ποιήσεται κοπετόν ὡς δρακόντων, καὶ πένθος ὡς θυγατέρων Σειρήνων." [10.] γενομένη γὰρ ὑπὸ τοῦ πάθους παράφορος καὶ οἷον ἐκβακχευθεῖσα τῷ παρ' ἐλπίδας κακῷ, περιενόστει τὰς ἀγυιάς, κατέξαινε τὰς πολιὰς, ἐσπάρασσε τὰς παρειὰς, λίθοις παίουσα καὶ στέρνα καὶ κεφαλὴν, μαστοὺς ὑπεδείκνυ τοὺς θρέψαντας. καὶ πρὸς τὸ πλῆθος ἔλεινῶς ὑποστρέφουσα· "ἦπου, φησὶν, τοὺς τοῦ υἱοῦ μου γάμους ἰδεῖν, ὧ παρόντες, συνεληλύθατε καὶ χορεύσοντες ἤκατε τὸν ὑμέναιον, καὶ τῆς χαρᾶς μοι κοινωνῆσαι προεθυμήθητε; χάρις μὲν τῆς προθυμίας ὑμῖν· ἀλλ' ὁ νυμφίος καθεῦδει

Translation

[7.] The child was lovely and beloved by everybody. The maidens prayed to be brides for such a spouse, the married to have such sons. The elderly clung to the youth, as to their own child. And the widow mother rejoiced embracing her son again and again, and kissed the *bloom of his lips and the redness of his cheeks*, and at one time twisted *the locks of his hair*, at another *slipped at blowing his curls in the wind*.¹ Perhaps the miserable mother imagined herself leading a bride towards the beautiful youth and observed the maidens so as to select the most excellent, and she dreamt of the crown and the bridal chamber and the nuptial song.² And yet more, the child was for her an oath she would take in the uncertain proceedings of the law: “So much I would have benefited from my only child, so much I would have kissed his crown of glory, so much I would have tendered his young, so joyfully I would have yielded up my life in the arms of my son.” [8.] For the mother lived only for her child, her one sweet consolation. *But envy cut off these bright hopes by snatching away the poor lad from life in his very youth*.³ *A grievous and tragic affliction fell on the mother*.⁴ What soul do you think that miserable mother carried, if indeed she has a soul till now, watching her beloved departing⁵ and *breathing his last*, and only just giving his mother his last instructions and farewell? How can I put into words, that as the youth withered away in a short time because of a violent fever, the mother stood fearfully by, quivering, burning up her entrails, withering her lips, tearing her hair, baring her chest, unveiling her head, *divided between hope and fear, gazing steadfastly at the not blinking child, with eyes open wide*,⁶ and almost breathing out her life along with him, *while the condition of his body gradually decayed and the strength of his body diminished*,⁷ and when the soul was spent, the child expired? How can one look upon this? How might one bear it? How would one not depart from this life together with the deceased? The recollection therefore provoked me to this [discourse], as it seemed to be in that place and to behold the tragic events.

[9.] For the entire city of Nain came together for the burial of the deceased, and a great noise arose and *the lament was confused, a wailing of men, a shrieking of women, a screeching of maidens*, the crying of children, *all was full of tears*.⁸ The youth lay stretched out on his back upon the bier, like a towering pine or a cypress tree, which the onslaught of winds has violently shaken and torn out by its roots, a pitiable spectacle and occasion for tears, even though the rose of his cheek has just now become pale, it still reveals the remnants of a great beauty.⁹ The wretched mother, by the things she did and by the words she uttered, drew out with greater force the tears of those gazing at her, *just as a bird watching her young being devoured, when a snake creeps in to attack, she flutters about her nest chirping shrilly all over and yet without being able to defend them*.¹⁰ And perhaps the words of Micah are being fulfilled in her: “Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls.”¹¹ [10.] For she became distraught because of her grief and filled with a frenzy by the evil opposing her hopes, she went around the streets, tore her grey hair, rent her cheeks, [and] smiting her chest and head with stones she revealed the breasts with which she had nursed.¹² And turning pitifully to the crowd: “Have you perhaps,” she said, “gathered, friends here present, to see

τόν γάμον ἀπαναινόμενος.” [11.] ταῦτ’ ἔλεγε καί τοις ὄνουσι τὰς παρεϊάς περιδρῦφουσα αἰμάτων ὁμοῦ καί δακρύων ἀπέσταζε πίδακας, καί περιστείχουσα τοῦ κειμένου τὸν κράβαττον ὡς ζῶντι τῷ νεκρῷ διελέγετο· “τίνα ταύτην, υἱέ μου, τίνα ταύτην βαδίζεις ὁδὸν τὴν μακράν τε καί ἀνεπίστροφον; τίς ἢ τοσαύτη ταχύτης περὶ τὴν ἀνάλυσιν; ἔλάνθανον ἄρα φανταζομένη σοι, τέκνον, οὐ θάλαμον, ἀλλὰ θάνατον, καί λαμπάδα ὑφάσαι οὐ γαμήλιον, οἴμοι, ἀλλ’ ἐπιτάφιον. μάτην ὠνειροπόλουν στεφάνους καί νύμφην καί παιδίον ὡς τάχος ἰδεῖν· ἡ δὲ γενέσθαι μάμμη καί πενθερὰ προσδοκήσασα, οὐδὲ μήτηρ κατονομάζομαι. οἴμοι, οἴμοι, ὅτι τὸν σὸν θάνατον εἶδον ἐγώ, ἥτις ὤφειλον ἐν ταῖς σαῖς ἐναποψύξαι χερσὶ καί ταῖς σαῖς ἐπικηδεῖαις τιμηθῆναι προόδοις. ὡς μακάριαι μητέρες, ὅσαις τελευτώσαις περιστάνται παῖδες. ἵνα τί μέχρι ταύτης ἐτηρήθην τῆς θέας; πότε μοι ἐπανήξεις, ὦ σπλάγχχνον ἐμόν; πότε σε πάλιν ἐπόψομαι;.” ταῦτα λεγούσης, πᾶσα μήτηρ ἐθρήνει, καί οἱ πατέρες ὠδύροντο.

[12.] Ὡς δὲ τῆς πύλης τῆς πόλεως ἔξω ἐγένοντο, τοῦ πλήθους ἐφεπομένου τῇ ἐκφορᾷ, μακρόθεν ἰδοῦσα τοὺς τὸν τάφον ὀρύττοντας, ἔμμανῆς ἐπὶ τὸν κράβαττον ἵεται· καὶ περιχυθεῖσα τῷ πτώματι καὶ μέλεσι μέλη τοῖς τοῦ παιδὸς τὰ ἑαυτῆς συναρμόσασα, ἀπρίξ εἶχετο καὶ γοεροῖς κατησπάζετο θρήνοις· “τέκνον, λέγουσα, τοιοῦτός σοι θάλαμος ἐτοιμάζεται; τοιαύτη σοι παστὰς καλλωπίζεται; ἔγρευο, φίλτατε, καὶ γηραιᾷ μητρὶ θρηνοῦση ἐπάκουσον. ἀποτίναξον τὸν βαρὺν τοῦτον ὕπνον τὸν ἄωρος χυθέντα σοι· οἴκτειρον μητρὸς πολὺν καὶ σπλάγχχνα φρυγόμενα. οἴμοι, σιωπᾶς καὶ τὸ γλυκὺ στόμα κατέσχε σιγὴ καὶ ζόφος περικέχεται ταῖς λαμπάσι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν. καὶ σὺ μὲν ὑπὸ λίθον οἰκήσεις τραχὺν καὶ σκότος βαθύ, ἐγὼ δὲ βλέπω τὸν ἥλιον; οὐ μὲν οὖν, οὐκ ἔστιν εἰκός. πρὸς τῷ σῷ τάφῳ πῆξομαι τὴν καλύβην, καὶ τάχα μοι φανήσῃ καὶ λαλοῦντος ἀκούσομαι, μᾶλλον δὲ συναπαφήσομαί σοι, ποθούμενε, καὶ τοῖς σοῖς νεαροῖς ὁστέοις σάρκες γηραιαὶ συντακήσονται.” οὕτως ἐπετραγῶδει, μὴ ἐπισπεῦσαι συγχωροῦσα τοῦ νεκροῦ τὴν κηδεῖαν, ἀλλ’ ἐμφορεῖσθαι τοῦ πάθους ζητοῦσα, ἐπὶ πλεῖστον αὐτῷ τοὺς ὀδύρμους παρατείνουσα.

[13.] Ἄλλ’ ἐπεὶπερ ὀρῶ τοὺς ὕμῶν ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐκ συμπαθείας διανοίας τεγγομένους τοῖς δάκρυσι, κάμοι δὲ τῇ μνήμῃ τῆς φωνῆς ὁ τόνος ἐκκόπτεται, φέρε τὰ δάκρυα τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀπομάξαντες ἐπὶ τὸ τῆς ἱστορίας μετέλθωμεν χαριέστατον. ἡ μὲν οὖν τοῦ νέου ψυχὴ τὸν τοῦ ἄδου χῶρον διήρχετο, τὸν σκοτεινὸν καὶ ἀμειδίη καὶ ἀηδίας ἀνάπλεων, καὶ γῆν περιεπόλει, “ἦς οἱ μοχλοὶ μάτοχοι αἰώνιοι,” ὡς εἶπε τῶν προφητῶν ὁ φυγὰς. ἴετο δὲ ὁ Σωτὴρ ἐκ τῆς Καπερναοῦμ, ἄρτι τὸν τοῦ ἑκατοντάρχου παῖδα τεθεραπευκῶς ἐν δυσμαῖς τοῦ βίου γενόμενον· ἴετο δὲ πεζῆ βαδίζων, ὡς ἔθος αὐτῷ, καὶ βάδην τὴν ὁδοιπορίαν ποιούμενος, ἅμα μὲν παιδεύων ἡμᾶς μὴ ἐνυβρίζειν τὸ σεμνὸν τῆς καταστάσεως ἀτάκτῳ βαδίσματι, ἅμα δὲ καὶ θαρρῶν ὡς, εἰ καὶ τάφῳ κατακρύψαιεν τὸν νεκρὸν, ἀναστήσει τοῦτον ὡσπερ τὸν Λάζαρον. καὶ ἰδὼν τὴν χήραν οὕτως ἡμίγυμνον, αἵματι φυρωμένην καὶ δάκρυσιν, εὐσπλαγχνίσθη ὁ φύσει φιλόανθρωπος ἐκ τῆς ἐνούσης αὐτῷ περὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἀγαθότητος, καὶ φωνὴν ἀφήσει τῇ γυναικὶ ὄντως θεῖας χάριτος ἐμπλεων· “μὴ κλαῖε.” ὦ θεῖα φωνὴ τοσοῦτον ἄχθος λύπης κουφίσασα. εἰ γὰρ τις ἕτερος μὴ κλαίειν αὐτῇ ἐπετέλλετο, ἄρα οὐκ ἂν ἀπέπτυσε τὴν νουθέτησιν καὶ ὡς ἐχθρὸν τὸν νουθετοῦντα παρηγκωνίσαστο; ἀκμάζουσα γὰρ λύπη παραμυθητικῶν λόγων ἔστιν ἀνεπίδεκτος, ὡσπερ τὰ τῶν ῥευματικῶν νοσημάτων κακοηθέστερα ἐπιξαινέται μᾶλλον

the marriage of my son, and to dance in celebration at his wedding, and to eagerly impart your joy to me? I am grateful for your ready kindness. But the bridegroom lies asleep refusing the wedding.” [11.] When she said these things and tore her cheeks with her nails, she unleashed fountains of tears and blood together, and walked around the bier of the one lying [there], she spoke with the deceased as if he were living. “What is this, my child, what is this long road, with no returning, that you walk? What is [for you] such swiftness for departing? For I was unaware that I was not imagining for you, my child, a bridal chamber, but death, and not to be lighting the wedding lantern, alas, but the one at your tomb.¹³ In vain I have been dreaming to see both the bridal and then immediately the child’s crowns; thinking that I might become a grandmother and a mother-in-law, [but] I am not named a mother [any longer]. Oh, woe is me! For I saw you dying, for I ought to have given up my life in your arms, and be honored by you in preceding funeral rites. How happy [are those] mothers, whose children attend their deaths. To what end have I observed this spectacle? When will you return to me, O my son? When will I look upon you again?” When she said these things, every mother cried, and the fathers lamented.

[12.] When they proceeded outside the gates of the city, the multitude flocked to the burial, [and] when she saw from afar those digging the grave, *she ran raving towards the bier; and she embraced the corpse and bound her own limbs to the limbs of the child, and embraced him closely, and caressed him with mournful lamentations.*¹⁴ “O my child,” she said, “what kind of wedding is prepared for you? How is this bridal chamber adorned for you? Awake, my darling, and listen to your old mother lamenting. Shake off this heavy sleep, which rushed upon you in such an untimely manner! Have pity on your mother’s hoary age and her parched innards. *Alas! You are silent and that sweet mouth withheld by silence and darkness* is spread upon the lamps of your eyes.¹⁵ You dwell beneath a rough stone and deep darkness, and shall I see the sun? But no, this is not just. *On your grave I shall fix a hut, and perhaps you would come forth to me, and I shall hear you talking,*¹⁶ or rather I shall bury myself with you, my darling, and aged flesh will be consumed along with your youthful bones.” In this manner she bitterly lamented, *not hastening to accede to the funeral of the deceased, but seeking to have her fill of suffering, the wailing was stretched out by her to the greatest extent.*¹⁷

[13.] But now since I behold your eyes imbued with tears out of compassion and since the intensity of my voice faded out in the remembrance [of the events], after having banished away the eyes’ tears let us move towards the most graceful meaning of the story. Therefore, the soul of this youth arrived at the province of death, to that darkness and gloom, full of abhorrence; [for] he traversed the earth, “whose bars are the everlasting barriers,”¹⁸ as the fugitive among the prophets said. But the Savior hastened from Capernaum, having just cured the centurion’s boy, fallen in the evening of life; He hastened on foot, as was His habit, making the journey with measured step, at once teaching us not to disparage the seriousness of the [soul’s] condition by a disorderly walk, yet at the same time inspiring confidence that even if the dead were shut in the grave, He will raise him, as with Lazarus.

πρὶν πεπανθῆναι θεραπευόμενα. [14.] εἶπε γὰρ ἴσως δριμύ τι ἀπιδοῦσα καὶ βλοσυρόν·
 “ὦ τῆς ἀκαιρίας ἀνθρωπε, ὄρᾳς οἶον κάλλος ὁ θάνατος πρὸ ὥρας ἐμάρανε καὶ ὅτι ἄπειμι
 τῇ γῆ κατακρύψουσα τὸ ἐμὸν φῶς, τῆς ζωῆς μου τὴν ἄγκυραν. καὶ ὡς ἐπὶ μετρίῳ τινὶ
 πάθει φιλοσοφεῖν ἐπιτάττεις καὶ *Μὴ κλαῖε λαλεῖς*· ὡς ἔοικεν, “*ἔξ ἀδάμαντος ἢ σιδήρου τὰ
 σπλάγχνα μεχάλλευσαι*.” [15.] ἀλλ’ οὐδὲν τοιοῦτον ἐφθέγγατο ἡ γυνὴ· ὁμοῦ δὲ ἤκουσε καὶ
 σεσίγηκε. διατί; ὅτι τοι σὺν τῷ δεσποτικῷ λόγῳ καὶ γλυκεῖά τις παραψυχὴ ἐνέσταξεν
 ἐν τῇ ταύτης ψυχῇ, πρὸς ἀγαθὴν ἐλπίδα τὸν νοῦν διεγείρουσα. ἔσθη οὖν πρὸς τὸ μέλλον
 μετέωρος. ἀλλὰ τί μὴ θᾶπτον ἐπάγω τὸ γλυκὺ τοῦ διηγήματος καὶ παράδοξον;

[16.] Ἐρχεται τοίνυν ὁ τῆς ζωῆς χορηγός, ἄπτεται τοῦ κειμένου θεῖα χεὶρ. καὶ οἱ μὲν
 βαστάζοντες ἔστησαν (ῥῶντο γὰρ ἴσως ἀσπάσασθαι αὐτὸν τὸν νεκρόν), ὁ δὲ δεσποτικῇ
 φωνῇ καλεῖ τοῦτον εἰπών· “*νεανία, σοὶ λέγω, ἐγέρθητι*.” καὶ αὐτίκα, ὦ τοῦ θαύματος, ὁ
 μὲν ἄδης ἐλέλυτο, ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ ἐκ τῶν νεκάδων ἀνέθορε καὶ ὁ νεκρὸς ἀνεκάθισε καὶ τοῦ
 κραβάττου ἀφήλατο, καὶ γίνεται πάντα καινὰ καὶ παράδοξα. ὁ χαρωνίας τάφος ἔμεινε
 κενοτάφιον· οἱ ὀρύττοντες, τὸ πτύον καὶ τὴν σκαπάνην ρίψαντες, πρὸς τὸ παράδοξον
 ἔτρεχον, τὰ δάκρυα εἰς χαρὰν καὶ θαῦμα μετήγετο· τοὺς συνελθόντας ἦρει δέος καὶ
 ἔκπληξις, καὶ τινες, οἶμαι, τῶν ἀπλουστέρων τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἀπέματτον, ὡς ἐν ὀνείρω
 ταῦτα βλέπειν οἴομενοι. ἡ δὲ μακαρία μήτηρ ἐκείνη, καὶ τοῖς ποσὶ τοῦ Δεσπότητος
 καλινδουμένη καὶ θατέρᾳ χεὶρὶ τῷ παιδί περιπλεκομένη, ἠπίσται κατέχουσα καὶ διὰ
 πάντων μετήμειπτο τὸ πένθος εἰς ἀγαλλίασιν. καὶ ἵνα συνέλω τὸ πᾶν, εἶδεν ὁ ἥλιος τότε
 τὸ Δαβιτικὸν ἐκεῖνο πληρούμενον· “*μητέρα ἐπὶ τέκνω εὐφραينوμένην*” καὶ τὸν τῆς ζωῆς
 δοτῆρα καὶ Θεὸν ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν δοξαζόμενον. ἡ μὲν οὖν παράδοξος αὕτη θαυματουργία
 ὧδέ πη κατέληξε, πλεῖστα τὰς ἡμετέρας ψυχὰς ὠφελήσασα, καὶ μᾶλλον ὅσοι καταφυγόντες
 συμπαθείας ἐστάξατε δάκρυον, ὅπερ καθαρτικὸν εἶναι τῶν ψυχικῶν ρύπων πιστεύομεν.

And seeing the widow in this manner half naked, drenched by blood and tears, He was shaken,¹⁹ being by nature compassionate as He unites [human nature] in Him out of His goodness towards man, and He addressed the woman with a voice full of divine grace: “Do not weep.”²⁰ O divine voice, that you relieve such a huge burden of grief! For if another had ordained her not to cry, would she have not spurned the admonition and cast off the admonisher as if an enemy? Truly, when grief is in full bloom it does not accept words of consolation, just as when tumors when scratched before they soften and suppurate break open afresh in a more virulent manner. [14.] Perhaps looking at Him, she might have said something stern and grim: “O senseless man, behold what beauty untimely death has withered and that I go to bury my light in the earth, the anchor of my life. And as for some moderate suffering you command me to remain indifferent and tell me, “Do not cry?” It seems *your hearth is forged from adamant or steel.*²¹ [15.] But the woman felt nothing of the kind. As soon as she heard, “Do not cry,” she fell silent. For what reason? Because with the word of God, He instilled a sweet consolation in this soul, lifting up her mind towards good hope. For she stood exalted regarding the future. But why do I delay to add what is the sweetness of the story and what admirable [to it]? [16.] So then, the Bestower of life comes, and grasps with a divine hand the one lying dead. And those who carried him stood still – thinking that perhaps He wishes to embrace the corpse – but [Christ] with commanding voice calls upon the dead: “Young man, I say to you, arise.”²² And forthwith, O what a miracle! For Hell has been broken, and the soul sprung from the realm of the dead, and the one who was dead sat up, and leapt down from the bier, and all things become new and wonderful. For the tomb of death remained deprived of death.²³ And the gravediggers, having thrown the shovel and the mattock down, run towards the miracle; and the miracle changed their tears into joy. Fear and consternation seized those gathered there, and some of them, I think among those who were simpler minded, wiped their eyes, as if believing that they beheld these things in a dream. Whereas that happy mother, wallowing at the feet of the Lord, and embracing the child with her other hand, *seeming as if she could yet scarcely believe that she was holding him in her arms,*²⁴ and because of this [her] sorrow was wholly changed into great happiness. Therefore, to summarize everything, at that time the sun saw that Davidic prophecy fulfilled, “a mother rejoicing over her child”²⁵ and glorified the Dispenser of life and our Lord Jesus. So, then, this astounding miracle ended in this way, procuring the greatest benefit to our souls, and much more for all those who, being pierced by compunction shed forth tears of affection, which we believe to be efficacious in cleansing the filth of our souls.

Commentary

1. Philagathos exploits traditional themes recommended in laments; Menander Rhetor prescribed the rhetor to address the appearance of the fallen young by asking: “What beauty he has lost – the bloom of his cheeks – the tongue now silent! The soft beard wilted! The locks of hair no longer to be gazed at! The glances of the eye, the eyeballs at rest! The tendrils of the eyelids, tendrils no more! All fallen in ruin!”¹³ Philagathos actually appropriates in this place the words of Gregory of Nyssa who was chastizing the folly of pride in his first homily on the Beatitudes: “You boast of your full bloom . . . because your curls blow about in the wind . . . Where is the redness of your cheek? Where is the bloom on your lips?”¹⁴
2. The invocation of marriage is a conspicuous *topos* in laments carrying profound underpinnings. Margaret Alexiou noted the similarities in the ritual of wedding and funeral prompted by the “popular belief [which] viewed death and marriage as fundamentally similar occasions, signaling the transition from one stage in the cycle of human existence to another.”¹⁵ The theme of marriage in lamentations was naturally prescribed in the rhetorical handbooks; in this sense Menander Rhetor writes: “If the deceased is young, you must base the lament on his age, on his nature (he was gifted, the hopes he raised were great) and on the calamity that has happened – e.g. the bridal chamber, the alcove, were soon to be made ready for him.”¹⁶
3. This is a *verbatim* citation from Gregory of Nyssa’s *Life of Saint Macrina*, where it refers to the sudden death of the young man betrothed to Macrina.¹⁷
4. Philagathos’ formulation is derived from Gregory’s *Life of Saint Macrina* and concerns another untimely death, this time of Naukratios, Macrina’s younger brother.¹⁸
5. The expression “watching her beloved departing” (ὄρωσαν ψυχορραγοῦντα τὸν φίλτατον ψυχορραγοῦντα – i.e. ψυχορραγέω – “let the soul break loose”) alludes to the popular belief of soul’s frightful struggle before departing with the host of angels attending by.¹⁹
6. For describing the mother’s conflicting emotions, Philagathos turns to the *Life and Miracles of St. Nicolas of Myra*; the *Life* presents a father astounded and “divided by fear and joy” at the miraculous apparition of his son, who has been taken in captivity;²⁰ yet, Philagathos’ characterization of the young child lying on the bier with “eyes open wide, not blinking” is meant to be particularly evocative, for in the funeral ritual the eyes and the mouth were immediately closed after death ensued;²¹ for this image, Philagathos appears to draw on Pseudo-Nilus of Ancyra’s *Narrations* (a Late Antique

13 Menander Rhetor, *On Epideictic Speeches*, II.16, ed. Russell and Wilson 1981: 204–07.

14 Gregory of Nyssa, *Homilies on the Beatitudes*, PG 44: 1204, 26–28, 40–51.

15 Alexiou 2002: 120.

16 Menander Rhetor, *On Epideictic Speeches*, II.16, ed. Russell and Wilson 1981: 202–03.

17 Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Saint Macrina*, 4.23–24, ed. P. Maraval.

18 Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Saint Macrina*, 9.5–7, ed. P. Maraval.

19 See for this belief Alexiou 2002: 4–5, 25–27.

20 *Life and Miracles of Nicholas of Myra*, 15.7–15, ed. G. Anrich.

21 Alexiou 2002: 5.

monastic tale of martyrdom), which presents a striking lexical and contextual parallelism with the homily; in Pseudo-Nilus' *Narrations* a mother is described lamenting for her dead boy while gazing "with eyes open wide, without blinking" – ἀσκαρδαμυκτῶν κεχηνότι τῷ βλέμματι.²²

7. For the image of the youth's decaying body Philagathos closely mirrors Basil of Caesarea's description of our perishable nature; the text is taken from Basil's interpretation of Ps. 44 (45).²³
8. Philagathos' description of the funeral convoy closely mirrors Achilles Tatius' *ekphrasis* of the storm and his vivid portrayal of the despair, which seized the passengers when the ship was tossed by the winds and almost engulfed by the waves.²⁴
9. The metaphor of the young lying dead like "a towering pine or a cypress tree" corresponds to an ancient simile for death as "uprooted tree," which was already established in the Homeric tradition. Thereafter, the cypress tree is a presence in the journey of the dead man in the Netherworld: "You will find to the left of Hades' halls a spring, / and standing by its side, a white cypress tree. / Do not go near this spring." This association of the dead with the cypress tree endured to this day.²⁵
10. For the picturesque metaphor of the bird watching her young devoured by a serpent Philagathos appeals to Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*; the homilist appropriates this simile from Kalasiris' elucidation of his wretchedness; roaming about the place of a battle Kalasiris bemoans Charikleia and Theagenes for their alleged death:²⁶ "Robbers have taken my children. I know who they are who do me wrong, but there is nothing I can do in retaliation (ἐπαμῦναι δὲ οὐκ ἔχων). So I hover around this place trying to assuage my sorrow with tears. I suppose I am rather like a bird whose nest is plundered and chicks devoured by a snake before her very eyes (ὥσπερ οἶμαί τις ὄρνις ὀφελως αὐτῇ τὴν καλιὰν πορθοῦντος ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς); she dare not go near but cannot bear to fly away; her heart is torn between desire and despair, and she twitters and flutters around the sack of her home (περιποτᾶται τὴν πολιορκίαν), but her pleas and the grief she feels for her young are wasted on cruel ears that nature has left unacquainted with compassion."²⁷
11. Mich. 1:8.
12. This emphasis on violent gestures of bereavement may attest the endurance of an age-old practice of mourning, for the violent tearing of the hair, lacerating of cheeks or smiting the chest and the head "were not just acts of uncontrolled grief, but part of the ritual indispensable to lamentation throughout antiquity";²⁸ in the twelfth century

22 Pseudo-Nilus of Ancyra, *Narrations Concerning the Slaughter of the Monks of Sinai*, 6.1.11–12, ed. F. Conca.

23 Basil of Caesarea, *Homilies on the Psalms*, Psalm 44, PG 29: 388.

24 Achilles Tatius, *Leukippe and Kleitophon*, 3.2.8.

25 For the text cited (dated to the fourth century BCE) and for the association of the dead with the uprooted tree see Alexiou 2002: 201–02.

26 Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, 2.22.4, ed. Colonna, 154–56.

27 Transl. Morgan 1989: 395.

28 Maguire 1977: 126–32; Alexiou 2002: 163.

the Byzantine princess Anna Komnene records similar practices of wailing;²⁹ at the same time these displays of grief may point to a literary convention in laments: in the *Aethiopica*, for instance, Theagenes is described mourning for his beloved Charikleia by “striking his head and tearing his hair.”³⁰

13. The association of wedding with funeral rites is often encountered in the sources Philagathos cherished; in Achilles Tatius’ novel, Kleitophon’s father is mourning his son’s death in similar terms with Philagathos: “Your bridal chamber, child, is the grave, your wedding hymn, the funeral dirge, your nuptials songs these wailings.”³¹ Similar formulations abound in Nyssen’s writings, as to refer to Philagathos’ most-cited author.³²
14. The scene with the widow running frantically towards the coffin is inspired from a scene loaded with intense emotions in Heliodorus’ novel; after having been separated from her beloved, Charikleia recognizes Theagenes from afar and “runs raving towards him, and, falling on his neck, held him fast, clung to him and embraced him with mournful lamentations” – ἐμμανῆς ἐπ’ αὐτὸν ἵεται καὶ περιφῦσα τοῦ αὐχένος ἀπρίξ εἶχετο καὶ ἐξήρτητο καὶ γοεροῖς τισὶ κατησπάζετο θρήνοις.³³
15. For the widow’s lament, Philagathos relies again on Heliodorus’ novel, precisely on Theagenes’ wailing the death of Charikleia.³⁴
16. Philagathos enhances the intensity of the widow’s lamentation by drawing on Procopius of Gaza’s lost *Monody for Antioch*,³⁵ a text which Philagathos used in the homily “On the Massacre of the Holy Innocents”;³⁶ the *Monody* (a lament inspired by historical events) was written in relation to the devastating earthquake of 526 CE that flattened Antioch.
17. The passage is a verbatim citation from Nyssen’s account of the widow’s wailing in his treatise “On the Making of Men.”³⁷
18. Jonah 2: 7; the prophet Jonah is poetically referred as the “fugitive,” on account of his flight “from the presence of the Lord” by going to Jaffa instead of the city of Nineveh where God commanded him to go (Jonah 1:1–3).
19. Lk. 7:13; cf. Jn. 11:35.
20. Lk. 7:13.
21. Pindar, fr. 123. 4–5; Philagathos’ reference to Pindar is probably derived from the indirect transmission of the poet’s works; the verse assumed almost the function of a

29 Anna Komnene, *Alexias*, 11.12.2, ed. Reinsch.

30 Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, 2.1.2, ed. Colonna, 118–19.

31 Achilles Tatius, *Leukippe and Kleitophon*, 1.13.6, transl. Gaselee, 42–43.

32 Gregory of Nyssa, *Homily of Consolation Concerning Pulcheria*, 9.468–69, ed. A. Spira; cf. *Oration on the Deity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*, PG 46: 568–69.

33 Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, 7.7.5, ed. Colonna, 378.

34 Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, 2.4.3, ed. Colonna, 122.

35 Procopius of Gaza, *Monody for Antioch*, 1.16–21, ed. Amato, 463.

36 Philagathos, *Homily* 2.4.6, ed. Rossi-Taibbi, 158.

37 Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* PG 44: 220C.

- proverb, as Cristina Torre argued;³⁸ in its original context it refers to homoerotic love being part of Pindar’s description of his desire for his beloved Theoxenus of Tenedos: “but whoever has seen those rays/flashing from Theoxenus’ eyes/and is not flooded with desire/has a black heart forged from adamant or steel/with a cold flame . . .”³⁹
22. Lk. 7:14.
 23. Philagathos gives extra vividness to the passage through the antithetical parallelism between τάφος and κενोटάφιον (“tomb/empty tomb”), a wordplay difficult to render into English. Literally the sentence means: “The grave belonging to Charon remained an empty grave.”
 24. For rendering the astonishment of the mother, Philagathos draws on the opening scene of Heliodorus’ novel, which pictures Charikleia embracing and kissing Theagenes, – ἠπίστει κατέχουσα – “seeming as if she could yet scarcely believe that she was holding him in her arms.”⁴⁰
 25. Ps. 112 (113):9.

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³⁸ Torre 2011: 33–35.

³⁹ Pindar, fr. 123, 2–6, transl. Race, 364–65.

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I.8.21 Manuel Philes (c.1270–after 1332/34, perhaps mid 1340s)

On a Lion Depicted on the Ground

MARIA MAVROUDI, WITH ADDITIONS IN THE COMMENTARY
BY FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, A no. 48 (107–08), B no. 59 (121–22), C no. 33 (96); previous edition: A. Manuel Philes, *Poems*, vol. I, ed. E. Miller, 102 (Scor. 209), B. vol. I, 102 (Scor. 210), C. vol. II, 78 (par. 39)

MSS.:¹ A –C: Florence, BML, Plut. 32.19 (s. XIV), f. 86v

Paris, BnF, graecus 2876 (s. XIV), f. 79v

Vatican, BAV, graecus 1126 (s. XIV), ff. 182v–183r

A and B: Athens, EBE, Metochion tou Panagiou Taphou 351 (s. XIV), f. 178v

Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo, X.IV.20

(s. XVI), f. 77v

Other Translations: E. Braounou-Pietsch, as above (German)

Significance

The following two epigrams introduce the viewer to a floor mosaic.

The Author

See A. Rhoby, with additions by M. Bazzani, I.4.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

In this series of epigrams, Philes refers to a floor mosaic in an unspecified location. It is unclear whether it was made in the thirteenth century or a pre-existing time. Hunting scenes involving wild beasts were especially common in Late Antique floor mosaics, as can be seen in the well-known mosaics from the Great Palace (whose exact date is unclear) – although these would not have been accessible to a viewer in the fourteenth century.² The mosaic floor of San Marco in Venice also included lions, which were understood as the king of the animals, having qualities comparable to those of Christ.³

¹ Consulted.

² E.g. Maguire 2001: 155.

³ See Barral I Altet 1985, p. 76; p. 162, fig. 117.

Although the three epigrams have never been published together, they can be found as a series in all manuscripts that preserve them and for this reason they most probably refer to the same object. The text of the epigrams does not provide any evidence regarding their use. However, the Athenian manuscript – which preserves only the first two epigrams – indicates that they were improvised on the spot, suggesting a performative use.⁴

In the first epigram, the poet exalts the artist's daring in depicting a lion. In the second, he admires the terrifying appearance of the lion. In the third, Philes paraphrases a popular fable attributed to Aesop on a man and a lion walking and discussing which is the most powerful animal. In all three poems, the poet hastens to highlight that the lion, although merely depicted, looks alive.

By the time of Philes, the living icon had become a *topos* among the Byzantines, who were seeing icons, statues, and all kinds of pictorial representations as able to talk, react, and even perform magic. In recent years, numerous publications by Byzantinists explore this subject. Ismene Braounou-Pietsch has analyzed the significance of this *topos* in the poetry written by Philes. She discussed all three epigrams. The first two epigrams are interesting – according to Braounou-Pietsch – for their emphasis on the kinetic component of living icons. Specifically, the epigram (A) is understood as a text that emphasizes “spirited art” (“Die beseelend Kunst”) and epigram (B) as an example of a poem that translates the enlivened nature of the image (“Die beseelende Dichtung”) into words.⁵ Finally, the third epigram is highlighted for emphasizing the enlivened figures shown in the depiction (“Die abgebildeten Gestalten”).⁶

4 Athens, EBE, *Metochion tou Panagiou Taphou* 351 (s. XIV), f. 178v: “εἰς λέοντα ἐζωγραφημένον, αὐθωρόν.”

5 Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 107–1, 121–22, respectively.

6 Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 96–97.

Text

A. Εἰς ἐζωγραφημένον ἐν τῇ γῆι λέοντα¹
 Ψυχὴν σταθηρὰν εὐτυχῶν ὁ ζωγράφος²
 ἔγραψε καὶ λέοντα μὴ δειλιάσας.
 καινὸν μὲν οὖν καὶ τοῦτο, πλήν τό γε πλεόν,
 ὅτι πνοὴν τίθησι μικροῦ τῷ τύπῳ
 5 τὸν θῆρα κινῶν τῇ γραφῇ πεπηγμένον.

B. Εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ³
 Ἄν οὐκ ἔχων κίνησιν ἐν τύπῳ λέων
 πείθη πτοεῖσθαι τοὺς ὀρώντας ἀθρόον,
 τίς ἂν πνέων φαίνοιτο καὶ ζῶν τοῖς πέλας,
 ὅταν σφιδάζῃ καὶ πλατύνῃ τὸ στόμα;
 5 ἐρεύξεται γὰρ φησὶν ἡ Γραφή λέων,⁴
 καὶ τοὺς παρόντας λήψεται τρόμος μέγας.

C. Ἔτεροι⁵
 Λέων ἐπὶ γῆς πνευστιῶν γεγραμμένος
 δοκεῖ σιωπῶν προσλαλεῖν τῷ ζωγράφῳ.
 ἂν εἶχον οἱ λέοντες ἐξ ἴσου γράφειν,
 πολλοὺς ἂν εἰς γῆν εἶδες ἄνδρας ἐν τύπῳ.

Translation

A. On a Lion Depicted on the Ground.¹
 The painter² is fortunate to have a steady soul,
 And has without hesitation depicted a lion.
 The following is also wondrous, even more than the previous one:
 he <the painter> quickly gives breath to the picture,
 5 by adding movement to the beast, even if it remains still in the painting.

B. On the Same <Subject>.³
 Even if a lion does not move in the picture,
 he persuades the viewers to feel entirely defeated.
 Who would not have the impression that he breathes and he is alive,
 when he chafes and opens his mouth wide open?
 5 For, as the scripture says, the lion shall roar,⁴
 and a great fear shall seize the beholders.

C. Other <Verses>⁵
 A lion, painted on the ground, breathing hard,
 looks like he is addressing the painter with his silence.
 If lions could also paint,
 you would have seen the images of many men lying on the ground.

Commentary

1. The poet compares the steady, brave, soul of the painter who dares to depict a lion and the picture of the beast, which seems as if it is moving. The titles are cited following the Florentine manuscript.
 2. The reference to a “painter” (ζωγράφος) should be understood as a way of indicating someone who works in any medium.
 3. According to the poet, the depicted lion seems to not move, yet conveys the impression of his wild nature by the manner in which it is depicted.
 4. Amos 3:8.
 5. As Ismene Braounou-Pietsch and E. Miller have already observed, the poet draws the inspiration for this poem from a myth attributed to Aesop.⁷ According to the myth, while a man and a lion were walking side by side, the man proudly argued that humans are the strongest animals, as proven by the many sculptures representing men slaying lions. The lion replied back that if lions could make sculptures one would see many men defeated by them. Philes builds on this myth: the human in the myth becomes the painter in the poem. Artist and depiction appear to secretly converse on the meaning of the artwork.
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⁷ Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 96.

I.8.22 Nikephoros Choumnos (c.1260–1327)

A Letter to Demetrios Kabasilas, On the Beauty of his Handwriting

ALEXANDER RIEHLE

Ed.: A. Riehle, *Die Briefsammlungen des Nikephoros Choumnos*, Byzantinisches Archiv (Berlin and Boston, Mass., forthcoming); previous edition: J. F. Boissonade, *Anecdota Nova* (Paris, 1844, repr. Hildesheim, 1962), 167–68

MSS.:¹ Paris, BnF, Graecus 2105 (a. 1323/24), ff. 424v–425r

Patmos Island, Monastery of Saint John the Theologian, ms. 127 (a. 1323/24), ff. 363v–364r

Other Translations: A. Riehle, as above (German)

Significance

The letter presents a rather rare example of an aesthetic assessment of calligraphic handwriting. Although the account remains vague and does not provide any particulars on the form and appearance of the writing style, it is an interesting testimony for the view that Greek script could function, from the beholder's perspective, as an art (τέχνη) giving aesthetic pleasure.

The Author

Nikephoros Choumnos was one of the leading political and intellectual figures in the long reign of emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (r.1282–1328).² He was born around 1260 to a middle- to upper-class family with a history in imperial service. Decisive for his career were his formative years under the tutelage of George of Cyprus, the later patriarch Gregory II (1283–89), who maintained excellent ties with the ruling elites of Byzantium's capital. After Andronikos' accession to the throne, Choumnos delivered an encomiastic oration for the emperor, which was modeled after his teacher's encomium for this emperor and evidently designed as a showpiece through which the young man hoped to gain the emperor's attention and favor. His ensuing *cursus honorum* suggests that Choumnos succeeded in this quest: he was subsequently appointed to the offices and dignities of

¹ Consulted

² On his background, life, and writings see *PLP* no. 30961; A.-M. Talbot, *ODB*, s.v. "Choumnos, Nikephoros"; "Choumnos (Nikephoros Ch.)" in Buchwald *et al.* 1982: 168–69; Verpeaux 1959a: 252–54; Verpeaux 1959b; Ševčenko 1962; Riehle 2012; Riehle 2011.

koiastor, *mystikos*, and governor (*kephale*) of Thessaloniki. When the serving *mesazon* (“chief minister”) of the emperor, Theodore Mouzalon (who had also been George of Cyprus’ student and was closely attached to his former teacher) fell ill and had to retire in 1292/93, Choumnos was nominated as his successor at Mouzalon’s recommendation. In this position, and with the high-ranking dignity of *epi tou kanikleiou*, Choumnos would be the most powerful court official for the following two decades. Moreover, through his daughter Eirene’s marriage with Andronikos’ son John Palaiologos, Choumnos managed to tie his family to the imperial kin. His high ambitions for himself and his family were thwarted by several blows: John Palaiologos died in 1307, after only four years of marriage and without having produced offspring, and around 1315 Choumnos had to retire from the office of *mesazon* due to his suffering from chronic gout. He dedicated the following years to philosophical studies, which resulted in a number of treatises on physics, while remaining a counselor to the emperor in important affairs. Around 1323 he engaged in a fierce controversy with his successor as *mesazon*, Theodore Metochites, over matters of literary style and philosophy. Shortly afterwards he withdrew to the family monastery of Christ *Philanthropos Soter* in Constantinople, where he died as the monk Nathanael on January 16, 1327.

Text and Context

We possess today at least four manuscripts of Choumnos’ writings that were likely commissioned by their author: Ambrosianus C 71 sup., comprizing several booklets written by different hands, which were bound around 1315 to form a cohesive codex, and containing a part of Choumnos’ orations, treatises, charter texts, and letters; Metochii S. Sepulcri 276 transmitting the philosophical treatises; Patmiacus 127 and Parisinus graecus 2105, which are nearly identical in their contents and arrangement, and constitute the last known versions of Choumnos’ “official edition” of his complete oeuvre (to be dated c. 1323/24).³ Of these manuscripts the last three and probably the last and latest part of the codex *Ambrosianus* were written by one and the same scribe. This leads to the conclusion that from c. 1315 onwards Choumnos mainly or even exclusively entrusted this scribe with the production of manuscripts of his writings. We know from other wealthy intellectuals of this period that they did not take up the pen themselves when it came to producing “editions” of their oeuvres, but employed professional scribes – for instance, Theodore Metochites, whose “personal scribe” has been identified as Michael Klostomalles, who is known to have also worked in the imperial chancery.⁴ The hand of Choumnos’ scribe bears some similarities with Klostomalles’ *Metochitesstil*, which is characterized by the introduction of certain stylistic features of the script that can be found in imperial

3 On the manuscripts and transmission history of Choumnos’ writings see Papatriantaphyllou-Theodoride 1984 with Riehle 2011: 54–85; Riehle 2012: 5–11.

4 Lamberz 2006: 44–47.

charters.⁵ This fact might suggest that Choumnos' scribe also worked for the imperial chancery, which was headed by Choumnos during his tenure as *mesazon*.

On the basis of the present letter, Choumnos' scribe has been identified with Demetrios Kabasilas, who is known as an addressee of letters from Michael Gabras and Nikephoros Gregoras.⁶ Although the letter suggests, indeed, that its recipient worked as a calligrapher for Choumnos and therefore might be none other than the scribe of the aforementioned manuscripts, a caveat should be issued: the heading providing the name of the addressee is only given in one of the two manuscripts transmitting this letter, and here it was added not at the time of the original compilation of the collection, but somewhat later. Some of these later additions to the collections provide erroneous information.⁷ Consequently, the identification of the recipient of this letter with Demetrios Kabasilas cannot be verified with absolute certainty.

Our letter is preserved in the rear part of the collections of the Patmos (168 letters) and Paris (172 letters) manuscripts. The internal evidence points to a date of around 1322/23 for its composition, that is, not long before the compilation of the manuscripts (presumably by its recipient) that preserve it.

In Choumnos' adulatory description, Kabasilas' handwriting functions essentially as an image: the beauty (*κάλλος*) of its form (*τύπος, μόρφωμα*) causes pleasure (*ἡδονή, τέρψις*) to the beholder's eye (*ὄψις*). At the core of these words lies the well-known ancient and medieval view that writing and painting (for which Greek uses the same terminology: *γράφω, γραφή*, etc.) were essentially similar media and fulfilled the same functions – a belief that the triumph of icon veneration in Byzantium had only reinforced, as iconophile theologians argued that images and words were equal in their potential to convey divine truth.⁸ In our case, however, the focus is not on truth, but on aesthetic pleasure, which in the realm of writing finds expression in the term “calligraphy” (*καλλιγραφία, καλλιγραφέω*, etc.⁹). In fact, in a jesting letter to his friend Theodore Xanthopoulos, Choumnos acknowledges the difference between a stenographer (*ὄξυγράφος*) and a calligrapher, arguing that the latter – like any craftsman (*ἐπὶ τῶν χειρωνακτικῶν*) – needs time and practice in order to create something excellent and to sell it for a reasonable price.¹⁰

5 Papatriantaphyllou-Theodoride 1984: 215–20; Prato 1991, vol. 1: 140–48, vol. 2: 86–96 (figs. 6–16); Hunger 1991, vol. 1: 154–56, vol. 2, 99 (fig. 1); Lamberz 2006.

6 Papatriantaphyllou-Theodoride 1984: 220–27; Beyer 1989.

7 Cf. Riehle 2011: 76–77.

8 See, for instance, Maguire, *Art and Eloquence*, 9–12; Brubaker 1989: 70–75; Sansterre 1994; Cavallo 1994: 38–44; Barber 2002: 125–37.

9 Cf. LSJ and Lampe, *s.vv.*

10 *Letters*, ed. Boissonade, 2–3 no. 2; on the terminology see Atsalos 1971: 247–56. On the various types of scribes see Hunger 1989: 89–94. The scribe-calligrapher, like the painter (cf. A. Cutler, *ODB*, *s.v.* “Artists”), was seen as more of an artisan than an artist in the modern sense; on the social standing of Byzantine scribes cf. Cutler 1981: 328–34.

The surviving manuscripts that, as suggested above, could be attributed to the recipient of our letter, indeed present a calligraphic, highly stylized script in line with contemporary scribal fashion and adorned with decorative elements such as rubricated headings and crested initials as well as occasional decorative twines.¹¹ Also content-wise the text was executed carefully and accurately: over hundreds of folios the scribe committed almost no mistakes.

¹¹ See, e.g., Letter 1 in MS Paris, BnF, Graecus 2105, f. 327r, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10722960s/f333.item> (accessed December 2020).

Text¹

[p. 167] ρμδ': {τῷ Καβάσιλα κῦρ Δημητρίῳ}

Γράμματα καὶ τὴν ἐν τούτοις ἀριστουργὸν χεῖρα σὴν ἐπὶ λόγων καὶ πονημάτων τῶν ἐμῶν ἔχων ἀνὰ χεῖρας, ὅλος ἐγενόμην τοῦ τύπου καὶ τοῦ μορφώματος καὶ τοῦ κάλλους αὐτῶν· καὶ πόθος με πολὺς εἰσῆει καὶ δὴ γ' ἔρωσ σφοδρὸς, κτήματος οὕτω καλλίστου τοῦ βιβλίου, ἐν ᾧ τειτελεσμένου πρὸς ἡδονὴν καὶ τέρψιν γενέσθαι. αὐτὸ μὲν γὰρ πᾶν τὸ ἐκ τῶν λόγων ἦκον, ὃ τί ποτέ ἐστιν, εἴτε τῶν πρὸς ἔπαινον ἐρχομένων εἴτε μὴ, ἄλλοι λεγόντων· καὶ σύ δε λέγε, καθὼς ἂν καὶ γνοίης, καθὼς ἂν καὶ κρίνῃς. ἐμοὶ δέ, καὶ γὰρ ἐρῶ τάληθές, συμβαίνει πάθος λογιζομένῳ περὶ αὐτῶν, ὃ δὴ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις πᾶσιν οἶμαι συμβαίνει τοῖς σπουδάζουσι περὶ λόγους. φρονοῦσι γὰρ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἑαυτῶν, οὐχ ὅσον δὴ πού γε καὶ εἰκός, ἀλλὰ τι γε καὶ πλεον, ὑποκλεπτοῦσης δὴ πού γε τῆς περὶ αὐτοὺς σχέσεως. ὡς γὰρ περὶ παιῖδας οὓς ἂν τέκωσιν, οὕτω δὴ πάσχουσι καὶ περὶ τόκους λόγους, ἄλλους μὲν ὀρωμένους καὶ δοκοῦντας τοῖς μὴ γεγεννηκόσιν, ἄλλους δ' αὐτοῖς καὶ καλλίστους, τοῖς πού γεγεννηκόσι· καὶ συγγνώμη κάμοι τοῦ πάθους, κοινού καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὄντος· καὶ νῦν δὲ μᾶλλον ἐπὶ τῆς σῆς ἀρίστης χειρὸς πλείονος ἐπιγεγεννημένου, προστεθέντος οὐ μικροῦ τινος μέρους τῷ προτέρῳ περὶ αὐτῶν δόγματι καὶ φίλτρῳ. πῶς καὶ τίνα τρόπον; ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων μοι παιδῶν καὶ τῶν γε κατ' ἐκείνους, λάμβανε τὰς ἀποδείξεις. καὶ γὰρ ὡσπερ ἐπ' αὐτῶν, ἀγαθῶν δὴ τινῶν τὰς ᾧ τειτελεσμένοι καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τοῦ σώματος ὄντων, ἡμελημένων δ' ἄλλως, καὶ ρύπου μὲν τῶν μορφωμάτων γεμόντων, ἀχρεῖοις δ' ἱματίοις ἐνασχημονούντων, οὐ τοσοῦτον τό γ' ἐξ αὐτῶν γάνος καὶ τὸ τοὺς τεκόντας θέλγον καὶ καθηδύνον ἐστίν· εἴ τις δ' ἀπολουσάμενος καὶ τοῦ αἵσχους ἀποκαθάρας καὶ διευθετήσας καὶ πᾶν τὸ ἔξωθεν ἀχρειοῦν ἀποτρίψας, μετὰ φαιδρᾶς καὶ λαμπούσης τῆς στολῆς προσαγάγοι, τότε δὴ τότε καὶ ἡδύτερον θέαμα καὶ πάνυ τι τερπνὸν γίγνεται, τῷ κάλλει γυμνοῦ καὶ ἀκραιφνοῦς τοῦ σώματος ὄντος, προστεθέντος καὶ τοῦ τῆς στολῆς κάλλους, οὕτω δὴ καὶ λόγων ἐπὶ τῶν ἐμῶν καὶ τοῦ βιβλίου, καὶ τοῦ γ' ἐκ τῆς σῆς χειρὸς προστεθέντος ἀρίστου μορφώματος, ἐπιπλέον καὶ αὐτὸς ἐθέμην τῆ περὶ αὐτῶν δόξῃ καὶ φιλοτιμίᾳ. καὶ ναὶ δὸς μοι τοῦ βιβλίου ὡς οἶόν τε τάχιστα, οὕτω δὴ μεμορφωμένου οὕτω δὴ καὶ τετελεσμένου τυχεῖν, ᾧ πάντων φίλων ἄριστε σύ καὶ τὰ καλά ταῦτα τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον δὴ χαριζόμενος.

Translation

[p. 167] Letter no. 144: {To *kȳr* Demetrios Kabasilas}²

When I held the script³ of my writings and works and your masterful hand contained in it in my hands, I was completely taken in by its form, shape, and beauty; and a strong yearning and vehement desire penetrated me to possess such an excellent book, which has been executed in order to give the beholder pleasure and delight. I leave it to others to judge whether the texts themselves merit praise or not – and you may also add your opinion and judgment. Truth be told, when I consider my works, I suffer from the same affliction as everyone else who devotes himself to learning: their opinion about their own achievements is not completely objective, but somewhat more positive, because their disposition towards them misleads them. For, the same happens to them with regard to their intellectual offspring as with regard to their biological children: those who did not produce them see and assess them differently than their producers, who take a great fancy to them. So I may be forgiven for this affliction, since it is shared by all the others. In fact, it has been intensified due your excellent hand, because no little share was added to the previous opinion and affection. How and in what ways? Here comes the proof from the aforesaid children and their affairs: when they are handsome in their looks and the remaining physical characteristics, but otherwise unkempt – with their bodies covered in filth and disfigured by worthless garments – they will not cause much joy and charm and gratify their parents. Yet, when someone bathes them, scrubs off the dirt, grooms them, removes every outward blemish and presents them in bright and shining garb, then they provide a more enjoyable and highly delightful sight, since to the beauty of the naked and unblemished body the beauty of the garments is added. In like manner, my opinion and pride in my writings and the book [containing them] have increased, because your hand attached to them an excellent appearance.⁵ Indeed, let me have a share in this book as soon as possible,⁶ as it is formed and executed in such a manner, O best of all friends, who makes such beautiful gifts in this way!

Commentary

1. The text presented here is based on my forthcoming edition, with page references to Boissonade.
2. On the heading see Text and Context, above.
3. On γράμματα (“written elements” = “letters/characters (of the alphabet)”) in the sense of “writing/script” cf. Atsalos 1971: 182–84.
4. The comparison of the relationship between the author and his writings with that between father and child can be found already in Plato’s *Symposium* (209c–e). Similar imagery proliferated in Byzantine learned literature (examples in Riehle 2011: 290, n. 1145).
5. Note Choumnos’ likening his *logoi* to a naked, unblemished body (σῶμα) to which the handwriting is added as a garment that highlights the body’s inherent beauty and adorns it. This comparison may perhaps be regarded as drawing on the Christian conception of the incarnate *Logos* of God (cf. Jn. 1:14: Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν).
6. This passage implies that Choumnos could not keep the book that he had received from the addressee and had “held in his hands” (see the beginning of the missive). On the basis of this evidence we might assume that Kabasilas had sent the manuscript to Choumnos for assessment and correction. Choumnos would then have returned it to Kabasilas for completion.

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I.8.23 Nersēs Šnorhali (attr.) (1102–1173)

Commentary on the Canon Tables

CHRISTINA MARANCI (INTRODUCTION, TEXT, AND COMMENTARY)

James R. Russell (transl. and commentary, first published in T. F. Mathews and A. K. Sanjian, *Armenian Gospel Iconography: The Tradition of the Glajor Gospel* [Washington, D.C., 1990], 207–11)

Ed.: This text has yet to receive a critical edition. It should appear in future years in *Matenagirk' Hayoc'*, a multi-volume series of Armenian medieval texts published by the Armenian Catholicosate in Ant'elias. The text transl. by James R. Russell is the 1825 printed edition, Nersēs Šnorhali and Yovhannēs Erzncac'i, *Meknut'iwn Surb Awetaranin or est Matt'ēosi* (Istanbul, 1825) 5–12. This Armenian text is reproduced here as pub. in Y. K'iwrtēan, "Meknut'iwn Xoranoc' Awetaranin," *Bazmavēp* 131 (1973), 429–37

MSS.: The manuscripts used for the 1825 edition are not identified. K'iwrtēan, however, identifies several manuscripts of this text in the *Matenadaran*¹

Other Translations: Karekin (I) Xaç'aturean, *Šolakat'* (1952), 290–96 (Modern Western Armenian)

Significance

The detailed discussion of the commentary offers a precious sense of how the Canon Table system might have been experienced by medieval viewers, and "establishes an important point of view from which to begin the general study of Armenian Canon Table iconography."² Explanation of colors and individual motifs may also be applicable more generally to the study of Armenian and Byzantine iconography. Most intriguingly, the commentary describes viewing the tables as "cleansing baths" for the eyes and ears of those about to embark on the Gospel text.³ The attribution of sensory purification to canon table decoration seems to be an important and original point by the author.

The Author

Although the text has also been attributed to Yovhannēs Erzncac'i, most scholars now consider Nersēs Šnorhali to be its author.⁴ Nersēs Šnorhali ("the Gracious") or Klayec'i

1 K'iwrtēan 1973: 420–28.

2 Mathews and Sanjian 1991: 170.

3 Mathews and Sanjian 1991: 172–73

4 See K'iwrtēan 1973; Der Nersessian 1963, 16 n. 51; Mathews and Sanjian 1991: 170 n. 26; Thomson 1991: 178.

(from Hfomklay in Armenian Cilicia) was a theologian and patriarch of Armenia from 1166 to 1173. Born into the noble Pahlavuni family, he was a brother of the patriarch Gregory III (1113–66). Both before and during his patriarchate, Nersēs engaged in discussions with the Byzantines on the union of the two churches.⁵ The terms of reconciliation, involving theological, liturgical, and administrative conformities with the Byzantine church, were ultimately rejected by the Armenians. Nersēs is known for his literary works, particularly religious poetry, including *Oḅ Edesioy* (Lamentation on the Fall of Edessa) and *Yisus Ordi* (*Jesus the Son*) – a poetic version of the Bible – as well as encyclical letters, instructional texts, prayers, hymns, commentaries, and musical works. He is celebrated for his lucid and irenic style.

Text and Context

The precise date of composition is unknown. The text appears to be drawn from prior sources, perhaps including the fragmentary commentary on the Canon Tables by Stepanos Siwnec'i (d. 735), and may also bear an echo of contemporary doctrinal debates with the Byzantines.⁶

The precise manuscript sources for the text have not been identified in the literature; the text presented here, which is that of the 1825 Constantinople edition (repr. in 1973), is thought to derive from several manuscripts. It is attributed to Nersēs Šnorhali and concerns the decoration of the Canon Tables, the organizational system ascribed to Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea (c.260–c.340 CE). Canon Tables allowed the reader to identify correspondences of individual passages across the four Gospels texts. In the medieval Armenian manuscript tradition, the Canon Tables (Arm. *xoran*: lit. temple, altar, pavilion) are ten in number and often feature ornate and inventive designs. Rectangular architectonic headpieces frame numerals and are surrounded by birds, flowering trees, and cultic forms (vessels, crosses).⁷

The text interprets Canon Table imagery and its colors in symbolic terms, highlighting concepts of salvation, paradise, and the heavenly city. The Tables are interpreted as a whole (e.g. as the walls of the Garden of Eden) and also individually and sequentially (e.g. Canon 5 is the Ark of Noah, Canon 6 is the Tabernacle of Abraham). Individual motifs are offered intriguing explanations: the olive tree, for example, symbolizes the longevity of the Patriarchs, and the olive's sour taste indicates their austere virtue.

5 On the events and for a summary of the relevant bibliography see Stone 2005: 194–200.

6 Mathews and Sanjian 1991: 170–71.

7 Mathews and Sanjian 1991: 166–76.

Text

ՆԵՐՄԷՍ ԾՆՈՐՀԱԼԻԻ ՄԵԿՆՈՒԹԻԻՆ ՍԱԿՍ ՏԱՍՆ ԽՈՐԱՆԱՅՆ

1. Մտտեանք աստուածայինք եւ հոգեբուրի վարդապետութիւնք իմաստից գալստելի սուրբ երրորդութիւն, միւս է՝ քարոզէն: Եւ յաւիտենական բարի. Եւ բոլորից գոյութեանց յոյժից՝ արարչագործ եւ խնամածու՝ կալ մնալ ի բարին. Եւ թէ անձնիւթխան անործականօք խոտորին ի բարւոյն բանականքս, ցուցանեն զնոյն արարիչն յիւրական բարեացն ողորմած եւ մարդասէր, որք ողջանալն կամին վերստին յիւրեցմամբ բարւոյն. որպէս եւ յայս է տեսանել զհաւատ բանիս [..]
2. [..] որ է պատմութիւն փրկութեան փառացն Աստուծոյ. գոր ունի յինքեան պարածածկեալ գիրքս այս աւետեաց. որ կայ առաջի մեզ ի քննութիւն:
3. Դրախտն իմանալի ի միջոցին կառուցեալ ունելով ըզծառն կենաց. քանզի ի տանէ տեառն բոլոր զջուրն գայն՝ որ խաղայ ի կեանսն յաւիտենականս. այս՝ որ ցանգեալս է ո՛չ պակուցիչ հրով եւ սրովքէական սրով բոցեղինեաւ, այլ հեշտալի եւ ծաղկեանց նկարիւք եւ պահուհագարդ գուօք խորանաց կերպագրութեամբ: Այլ եւ տրևիցոց ոմանց ստեղծագործութեանց, եւ ձագուց ձեւացեալ. եւ յօրինուածք սեղանոց եւ սեանց եւ ծաղկանց. որք ունին յինքեանս խորհուրդս խորինս եւ իմաստս անյայտ՝ եւ հանճարս ծածուկս. որովք ո՛չ է պարտ գանց անել վայրապար. քանզի ամենայն ինչ որ յաշխարհի է՝ յերկուս բաժանի. ի կարելորն՝ եւ ի վայելմունս: Կարելորք հարկաւորք են. որպէս լոյս եւ օդ եւ երկիր, եւ ի նմանէ հաց. եւ աղբիւրք ջուրց առանց նորա ո՛չ է հնար կեալ: Իսկ վայելչութիւնն հեշտալիք են եւ փափկացուցիչք. որպէս գինի, եւ միրք. եւ համեմք, եւ խորտկարարութիւնք. եւ պայծառագունութիւնք. եւ ակնցոց հեշտալորութիւնք. որք զգայութեանց են հեշտալիք՝ վայելչութիւնք եւ հանգիստք: Այլ եւ որք ո՛չ թուին կարելորք՝ մեծապէս օգուտ գործեն կատարելոցն՝ յործամ այս երեւելի գունովս, եւ համովս, եւ հոտով, եւ լրով, եւ հանգըստեամբ, ամբառնամք ի հոգեւորն՝ եւ յիմանալին վայելչութիւն յաւետն Աստուծոյ. գոր ակն ո՛չ էտես եւ ունկն ո՛չ լուա՝ եւ ի սիրտ մարդոյ ո՛չ անկա՝ գոր պատրաստեաց Աստուած սիրելեաց իւրոց:
4. Որպէս սքանչելի գարգու խորանին եւ տանարին, դաստիարակէր Աստուած զԻսրայէլ. եւ զընչասէրն՝ երկրաւոր գանձիւքս կաշառէր՝ տայր իմանալ զերկնաւորն. գոր հրամայեաց երկրասարդին ընչեղի փոխել զմարմնաւորն ի հոգեւորն՝ երթ սակ վաճառեա՝ գոր ինչ ունիս աստ, եւ յերկինս դիր գանձ: Յայս նայեցեալք ցանկիչք եւ հիմնադիրք աւետարանիս, հեշտալի դեղովք եւ գունագոյն ծաղիօք. նկարեալ պէսպէս յօրինուածովք. երկնաւորաց եւ երկրաւորաց կանխածայնութեամբ. եւ առաքինութեանց սպասաւորութեամբ՝ եւ որ ինչ հոգեւոր վայելչութիւնքն են եւ անապական գեղեցկութիւնքն, յառաջիկայ բնաբանութիւնքն. եւ գայն եւս տայ սոքօք մեզ իմանալ:
5. Իսկ տանն խորանաց պատհառ: Նախ այն է որ գրեալն է՝ Եթէ Կարպիանոս ոնմ մէջերկրեայ յԵգիպտոսի՝ խրնդրեաց յԵւսեբեայ յեկեղեցական իմաստապիրէ, եթէ դրոճմեա մեզ անվսխալ զհամածայնութիւն աւետարանացն. թէ ո՛ր միաբանին չորքն, եւ կամ ո՛ր երեւն, եւ յորո՛ն տեղուջ երկուքն, եւ ո՛ր յատուկ խօսիցին առանձնացեալք. եւ զհամարս տանցն ցանկեցես, զի մի՛ գողացին ի հերետիոտացն. եւ զի դիւրաւ կացցուք յիւրաբանչիւրոցն առանց մուրաբութեանց: Իսկ Եւսեբի զխրնդիրն Կարպիանոսի էլից, ի տանն կանօնս գրելով՝ ըզհաւաստի զիտութիւնս այնոցիկ. որպէս Եւրպոլ երանելին գրուխտս առաքելոց, եւ զգործս կարողիկիւքն հանդերձ, ընդդէմ Սաբինոսացն եւ այլոց հերձուածողացն: Իսկ խորհրդով տեսեալ տասն, որ է թիւ սրբագան եւ նուէր Աստուծոյ: Եւ ըստ տասնբանեան օրինացն. եւ ըստ սրահի խորանին. եւ ըստ տասն մասանց

Translation

Commentary on the Ten Canon Tables by Nersēs Šnorhali

1. The spiritual books and the inspired teachings of wisdom preach the venerable holy Trinity, the eternal being. (They preach) eternal good, and the abiding and remaining of the works of the Creator, for which he provides in the good, (which are) all existing things (created) of nothing. (They proclaim) that we, rational creatures, through our self-governing appetites are separated from the good; they display the same Creator as merciful and kind to man by reason of His own virtues, (to those) who wish to become whole through renewed recollection of the good, as it is in this (that is by) see(ing) the faith of these words . . .
2. . . . (This) is the history of the salvation of God's glory, which this book of good tidings encompasses, which is before us for interpretation.
3. The Garden (is) understood as having erected at (its) center the Tree of Life, for from the house of the Lord that water is caused to spring which flows in life everlasting; it is this which is walled around, not by the terrifying fire and the flaming Seraphic sword, but by the luxurious floral pictures and colorful, splendid ornament in the form of the drawing of the Canon Table. But also (there are) shaped the creations of certain plants; and little birds and the ordering of tables and columns and flowers possess within themselves profound mysteries, unrevealed meanings, and hidden ingenuities which are not to be passed by in vain, for all that is in the world may be divided into two parts: important (things), and pleasures. The important (things) are (the) necessities, such as light, air, and earth, and the bread from it, and the springs of the waters without which (things) cannot exist. And pleasures are (those) luxurious and soft things, such as wine, fruit, spices, (fine) cookery, bright colors, and sounds pleasing to the ear, which are the luxuries of the senses: pleasure and repose. But even (those things) which are not accounted important are of great utility to perfected (ones), when by this manifest color, taste, smell, hearing, and the rest we ascend to the spiritual, and to the rational enjoyment (of) the good tidings of God which the eye has not seen and the ear has not heard and which the heart of man has not recalled, which God (has) prepared for his loved ones.
4. As God taught Israel by the marvelous ornament of the tabernacle [*xoran*] and temple, (so) he gave the lover of material things understanding of the heavenly by be-guiling (him) with earthly treasures, as he commanded the rich youth to exchange the corporeal for the spiritual: "Go," he said, "and sell all that you have here, and place your treasure in heaven." Observing this, the compilers and founders of the Gospel illustrated (it) with luxurious herbs and multicolored flowers and various inventions, as a foretelling of earthly and heavenly things and a service to the virtues, and through these the text before us gives us to understand also what the spiritual pleasures and imperishable beauties are.
5. And (this) is the explanation of the ten Canon Tables [*xoranac'*]. First is that which is written: one Carpianos in midland [i.e. Upper] Egypt asked of Eusebius, the ecclesiastical philosopher, "Confirm for us unerringly the correspondence of the Gospels;

արարածոց. եւ որք ի մեզ են ըզգայարանք մարմնոյ եւ զօրութիւնք հոգւոյ: Այլ թէ եւ կամ ի ոք՝ անէ պատիւ տասնեկին. ի ստորագութիւնս, եւ ի տասն բանս ազօրիցն տեան՝ եւ ի նիկիական հաւատոս եւ յայլսն անենայն. եւ որ մանաւանդ հրաշալիք է իմացուած: Քանզի խորհուրդ աւետարանիս՝ որ ծածկեալ էր անկըզբնաբար յաստուածայինն, յայտնեցաւ ի տասներորդի [sic] երեւելապէս կառուցեալ ի լրման ժամանակաց: Եւ է այսպէս. Առաջին խորանն՝ ուր ինքն աստուածութիւնն ասի բազմեալ՝ ի լոյսն անմատչելի:

6. Եւ երկրորդ՝ եւ երրորդ խորանն՝ ուր միջին եւ վերջին քահանայութիւն անմարմնոցն ասի: Չորրորդն՝ դրախտն: Հինգերորդ՝ տապանն Նոյի: Վեցերորդ՝ խորանն Աբրահամու: Եօթներորդն՝ եւ ութերորդն՝ Մօսիսի. սուրբն սրբոց՝ եւ արտաքին խորանն: Իններորդն՝ սողմօնեան խորանըն: Տասներորդն՝ ամենակատար եւ լի ճամարտութեամբ. սուրբ եւ կարուղիկէ եկեղեցի, որ յինքն բովանդակեալ ունի զամենեցունց խորհուրդն: Եւ խորանք ասին. Քանզի խորհրդականք են ամենեքեան: Եւ խորհուրդն ո՛չ է ամենեցուց յայտնի, այլ սակաւուց՝ եւ բովանդակն Աստուածոյ միայն: Արդ եւ ի խորանքս յայտասիկ չորք երանկ գունոց. կարմիր, կանաջ, սեւ, կապոյտ, եւ մի առանձինն ծիրանի՝ գատ ի չորիցս: Եւ են ի սոսա ծառք չորք. արմաւենի. ձիթենի. շուշան. նոնենի. եւ այլ կրկին արմաւենի: Եւ ունի յինքեանս հաւս հինգ: Սիրամարգ կրկին. աղունի. կախաւ. ախաղաղ. ձկնախաղ. լինի եւ մըրտմունք վեցերորդ. հաւ՝ ուրեք ուրեք յաւետարանս երեւեալ:
7. Արդ՝ առաջին խորանն միեղէն համակ ծիրանի, յօրինեալ երիւք. որ ճանակէ զհաստատութիւն էական արոտոյն Աստուծոյ արտաքոյ չորից տարերացս: Խորանն անհատելի, ուր ինքն միայնակ շրջի սուրբ երրորդութիւն՝ զամենայն արարածս արտաքոյ թողեալ, ըստ սրում գոյնն ծիրանի զամենակալ թագաւորութիւնն ցուցանէ՝ անսպառ եւ անվախճան: Այս խորան պարփակեալ ասի՝ առաջին վարագուրան. բայց սակայն երեք դասն՝ արոտոց, սերովբէից, եւ ֆերովբէից, անընդմիջաբար վայելեն, ըստ կարի իւրեանց ի տեսլենէ փառաց նորա:
8. Իսկ երկրորդ խորանն՝ եւ երրորդ՝ կանաչով եւ սեւով է նկարեալ՝ յայտնեն զմիջին եւ վերջին քահանայապետութեանցըն. կանաչն, զմշտակայ եւ զանմահութիւն նոցա ճանակէ. եւ սեւն՝ զանհասութեան Աստուծոյ՝ որ ծածկեալ է ի նոցանէ. զի ի ձեռն եկեղեցւոյ յայտնեաց մարդէդութեամբն Որդւոյ՝ բազմապատիկ իմաստութիւն: Եւ զի երեք են կամարին, քանզի անձնաւորութիւն երրորդութեանն զիտելի էր նոցա, ուսեալք ի սերովբէիցն՝ յերեքսրբեանն: Եւ են ի խորանս յայտասիկ՝ ծառք արմաւենիք՝ եւ հաւք սիրամարգք. ծառքն զբարձրութիւն նոցա ցուցանէ՝ բնութեամբ, եւ տեղեաւ, եւ փառօք. եւ պտուղն՝ զամենախաղաղ օրհնաբանութիւնն: Եւ սիրամարգն ոսկեփետուր եւ ոսկետառնէ՝ զմաքուր եւ զձոյլ եւ զանարատ բնութիւն նոցա ճանակէ:
9. Եւ խորանն չորրորդ՝ զդրախտն տպաւորէ. քանզի ի չորից սեւանց կայ՝ զզգալի տարերքս առակելով՝ որ ի չորից է խառնուած: Եւ է գոյն կապոյտ եւ սեւաւ. քանզի անյայտացաւ ազամայ եւ որդւոց նորա պայծառութիւն դրախտին, զոր եւ մաշեալ պատմութեանն առակէր. դիմախար եղեալ փառացն Աստուծոյ, եւ դրախտին՝ յորս վայելէր գառաջինն; է՛ եւ տեսակ սեղանոյ ի մէջ իւրաքանչիւր խորանացն. յերկրորդ եւ յերրորդ խորանին՝ բոցավառ ցուցեալ առ ի ճանակել զիմանալի կերակուր անմարմնոցն. եւ զբանական պատարագն՝ զոր մատուցանեն Աստուծոյ: Եւ յայլ խորանքս մթառտեսակ իմն ձեւով՝ եւ խաչ ընդ ազօտ երեւեալ ի ներքոյ կամարացն՝ որ ցուցանէր զխորհուրդն Քրիստոսի, որ գայր ծածկապէս ի ժամանակսն առաջինս. վայր իջեալ յԱստուծոյ ի հրեւտակս՝ եւ ի նոցանէ յԱդամ եւ ի ծնունդս նորա խորհուրդ հանճարոյն:

where the four assent, and where the three, and in what place the two, and where they speak alone and individually. And list the number of their verses, lest they be stolen by heretics, and also so that we may with facility separate each without confusion.” And Eusebius fulfilled the request of Carpianus, writing in ten canons the reliable knowledge of them, as the blessed Euthalius (had done for) the letters of the Apostles and the Acts together with the Epistles [*kat’ulikēiwk’n*], against the followers of Sabinos and other heretics.¹ And by a mystery he saw ten, which is a holy number and a gift of God, according to the ten sayings of the Law and according to the hall(s) [*sra-hi*] of the tabernacle, and according to the ten parts of the creatures, and the senses of the body and the powers of the spirit which are in us. But if one wishes, the honor of the decade increases: in the Categories, and in the ten sayings of the Lord’s prayer, and in the Nicæan Creed, and in all other things. And this is a particularly marvelous understanding, for the mystery of the Gospel, which was hidden in the divine (in time) without beginning, was revealed in the tenth (age?),² visibly built at the completion of time. And it is so. The first Canon Table is where the Divinity himself is said to repose: in inaccessible light.

6. And the second and third Canon Tables are where the middle and last priesthoods of the incorporeal ones are said to be. The fourth (is) the garden. The fifth (is) the ark of Noah. The sixth (is) the tabernacle of Abraham. The seventh and the eighth (are) of Moses: the Holy of Holies and the outer tabernacle. The ninth (is) the most perfect and full of truth, the holy and Catholic Church, which contains within itself the mystery³ of all (the others). And they are called *xorans*⁴ because they are all *xorhrdakan* [“mystical”].⁵ And the mystery is not apparent to all, but (only) to a few, and (its) entirety (is known) only to God. Now, in these Canon Tables there are four shades of color: red, green, black, blue, and a particular purple [*cirani*] apart from these four. And there are four trees in them: the date palm, olive, lily, and pomegranate, and another date palm again. And they have in them five birds: the peacock twice, the dove, the partridge, the cock, and the heron. There is also a sixth found in the same Gospels, the teal [*mrtmunk’*].
7. Now the first Canon Table is singly and entirely purple, fashioned (in) three (parts), which symbolizes the fixedness of the existent throne of God outside the four elements. The Canon Table (is) ineffable, where alone by itself the Holy Trinity revolves as one, leaving outside (itself) all creations; accordingly, the color purple indicates the omnipotent kingdom, inexhaustible and unending. This Canon Table is said to be encircled by the first curtain. However, three ranks: (the angels) of the throne, the Seraphim, and the Cherubim, according to their ability immediately enjoy the spectacle of his glory.
8. And the second and third Canon Tables are painted in green and black (symbolic of) the incomprehensibility of God, which is hidden from them; for by means of the church through the incarnation⁶ of the Son, he announced manifold wisdom. There are three arches because the personality of the Trinity was known to them, (as they had) learnt the Trisagion from the Seraphim. And in these Canon Tables there are

10. Եւ ի հինգերորդ խորանն՝ յաւելագոյնն կարմիր. քանզի տապանան Նոյի եւ խորանան Աբրահամն՝ պայծառացաւ խորհուրդ արեանն Քրիստոսի, եւ եկեղեցոյ առաքինութիւն որ է հաւատն:
11. Եւ ել սեղանն խաչիւն հանդերձ ի վեր ի վեցերորդ խորանս կամարացն: Քանզի սարեկայ տընկովն եւ խոյիւն ծանուեցաւ Աբրահամն՝ ըստ որում ասացն՝ Աբրահամ ետես եւ ուրախ եղեւ: Եւ աստ սեանցն գոյն եւ գոյն որակն նշանակէ զՄեղիսեդեկի քահանայութիւնն ի դէմս Քրիստոսի: Եւ ի խորանս յայտարիկ ծառք ձիթենիք, եւ շուշան ծաղիկ. որ ցուցանէ ձիթենին զբազմաժամանակեայ կեանս նահապետացն ի խրատ ազգառոնիսն իւրեանց, զի անգիր օրէնք էին նոցա. եւ զի անբառան պահէին նոքա զծաղիկ առաքինութեան՝ որպէս ձիթենի զվարսագեղ վայելչութիւն իւր, տըտպատեսակ համովն՝ զքրքուագոյն առաքինութիւնն նոցա՝ առակէր եւ զխոշոր վարս՝ յորմէ իմաստ հանճարոյ գոյնայ. որպէս ի պտոյն ձիթենոյ նիւր լուսոյ, որով երեւին հաճոյքն Աստուծոյ. այսինքն առաքինութեան լուսովն. որպէս Նոյի, Աբրահամաւ, Սահակաւ, Յակոբաւ, Յովսէփաւ: Իսկ շուշանն երիւ որակս ունի. սպիտակութիւն, դեղնութիւն, եւ կարմրութիւն: Սպիտակն՝ զմաքրութիւն եւ զպարզութիւն նշանակէ. եւ դեղնութիւն, զժուժկալութիւնն նոցա, եւ կարմրութիւնն, զերկս վաստակոցն որ յարիւրեանն կանգնէ: Է՛ ազգ շուշանի՝ որ ի ծովու բուսանի եւ վերանայ քան զջուրն՝ որպէս նահապետին ի ծովու յաշխարհէս վերացան հաւատովք եւ գործովք: Է՛ եւ յանապատին եւ յոստին, եւ ծաղկի անձրեւով, որպէս հեթանոսք բնական գիտութեամբն միայն հաճոյացան Աստուծոյ, որպէս Կուռնելիոս՝ եւ այլք բազումք: Եւ է՛ դարձեալ՝ որ բոցով արեգականն ծաղկէ՝ յորժամ այլք թառամին՝ որպէս դասք անապատաւորաց ջերմութեամբ բոցոյ սիրոյն Քրիստոսի գանազան երեւեցուցին հանդէս՝ ուստի մեք թարգամիմք թուրութեամբ եւ հեղգութեամբ:
12. Իսկ երեւեալ եօթներորդ խորանն՝ որ օրինակէ զմօսիսեան խորանացն պայնառութիւն, ըստ որում եւ սիւքն կապոյտք խառնառոտք՝ հինգ մասամբ զարդարեալք՝ զօրէնս նկարագրելով. որ յերկուս հնգեակս բաժանեալ, եւ նեցուկ եղեալ ժողովրդեանն. զի մի՛ դիրագլորք լիցին ի սխալանս պատուիրանագանցութեան. Եւ զի աստ ի ներքոյ կամարացն՝ կապոյտն հարստանայ՝ եւ կարմիրն նուազի. քանզի ստուերական էին՝ եւ գուռակ նշանարտութեան. եւ կարմիրն նուագութիւն՝ զի սակաւ ինչ կարէին մաքրութիւն առնել ժողովրդեան՝ անասնոցն մատուցմունք: Արդ՝ է՛ խորան որ միաւորէ՝ որպէս առաջինն ի փառս աստուածութեան, եւ որպէս դրախտն՝ որ զԱդամ միայն ունէր սակաւ ժամանակս: Եւ դարձեալ հեղեղ ջուրցն՝ գտոյց զմարդկութիւնս յայսկոյս. զՆոյ ունելով սկիզբն: Իսկ այլքս՝ գոյգ գոյգ են. որպէս հրեւտակացն որպէս Նոյին եւ Աբրահամուն. եւ որպէս մոսիսեանքն, սուրբն սրբոց. որով եւ Մօսէս եւ սակաւ ոմանք էին արժանաւորք՝ յօրինակ փրկչին մերոյ Յիսուսի: Եւ արտաքին խորանն որ հասարակաց է մուտն, զնոցին իսկ վարուցն ունէին զօրինակ, որք պաշտէին նովա զՏէր. մինչեւ ի ժամանակս շինելոյ տաճարին՝ ի Մօսիսէ սկսեալ: Որպէս յեօթներորդ խորանին հաւքն՝ աղանիք են կարմրակըտոց՝ որք ընդ հովանագրեն ըզՀոգւոյն սրբոյ աշակերտս. որ էլից զԷսէլիէլ հարտարապետ խորանին եւ զԵղիաբ՝ եւ ի նմա ըզՅեսու Մոսիսիս զծերսն:
13. Իսկ յաւերթորդ խորանն կախալ՝ են նշանակ պոռնիկ եւ օտարագրի կանանց՝ Թամարայ՝ Բաթսբայ՝ եւ Հոււրայ. զի խառնասէր է կախան. եւ դարձեալ բարք է կախաւ գալոյ գողանալ զծուս եւ իւր առնել. որպէս նոքա գողացան հնարիմացութեամբ ի տանէն Աբրահամաւ եւ ի գաւակէն՝ զպտուղն օրհնութեան՝ եւ եղեն նախամայրք Քրիստոսի: Եւ զի յաղանեացն ոմանք ի սեղանն հային՝ Մօսէս եւ մնանք նորա, որոց իբր բարեկամ

date palms and peacocks. The trees indicate (the angels' lofty) height in nature and their place in glory; and the fruit (indicates) the sweetest pronouncement of blessing. And the gold-feathered and gilt-tailed peacock symbolizes their pure, fine, and unblemished nature.

9. And the fourth Canon Table typifies the Garden (of Paradise), for it stands on four columns as an allegory of the tangible elements of which (it) is a mixture. And it is blue and black in color, for the radiance of Adam and his sons disappeared; the garment of skins allegorizes (this). (He) was screened from the glory of God and from the Garden which he had first enjoyed. There is also the form of an altar⁷ in each of the Canon Tables. In the second and third Canon Table (it is) shown aflame [i.e. with a flame burning on it] to symbolize the intelligible food of the corporeal ones and the rational offering [*patarag*] which they make to God. And in other Canon Tables in murky shape a Cross appears palely beneath the canopies, which demonstrates the mystery of Christ, who came secretly in the first times, descending from God amongst the angels, and from them the mystery of intellect (was given) to Adam and his progeny.
10. And red additionally (is used) for the fifth Canon Table, for by the ark of Noah and the tabernacle of Abraham the mystery of the blood of Christ was glorified (with) the righteousness of the church, which is the faith.
11. And the altar rose up together with the cross in the sixth Canon Table over the canopies, for it was made known by Abraham through the plant of the thicket and the ram [*sabekay tnkovn ew xoyiwn*], according to which it (is) said: "Abraham saw and was happy."⁸ And the multicolored aspect of the columns symbolizes the priesthood of Melchizedek in the hypostasis [*dēms*] of Christ. And in these Canon Tables are olive trees and the lily flower; the olive indicates the longevity of the Patriarchs for the counsel of their kin, for they were their unwritten law. And since they kept unwilted the flower of virtue, as the olive (keeps) its splendid, shaggy crown, the sour taste (of the olive) allegorized (both) their austere virtue and their thick locks, from which the meaning of intelligence derives. As the fuel of light (comes) from the fruit of the olive, (the light) by which things pleasing to God become visible, so (it is) with the light of righteousness through Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. And the lily has three aspects: whiteness, yellowness, and redness. The white symbolizes purity and simplicity; the yellow their patience; and the red, the labor of deeds accomplished in manliness. There is a kind of lily that grows in the sea and rises above the water, as the Patriarchs rose above the sea of this world through faith and works. And there is (a kind of lily that grows) in waste and desert lands and blossoms with the rain, even as the Gentiles by natural wisdom alone were pleasing to God, like Cornelius⁹ and many others. And again there is (a lily) that flowers beneath the flaming sun when others wilt, like the ranks of the dwellers in deserts [i.e. ascetics], (who) through the heat of the flame of the love of Christ made visible diverse proofs [*handēss*]; hence in laxity and luxury we wither.

խօսեցաւ առ նոսա Աստուած. եւ Յեսու եւ Դաւիթ՝ որ հայեցան ի խորհուրդ մարդէրորթեան Քրիստոսի: Որպէս Մօսէս ասէ. մարգարէ յարուցէ ձեզ տէր Աստուած ձեր՝ յեղբարց ձերոց իբրեւ զիս: Եւ աստ երկու եղջիւրք են սեղանոյն՝ զՄօսիսէ եւ զԱհարօնէ ասէն, որք զօրութիւնք էին ժողովրդեանն, խեթկիչ հակառակորդացն:

14. Իսկ իններորդ խորանն՝ գտահարն նշանակէ, ըստ որում առաւել է երանգօք. Բանգի սեան եւ կապուտակն նուագեաց՝ եւ կարմիրն պայծառացաւ. զի մերձ էին գալուստ Էմմանուէլին՝ եւ որպիք մարգարէիցն բարձրացուցանեն զաստուածաբանութիւն որդւոյն Աստուծոյ. ըստ որում եւ հաւքն ահազաղք՝ զնոյն նշանակէն՝ որք մերձ յառաւօտն արգարութեան ձայնէին զերեւումն անհատելի լուսոյն, ոսնհար լինելով ի վերայ մահու ասելով՝ ո՞ւր է մահ յաղթութիւն քո. ուստի քաջալերեալ բազմաց՝ արհամարհեցին զանցաւորս. եւ պսակեցան առաքիլի մահուամբ, որպէս մակաբայեցի վկայքն արիականք ըզՔրիստոսի գուշակելով զմահ. վասն որոյ սեղանն անմթեր եւ թափուր՝ զնոցայն ժամանակն ցուցանէ՝ որ արգելան յԱնտիոքայ՝ ըստ օրինացն հանելոյ պատարագ ի սեղանն: Եւ աստ՝ ծառ նոնենիք՝ որք զբանս մարգարէիցն նշանակէն. որք որպէս կեղեւօք՝ ծածկէին առակօք զհաղթութեան աւետիան հերանոսաց՝ ջանքելով հրէիցն զպտնութիւն սպառնալեացն. որ էհաս նոցա վշատեսակ խոշորութիւն վշտաց եւ գերութեանց. եւ կեղեցւոյ հերանոսաց ըշտեմարանելով զմանալի պտղոյն բարութիւն: Եւ զի է աստ արմաւենի ի ստորուստ է վեր բուսեալ՝ որ զԴաւթայն բացայայտէ մեզ. երէ նշարտութիւն յերկրէ բուսալ՝ արգարութիւն յերկնից երեւեցաւ: Եւ այսպէս իններորդ խորանն խորհրդական՝ որ է երիցս երեք՝ նշանակէ մեզ զերիս աւետարանիչս զհամաբարբառս՝ զՄատթէոս՝ զՄարկոս՝ եւ զԼուկաս. որք համաձայնեալ միմեանց գրեցին զմարդէրորթեան Քրիստոսի գտելի եւ զժամանակ. եւ ըստ մարմնոյ ազգատոհմն ցուցանելով՝ զի առաջին աստիեան՝ այս լիցի ի վեր ելից հաւատացելոց՝ եւ սոքօք իմանալ զանհատն եւ զանժամանակն. որոյ զանժամանակ ազգատոհմն ո՞ պատմեցէ. որպէս ի ձեռն Յեսուայ՝ երկրին աւետեաց կարին եւ մեղու աղբերաց՝ զՅիսուս Քրիստոս եւ զվերին գաւառն տայր նըկատել անկատար ազգին:
15. Իսկ տասն խորանն՝ որ կայ հանդէպ իններորդ խորանին, ըզհաստատութիւն եւ զկատարելութիւն սրբոյ կեղեցւոյ հաւաստաբանէ՝ որ ելից զթերութիւն օրինացն. նշարտութեամբս՝ զըստութեականացն. որոյ միջոցն Յովհաննէս էր արուսեակն արեգական արդարութեան, կատարումն մարգարէից՝ եւ սկիզբն առաքելոց. վասն որոյ հանդէպ ահազաղացն կան հաւքն ձկնաբաղք՝ որ զառաքելոցն ձկնորսացն բացայայտեն խորհուրդ. որք եղեն որսորդս մարդկան հրամանաւ տեառն՝ ի մահուանէ ի կեանս որսալով զհաւատացեալս աւետարանին: Եւ զի ոմանք ի նոցանէ յահազաղսն դարձեալ են. Բանգի մարգարէիցն էին իսկ թարգման՝ առաքելքն: Եւ կէսն ի միմեանս՝ զի միոյ կրօնից էին քարոզք: Եւ ոմանք ի սեղանն՝ զի յառաջին աղբերէն առնուն՝ զոր քարոզէն: Իսկ մրտմունքն մերձ կացեալ՝ զաւետարանիչսն նշանակէն ի կատարմանն՝ որք միջամուխք եւ ծովամուխք եղեն խորոցն Աստուծոյ՝ եւ արբին ի յորդառատ վտակացն Հոգւոյն սրբոյ՝ եւ նովին քեւօք թուլցեալ առ ամենեքումք՝ ի նոյն կենսատու ջրոյն առեալ, ցանեցին զցօղն բժշկութեան ի ցամաքուս եւ ի հիւանդացեալ հոգիս մարդկան, յառողջութիւն եւ յառօգումն անմահութեան: Եւ կարմիր ոտիւք՝ զմարգարէիցն ստուգեն՝ երէ զեղեցիկ են ոտք աւետարանչացն: Եւ բերանովքն՝ զհրագունակն խորհուրդ՝ որով արբեցան եւ աւետարնեցին զնոյն օրինակն՝ ի մաքրութիւն անձանց քրիստոնէից: Իսկ զի ոմանց ձկնաբաղաց պարանոցն ուրբեալ ընդ միմեանս՝ եւ մրտմանցն առ միմեանս կազմեալք՝ զհին եւ զնոր կտակարանացն զմիաւորութիւն եւ զմերձակայութիւն ցուցանեն: Եւ Բանգի առաւել զարդարուն եւ շնորհաւոր եւ պայնառ է տասներորդ խորանն՝ վարդազոյն

12. And the seventh Canon Table (is) apparent, which exemplifies the splendor of the tabernacles [*xoranac'in*] of Moses; accordingly, the columns¹⁰ are blue and spiraled, and adorned with five parts, describing the law, which is divided into two pentads and was a staff (of support) to the people, so that they might not fall easily into error through transgression of the commandments. And here beneath the arches blue is increased and red is lessened, for they were tenebrous and prophesiers [i.e. merely tenebrous foreshadowing] of truth. And the paucity of red (is) because the sacrifices of animals could but slightly cleanse the people. Now, it is the tabernacle which unifies, as the first (was) in the glory of divinity; and as the Garden, which had Adam for only a short time. And again, the flood of the waters parted man (from it) on this side, having Noah as the beginning. And other (tabernacles) are in pairs, as those of the angels, of Noah, and of Abraham, and (so also were) the Mosaic (ones), the Holy of Holies by which Moses and a few others were worthy, in the manner of Christ our Savior. And the outer tabernacle is the one which is the entrance of the common people, and those who worshipped the Lord by it had as an example the lives of those (who lived) until the time of the building of the temple, beginning with Moses. In the seventh Canon Table the birds are red-beaked doves, who shelter in their shadow the disciples of the Holy Spirit, who filled Bezalel the architect of the tabernacle and Eliav [= Oholiab] and in it [i.e. once it was built], through Moses, Joshua, and the elders.
13. And in the eighth Canon Table the partridges are a sign of whorish and foreign women: Tamar, Rahab, and Ruth. For the partridge (is) fond of copulation; and again it is the way of the partridge to steal eggs and make them its own, even as they [i.e. the three women] stole by cunning from the house of Abraham and his son the fruit of blessings and became the foremothers of Christ. And some see in the doves on the table Moses and his like, to whom God spoke as a friend, and Joshua and David, who looked upon the mystery of the incarnation of Christ. As Moses says: "O prophet, the Lord of God will arise for you from your brothers like me."¹¹ And the two horns of the altar they speak as Moses and Aaron, who were the powers of the people, which butt against their opponents.
14. And the ninth Canon Table signifies the temple; accordingly, it is richly colored, for the black and blue (have) waned and the red has waxed brilliant. For the advent of the Emmanuel has come close, and the sons of the prophets elevate the theology of the Son of God. Accordingly, the birds (are) cocks: They symbolize the same as those who, close to the morning of righteousness, proclaimed the apparition of the ineffable light, trampling death underfoot, saying, "Death, where is your victory?" Hence many, emboldened, scorned the transitory and were crowned with the death of the righteous, like the manly Maccabean witnesses prophesying the death of Christ; wherefore the altar, barren and without stores, shows their time, when by Antiochus they were forbidden to bring offerings to the altar according to the Law.¹² And here the trees (are) pomegranates, which symbolize the words of the prophets, who as though with rinds by allegories concealed the good tidings of sweetness to the Gentiles, feeding to the Jews the bitterness of warnings, which reached them (as)

ներկուածով կարմրութեամբ. սպառեալ եւ կապուտակին՝ զի հինն էանց խաւարն մեղաց եւ անգիտութեան՝ սգոյ եւ տխրութեան եւ ամենայն ինչ նոր եղև արեամբն Քրիստոսի ներկեալ. ըստ որում եկն եկաց ի գլուխն վերոյ կամարին՝ զի կատարեցաւ խորհուրդն Աստուծոյ. եւ կալաւ քարգուրիւն խաչին զծագս տիեզերաց՝ եւ աստուածաբանեցաւ խաչեալն ընդ ամենայն երկիր ի փառս Հօր եւ Հոգւոյն սրբոյ:

16. Եւ այս տասն խորանս ունի դարձեալ զխորհուրդ վերնագոյն խորանին՝ որ յայտնելոցն է ի լրման յաւիտենիս՝ ի կատարման զգայական աշխարհիս՝ եւ սկսանել անտեսակ եւ անձեւ երկնային աւետեացն. յորում ամենայն ինչ կատարումն առցէ՝ եւ նորն Երուսաղէմ իջանէ յերկնից ի գարդ անհատելի գարդարեալ եւ պահուհեալ՝ ըստ յայտութեան սրբոյն Յօաննու: Եկեղեցիք ամենայն յարափոխեալ միանան եւ միաւորին ի նա՝ եւ պնակաբար գեղեցկութեամբն հարսնանայ Քրիստոսի ընդունել զնա յառագաստ փառաց: Ի կատարմանն՝ յորժամ տացէ ի ձեռս զքագաւորութիւն Աստուծոյ եւ Հօր՝ յորժամ խափանեցէ զամենայն իշխանութիւնս եւ զպետութիւնս դիւաց՝ եւ ի նոցանէ զօրացեալ աշխարհակալաց՝ որք դիցին ի ներքոյ ոտից նորս ի խափանելն մահուն յետին թեամիսն. զի ամենայն ինչ հնազանդին նմա. կամաւորն եւ ակամայն. վերինն եւ ներքինն. աջն եւ ձախն. դժոխքն եւ արքայութիւնն. եւ ի նմանէ առնուն հատուցումն ըստ արժանեացն՝ յարդար դատաւորէն՝ անմահաբար եւ անեզր յաւիտենիս. եւ ապա անհատիցն ընկալցի իմացում՝ առ ի լինել Աստուած ամենայն յամենայնի: Եւ յաղագս այսորիկ ի տասն խորանին՝ բացափայլ երեւի խաչն պահուհագարդ. քանզի յաւարն վերջին ակն ունիմք հաւատացեալսն ընդ ամպս երկնից փայլատակեալ լուսով տեսանել՝ զանօրն փրկութեան մերոյ եւ զպսակն եկեղեցւոյ՝ ըզնօսան աստուածային՝ եկեալ ի պարծանս քրիստոնէից՝ եւ ի տագնապ անհաւատից՝ եւ ի ըսպառ կործանումն դիւաց աններելի եւ անսպառ տանջանօք:

17. Այստիկ սրբագան ուսումնասիրաց հարց եւ եղբարց մերոց՝ սակս ինչ պատնառ հանճարոյ եւ հիմն սկսման՝ բանակիս աւետեաց. զի զիտացումք՝ եթէ ո՛չ վայրապար եւ առանց խորհրդոյ են նկարեալ զծաղկածեւ քանդուածս գունագոյն երանգոցն խորհրդական խորանացս տասանց՝ հարքն առաջինն. այլ հոգէվարժ իմաստիւք տեսեալ զասացեալս՝ յօրինեցին զայս, եւ հեղին կրկին աչաց բանականացս առաջի՝ երեւելի հայեցումածովս ընդ տեսանելի նիւթս՝ առաջնորդեալ յիմանալի գեղեցկութիւն վայելչութեան՝ որպէս եւ ասէն Պօղոս. եթէ աներեւոյքք Աստուծոյ, երեւելեօքս իմացեալք տեսանին. յորս մտաւորաց եւ ծածկատեսից լիցումք խորանօքս այսու լուսաւորեալք: Ի բազմատեսակ առաքինութեանց մարգաց հաւաքելով զծաղիկս ի յօրինուած հիւսման պսակի անապական փառացն. ի խորանի սրբոյն տահարիս Երջելով զգուցութեամբ՝ անաղտ եւ անփոշի գնացիւք՝ աւետարանական պատրաստութեամբ՝ ի պատուանդանի աստ նախադրութեան աւետարանիս. օգտեալք որպէս իւրայէլական ժողովուրդն առ լերամբն Սինայ՝ լուսցմամբ եւ Երջացանութեամբք զարդարեալք՝ երեւմանն Աստուծոյ արծանաւորք լինէին. մանաւանդ թէ առաւել խնդրէ մերձակայ լեռանս այս աստուածաբանի՝ պարկեւորութիւն. զի այն երեքօրեայ միայն պահանջքս սուրբ լինել յօրինաւոր ամուսնաց՝ եւ զհանդերձս երեւելիս եւ զմարմինս սրբէ: Իսկ աւետարանիս աշակերտացն հրամայէ տէրն՝ միապատմութեան, եւ մի՛ պղինձ ի գօտի, եւ անմախապս՝ եւ անկօշիկս լինել. եւ ո՛չ շնալ աչօք՝ եւ ո՛չ մորթս եւ յիմար ասել եղբօրն, եւ պարտաւոր լինել զեհեհի եւ դատաստանի՝ եւ ո՛չ կալ հակառակ ընդդիմակին մեզ. եւ ապականիցն զծնօտն աջոյ՝ մատուցանել զմիւսն. եւ զներքին համդերձն հանդիսն՝ տալ եւ ըզվերինն. եւ վարդիկն պահակ մըղոն մի՝ երբալ եւ զկնի երկոյ. եւ ի հաւնապարհի կենցաղոյս չտալ ուղջոյն անցաւորից վայելիցս. եւ եթէ սխալեցաք ինչ՝ տալ աստէն զհաշիւն նախ քան զատեան մեծի աւուրն. եւ եօթանասուն եօթն թողուլ՝ որ մեզն մեղանչեն. եւ որ այսպիսիք

the thorny roughness of woes and captivities, (whilst) filling the stores of the church of the Gentiles with the goodness of rational fruit. So it is here that the date palm (is seen) sprouting on high from below, which announces to us (that tree) of David; truth sprouted from the earth and righteousness was made manifest from heaven. And thus the secret of the ninth Canon Table, which is thrice here, symbolizes for us the three synoptic¹³ evangelists: Matthew, Mark, and Luke, who in agreement with each other wrote down the place and time of the incarnation of Christ, showing his genealogy according to the body; for the first stage will be (that) of the ascent of the faithful and their understanding of the ineffable and the timeless. Who will relate his timeless genealogy? As by the hand of Joshua (he) gave good tidings of the land of fountains of milk and honey, (so he) displayed to the unperfected people Jesus Christ and the higher realm.¹⁴

15. And the ten(th) Canon Table, which stands facing the ninth, affirms the stability and perfection of the holy church, which fulfilled the inadequacies of the Law and, in truth, of the tenebrous things, in whose midst John [the Baptist] was the morning star of the sun of righteousness, the fulfillment of the Prophets and the beginning of the Apostles. Wherefore opposite the cocks are the herons, which reveal the meaning of the Apostles, (who were) fishermen. They by the command of the Lord became hunters of men, hunting the faithful of the Gospel from death into life; some of them indeed were turned toward the cocks, for the Apostles were interpreters of the Prophets, and half are (opposite) each other, since they were the preachers of a single religion; while others (face) the altar, since they take that which they preach from the first fountain. And the teals standing close by signify the evangelists in perfection: they became the penetrating sea-divers of the depths of God, and drank of the abundant rivulets of the Holy Spirit and, flying to all by the wings of the same and gathering the same life-giving water, they scattered the dew of healing over the dry and sickened souls of men, for health and the irrigation of immortality. And by their red feet they verify (the words) of the Prophets: "The feet of the evangelists [*awetaranč'ac'n*] are beautiful."¹⁵ And by their mouths (they signify) the fire-colored [*hragunakn*] mystery wherewith they were intoxicated and evangelized in the same manner, for the purification of the souls of Christians. And since the necks of some of the herons are intertwined and (those) of the teals are figured toward each other, they show the unity and intimacy of the Old and New Testaments. And since the tenth Canon Table is most ornamented and resplendent and brilliant, with rosy red paint, blue is entirely exhausted, for the ancient darkness of sin and ignorance, of lamentation and sadness, is past, and all has become new, bedaubed with the blood of Christ. Accordingly (he) came and stood at the head of the upper arch, for the mystery of God was completed, and the preaching of the cross possesses the entire universe, and the Crucified One (preached) divine wisdom to all the earth in the glory of the Father and of the Holy Spirit.
16. And this ten(th) Canon Table has again the mystery of the highest tabernacle, which will become manifest at the fulfillment of eternity, at the perfection of the sensible

են խրատական բանք եւ յորդորականք՝ լցեալք ի բանակեաղ աւետարանիս. որք են զճառք լուսակեցի՝ մերձեցելոցն յերկնաբերձ եւ յաստուածային լերինս տեսութեան՝ եւ լսելութեան. որք եւ մեզ յաջողեցին, ի ստորին նախադրութիւն աւետարանիս՝ զի մօսիսաբար մըտցուք ի մէզն անձանօք բազմաց՝ ի խորս գրոց աւետարանիս. ընդ մեզ տանել զտախտակս սրտից մերոց. զի յաղօթս հարց եւ եղբարց մերոց գրեացէ տէր ազգադութեամբ զգօրութիւն աւետարանիս՝ որ առաջիկայ մեզ. զոր նշանակեաց մեզ տան խորանս այս տպաւորութեամբ՝ փոխանակ տան պատգանացն, որ յաստուածային պնակիտան՝ ի վայելս սրտից ձերոց եւ բարեւէր վարուց՝ իբրեւ զնուէրս ինչ ընծայից բանեղէն պատարագաց, առնուլ տկար բազկօք մերովք ի սակաւատար սկտեղս մերոց մտաց՝ եւ փանախիմաց խօսիցս ձեզ ի հոտ անուշից՝ եւ մեզ ի փրկութիւն եւ յազատութիւն պարտուց: Որում արժանաւորս արասցէ ըզմեզ եւ զձեզ՝ Հոգին սուրբ առաջնորդական եւ ամենակեցոյց՝ ձերովք եւ մերովք երախտաւորօք՝ կենդանեօք եւ մեռելովք՝ մասին արդարոցն արժանաւորեալք՝ ի փառս եւ ի գովութիւն աստուածութեան. գովել եւ գոհաբանել այժմ եւ յաւետեանս. ամէն:

world and (at) the inauguration of shapeless and formless heavenly good tidings, at which everything will attain perfection and the new Jerusalem will descend from heaven in ineffable ornament and splendor, according to the Apocalypse of St. John ... And with respect to this in the ten(th) Canon Table the splendidly adorned cross appears with shining rays, for on the last day we of faith set our eyes on the clouds to see (them) suffused with beams of light: the vessel of our salvation and the crown of the church, the divine sign coming as the pride of the Christians and the terror of the faithless, for the complete destruction of the demons through merciless and unending torment.

17. These (are the teachings) of our learned fathers and brothers regarding the cause of wisdom and the foundation of the beginning of this (mighty) host of the Gospel, so that we may know that the first fathers did not portray the flowery sculptures of multicolored hue of the ten mystical Canon Tables in vain or without meaning. But they, guided by pleasure in rational beauty, fashioned these, seeing them with spiritually trained wisdom, and recast them before the eyes of rational beings as apparent displays (painted) with visible materials ...

Commentary

This commentary belongs to a rich tradition of medieval Armenian literature, dating at least to the seventh century, pertaining to the interpretation and function of holy images.

1. Euthalius is the author credited with certain prefatory material for Acts and the Pauline letters. (James R. Russell, hereafter, JRR)
2. Emending *tasnerordi* to *tasnerordi*. (JRR)
3. Or “meaning,” Arm. *xorhurd*. (JRR)
4. Canon Tables, lit. “canopy, tent.” (JRR)
5. Xorhradakan, adj. of xorh-urd, derives from a base that means “to think” and is not connected etymologically with *xoran*, which is derived by Ghilain from Pth. *xwaran* “tent.” (JRR)
6. Lit. “becoming human,” Arm. *mardelut’iwn*. (JRR)
7. Lit. “table,” Arm. *selan*. (JRR)
8. In the Armenian text of Gen. 22:13, the ram is not “caught,” as in the Hebrew and LXX, but *kaxec’aw*, “hung” from the bush. It is shown in manuscript illustrations actually dangling in the air at the scene of the sacrifice of Isaac. Hence the sense of “rising up” in the commentary is particularly Armenian. (JRR)
9. Cf. Act. 10. (JRR)
10. Restoring *siwnk’*. (JRR)
11. Cf. Deut. 18:15. (JRR)
12. Cf. 1Macc. 1:45. (JRR)
13. Or “concordant,” Arm. *hamabarbar*. (JRR)
14. Here, the intention seems to be explanation of ineffable things through familiar ones. (JRR).
15. Cf. Is. 52:7. (JRR)

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Part II



Literature, Art, and Aesthetics

II.1 Counting Down: Inventories

Introduction

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In 1972, when Cyril Mango was compiling his classic anthology of documents and sources in English translation for the study of Byzantine art, he included therein a small section titled “Inventories,” in order to bring Byzantine – primarily monastic – lists of icons, relics, liturgical vessels, vestments, manuscripts, etc. “of considerable interest for the study of the minor arts” to the attention of scholars.¹ Even so, it was only in the 1980s that certain Byzantine art historians began to exploit such lists, either appended to Byzantine monastic foundation documents (*typika*) or incorporated into other types of archival documents, such as wills, for studying various aspects of Byzantine material culture and artistic production. In 1981 Laskarina Bouras based her study of the typology and function of Byzantine lighting devices on monastic inventories, while in 1985 Ioli Kalavrezou-Maxeiner was the first to discuss critically such lists as reliable sources of information on the ways in which the Byzantines appreciated and categorized icons and ascribed material as well as religious value to them.² A few years later, Paul Hetherington employed their evidence in discussing the production and social distribution of Byzantine enamels.³ Still, it was a historian, Nicholas Oikonomides, who in 1990 brought the potential of such lists fully to the attention of the Byzantinist scholarly community with his seminal article on the contents of the Byzantine house, followed one year later by an equally important contribution on icons perceived and exploited as assets in Byzantium, an aspect art historians tended to neglect when discussing the role of these works of art in Byzantine society and culture.⁴ Since then, the number of archaeological and art-historical investigations making use of this primary source material has increased significantly, as has the range of research questions on which it is brought to bear: this is now much wider than the study of the “minor arts” that Mango had originally envisioned and includes, in addition to discussions of the typology, technology, and function of various artefact categories, enquiries into Byzantine perceptions of luxury and wealth, personal piety and its material expression, the attitudes of Byzantine owners towards their possessions and, not least, Byzantine aesthetics and the appreciation of various artistic media.⁵ Recourse to this textual material is now facilitated by *ByzAD*, an electronic database, freely accessible online, in which are collected all references to raw materials and religious and secular artefacts

1 Mango, *Art*, 237–38.

2 Bouras 1981; Kalavrezou-Maxeiner 1985, 73–79.

3 Hetherington 1988.

4 Oikonomides 1990, 1991.

5 See, selectively, Ševčenko 1992; Cutler 2002: 566–67; Parani 2007, 2008; Hetherington 2009; Pitarakis 2009–10; Pentcheva, *Sensual Icon*, 211–22; Spiesser 2015, 2016, and 2019.



Fig. II.1. Processional cross, 13.2 x 5.9 cm, c.1000–1050. Similar objects are mentioned in inventories.

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encountered in Greek Byzantine archival documents and *typika*, dating from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries.⁶ Considering that one of the major difficulties in employing Byzantine lists, as pointed out by Mango already in 1972, is understanding their terminology, the fact that *ByzAD* also provides interpretations of Byzantine technical vocabulary makes it an essential *instrumentum studiorum* for archaeologists and art historians working with Byzantine inventories.

Before proceeding to have a closer look at these Byzantine lists and the information they provide, a caveat is necessary on the use of the rubric “inventories.” The term “inventory” creates the expectation of a detailed, if not exhaustive, list of movable and immovable properties in the possession of an individual or an institution. The number of extant Byzantine documents that would fit this strict definition is very small and concerns mostly lists of ecclesiastic and monastic properties, such as that of the Xylourgou Monastery (II.1.1 in this volume). Probate inventories, compiled upon a person’s death and providing a comprehensive list of the deceased’s possessions, have not come down

⁶ *ByzAD*: L. Bender, M. Parani, B. Pitarakis, J.-M. Spieser, and A. Vuilloud, *Artefacts and Raw Materials in Byzantine Archival Documents/Objets et matériaux dans les documents d’archives byzantins*, <http://typika.cfeb.org>. See also Parani *et al.* 2019.

to us from medieval Byzantium.⁷ What has survived is a number of wills, marriage contracts,⁸ and other private acts concerning the transmission of property that include lists of movable possessions. The designation “inventory” is applied to these latter lists only in a very loose sense, since – with certain rare exceptions – they can make no real claim to comprehensiveness. Still, as the will of Kale Pakouriane (II.1.2 in this volume) demonstrates, such lists, however selective, offer us rare glimpses into the contents of Byzantine houses and small private churches and monasteries, and provide us with a useful gauge of the mentalities and tastes of Byzantine owners, shaped as they were by cultural practice, social custom, and personal inclination. As such, these lists are as worthy of consideration in archaeological and art-historical investigations as inventories proper.

The basic functions of Byzantine inventories were to safeguard property from loss, theft, or unauthorized alienation, to facilitate its management, and to ensure its smooth transition from one owner/administrator to another. The kind of information they provide depends on the nature of individual documents and on the specific purpose – legal or administrative – for which they were compiled. In Byzantine wills, for example, the price of individual items is as a rule not given, because it was neither required nor necessary for the purposes of a legacy. On the other hand, in acts that involved the restoration of a dowry, the monetary worth of individual items is usually meticulously recorded. All in all, in their descriptions, Byzantine inventories of all kinds provide only enough detail to ensure that an item was readily identifiable and easily distinguished from all others for the legal or practical purposes for which the list was compiled. In addition to price, when deemed necessary, the description could refer to materials, manufacturing and decorative techniques, colors, iconography, provenance, weight, age, and context of use. Individual entries are – one would say – telegraphic, written using a specialized technical vocabulary to describe an artefact’s distinctive features. Compared to descriptions of *realia* in Byzantine historiographical and other narrative texts, they are devoid of rhetorical flourish or exaggeration, making them all the more reliable as sources of information on the actual appearance and value of the items described. Only in documents like wills, which – their legal character notwithstanding – are also deeply personal texts, can one detect occasionally the testator’s sentiments coloring or augmenting a description with “unnecessary” details, without, however distorting it or detracting from its primary purpose, that of ease of identification.⁹

7 The closest Byzantine parallel to a probate inventory that I know of is the detailed list of the belongings of Manuel Deblitzenos from Thessaloniki, which was compiled upon his death in 1384 for the purpose of restoring to his widow Maria her dowry; see Thessaloniki, Ecclesiastical Tribunal, *Act concerning the dowry of Maria Deblitzene*; cf. Oikonomides 1990: 208; Berry 2014; Spieser 2019.

8 It should be noted that the number of surviving marriage contracts from medieval Byzantium is lamentably small: only two such documents are included in *ByzAD*.

9 See, for instance, the will of Eustathios Boilas, a potentate of Asia Minor (1059), who speaks of his illuminated gospel lectionary as his “very costly, or rather priceless treasure” (ὁ πολυτίμητος, μάλλον δὲ ὁ ἀτίμητος μου θησαυρός): *ByzAD*, artefact no. 344 = Eustathios Boilas, *Testament*, 24, l. 141. See, also, the will of Theodore Sarantenos, a member of the provincial aristocracy of Verroia in Greece (1325), who describes one of his six belts as having “beautiful” metal attachments (ἔχον καὶ στυλίου εὐμόρφους): *ByzAD*, artefact no. 1938 = Theodore Sarantenos, *Testament*, 355, ll. 50–51.

Due to the depredations of time and history, which resulted in the loss of state and private archives, the number of Byzantine inventories that has come down to us from the period between 1081–c.1330 is lamentably small. Among these, the most detailed are monastic and ecclesiastical inventories. Some of these, known as *brevia*, were compiled at the time of the foundation of a monastery and were appended to its *typikon*. Though the compilation of a *brevia* concurrently with a monastery's foundation had been obligatory since 861,¹⁰ extant examples date from the eleventh century onwards, that is a time when safeguarding a monastery's assets and protecting them from alienation became a central preoccupation of monastic founders.¹¹ The earliest surviving *brevia* is that appended to the foundation document of the Monastery of Christ Panoiktirmon in Constantinople by Michael Attaleiates (1077).¹² The provisions for the creation of multiple copies and for the safe-keeping of these inventories, included in Byzantine *typika*, make apparent the importance ascribed to them as a means of preserving and administering monastic possessions efficiently.¹³ All future acquisitions, either by donation or purchase, would be added at the end of the original *brevia*, thus ensuring not only that nothing was lost or misplaced but also, in the case of pious gifts, that the memory of the donors was preserved in perpetuity.¹⁴

In addition to self-standing *brevia*, inventories of monastic properties, serving a comparable legal and practical function, could also be incorporated into monastic foundation documents proper, as occurred in the case of the inventory of the Monastery of Boreine, near Philadelphiea in Asia Minor (expanded version after 1258).¹⁵ Detailed monastic inventories, however, were also compiled independently of an act of foundation, as was the case of the already mentioned inventory of the Monastery of Xylourgou, which was composed upon the appointment of a new abbot to the monastery for the purpose of ensuring the smooth transition of authority from the previous administration. In the case of the small monastery of St. Panteleimon in the area of Smyrna, the inventory of its possessions was composed upon the occasion of its being given to the Monastery of Lembos (1233).¹⁶ On the other hand, the specific circumstances surrounding the compilation of the extensive inventory of the treasury and the library of the Monastery of St. John the Theologian on Patmos (1200), more than a century after the monastery's foundation, remain unclear.¹⁷ Beyond the need for an up-to-date list for internal use, one may assume

10 Rhalles and Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, 2, 648–49 (so called First–Second Regional Council of Constantinople, canon 1).

11 *BMFD*, 307–8, 441–53.

12 Michael Attaleiates, *Diataxis*, 85–129; English transl. Talbot, *BMFD* 19, 355–70; cf. Lemerle 1977: 65–112.

13 E.g. Eirene Doukaina Komnene, *Typikon of Theotokos Kecharitomene*, 133; English transl. Jordan, *BMFD* 27, 705; cf. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner 1985: 73–74.

14 Michael Attaleiates, *Diataxis*, 87–89, 97; English transl. Talbot, *BMFD* 19, 356, 357.

15 Maximos, *Testament for the Monastery of Boreine*, 157–61; English transl. Dennis, *BMFD* 35, 1185–90; cf. the very short list of sacred vessels incorporated into the *typikon* of the Monastery of the Mother of God in Areia, Greece (c.1149): Leo, Bishop of Nauplia, *Typikon for the Monastery of the Mother of God in Areia*, 249; English transl. Talbot, *BMFD* 31, 968.

16 *MM* 4: 56–57.

17 *Patmos Inventory*.

that a personal interest of the then abbot, Arsenios, in the monastery's library might have prompted this laborious undertaking.¹⁸ Lastly, inventories of the possessions of small private churches were included in the wills of their founders, who wished thus to ensure that these possessions remained inalienable and, by extension, that their foundations continued to function without interruption following the testators' death. The best-known such inventory is encountered in the will of Eustathios Boilas (1059),¹⁹ but the practice apparently continued into the period that concerns us here, as demonstrated by the will of Theodosios Skaranos, active in the region of Hermeleia in northern Greece (1270–74).²⁰

It should be pointed out that some monastic inventories, such as those of Panoiktirmon and the Convent of the Mother of God Kecharitomene (1110–16) also in Constantinople, are confined to listing items kept and used in the monastery's main church, subsidiary chapels, treasury, and library, these being the most precious for the establishment in terms of both material and symbolic value and, by extension, the more likely to be threatened by misappropriation or requisition.²¹ Others, however, such those of Xylourgou, Boreine, and St. Panteleimon, also list other possessions, like metal household vessels, textile furnishings, agricultural tools, and other implements. Whether this had to do with the urban or rural context of individual foundations and the social position of the founders and their specific concerns in each case is unclear. It would seem, however, that in those examples where the inventory was compiled on the occasion of an administrative change (e.g. Xylourgou, St. Panteleimon) or in order to have the possessions of a monastery confirmed by the emperor (e.g. expanded version of Boreine), an effort was made to be as comprehensive as possible.

Despite the different occasions upon which the monastic and ecclesiastical inventories were created and the different types of documents with which they were associated, the categories of items listed therein are more or less standard. They include crosses, icons, reliquaries, liturgical vessels, censers, lighting devices, metal fittings for ecclesiastical furniture, priestly vestments and ecclesiastical textiles, and books. This implies the existence of an established notarial practice that the compilers of such lists, whether professional notaries, church officials, or members of the monastic community in question, would follow. The document in MS. Vatican City, BAV, Palatinus Graecus 367, from late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century Cyprus (II.1.3 in this volume), confirms the use of notarial templates, though this specific example seems to be modeled after a pre-existing inventory.

Some of the artefact categories included in Middle and Late Byzantine lists of ecclesiastical possessions, namely liturgical vessels, metal lighting devices, textile furnishings, and books, had formed part of church inventories since Late Antiquity.²² The inclusion of others, however, constitutes a significant departure from earlier practices, a departure

18 Cf. *ibid.*, 16.

19 Eustathios Boilas, *Testament*, 23–25; Parani *et al.* 2003.

20 Theodosios Skaranos, *Testament*, 79.

21 Cf. the bitter controversy sparked by Alexios I Komnenos' requisitions of ecclesiastical property, including liturgical vessels and other works of art, in the late eleventh century: Glavinas 1972; *BMFD*, 307–8, 450–51.

22 Mundell Mango 1986: 263–64 no. 91; Caseau 2007.

that is indicative of developments in Byzantine spirituality and piety and of the effect that these had on the liturgical praxis and its material paraphernalia and on the articulation and adornment of churches. The reference is to priestly vestments, liturgical textiles, metal fittings and curtains for the templon screen, and, above all, icons.

While the Xylourgou Inventory begins by cataloguing all the items located in the sanctuary of the monastery's church, intimating that these might have held a special significance for the monastic community given their "more sacred" location, other extant inventories list individual items according to category, with icons often heading the lists. Having said this, the order in which the various categories appear presents variation from one document to the next. Whether this was determined by perceived value (monetary or symbolic), location, the preferences of the founder, or the working habits of the compiler, is not easy to ascertain. Within each category, however, individual items appear to have been listed according to value, with the most valuable items appearing at the top of each sub-list. Still, as the inventories themselves make apparent, value was not established on purely material grounds.²³ The most important icon for a church or monastery, for instance, was usually that of its eponymous saint; to find it recorded first is thus not surprising, even if it was not the most expensive icon owned by a specific institution.²⁴ On the whole, however, within each sub-section of the lists, the items which tend to be enumerated first are those made from or adorned with costly materials (e.g. gold, silver, pearls, precious and semi-precious stones, ivory, steatite, copper-alloy) and techniques (e.g. enamel, niello, gilding, encrustation, repoussé). On the other hand, unadorned objects made of cheaper materials (e.g. plain, wood-panel icons) appear towards the end of each sub-section and are sometimes recorded in clusters rather than itemized like their more precious counterparts.²⁵

Thus, when examined as a group, such inventories can provide reliable witness to the hierarchies of materials and techniques that obtained in Byzantium at the time of their compilation.²⁶ Whether they can also help to document the existence of a Byzantine aesthetic hierarchy or a hierarchy of media²⁷ is more difficult to establish, given that elaborately decorated objects also happen to be the more expensive ones and, as such, they congregate to the top of their relevant category in any case. What remains certain is that ecclesiastical inventories reveal beyond doubt the Byzantines' preference for specific types of decorative techniques and luxurious ornament in mixed media as appropriate for honoring God and the saints and for beautifying their places of worship. As far as icons are concerned, they also help to document the development of pious practices that resulted in the total or partial concealment of the painted surface by various types of pre-

23 Cf. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner 1985: 75.

24 See, e.g., the eponymous icon of Christ Panoiktirmon in the *breve* of Attaleiates: Michael Attaleiates, *Diataxis*, 89 = *ByzAD*, artefact no. 45.

25 For example, in the Xylourgou Inventory there is reference to "90 other icons, large and small, painted on wood" (transl. L. Bender) = *ByzAD*, artefact no. 2643.

26 On the concept of Byzantine hierarchies of materials and techniques see Cutler 1981: 772–76; Mundell Mango 2003.

27 As proposed by Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon*, Appendix 1.

cious metal revetment and/or embroidered veils. As Cutler has reasoned, the selection of certain items as the recipients of such luxurious enhancements could imply that they had already held special symbolic or sentimental value for the devout donors, a value which was further augmented and proclaimed by the added ornamentation.²⁸ Interestingly, to the eyes of the Byzantine compilers and users of the lists the antiquity of an item did not necessarily impart additional importance to it.²⁹

Equally standardized with the artefact categories encountered in ecclesiastical inventories are the categories of household effects listed in documents, such as wills and marriage contracts, implying the existence of established notarial norms.³⁰ These categories commonly included jewelry, garments, and dress accessories, bedding, other textile furnishings, metal vessels and utensils for the table and the bath, and metal kitchenware.³¹ Though, as a rule, more selective and less comprehensive than inventories of ecclesiastical possessions, lists of household effects reveal a comparable appreciation and recognition of the value of items made of costly materials and using techniques requiring specialized artisanal skills.³² Wills in particular also allow us to explore how personal temperament, experiences, social status, and ambitions shaped the tastes and the preferences of individual owners and informed their attitudes towards their personal belongings. We can detect, for example, how other factors, such as beauty, provenance, and association with a beloved or respected person, could enhance the worth of an artefact in the mind of its owner. As already mentioned above, such personal attitudes can be traced in the manner in which specific items are described, either by the testator himself/herself or by a notary following his/her instructions. They can also be traced in the nature of specific legacies: a significant object, as an extension of the self, would ensure the endurance of the memory of the departed among the living long after death.³³

To conclude: though texts with no high literary aspirations, Byzantine inventories constitute an invaluable source for the study of Byzantine art. They document artefacts no longer extant, allude to the circumstances in which they were created, and evoke the contexts in which they could be displayed and appreciated by their Byzantine audience. Byzantine inventories, more than any other type of text, present artefacts in general and works of art in particular embedded in the day-to-day life, relations, and experiences of their owners and users. As such, they offer scholars an alternative path to explore how art and its products functioned within the framework of social interaction and were employed by the faithful to negotiate their relationship with the sacred. To my mind, this is a path well worth following.

28 Cf. Cutler 2002: 567.

29 In the Kecharitomene *brezion*, for instance, the last items to be listed among the unadorned icons were two old examples; see Eirene Doukaina Komnene, *Typikon of Theotokos Kecharitomene*, 153 = *ByzAD*, artefact nos 240, 2163.

30 For a thirteenth-century notarial formula for a marriage contract, see Ferrari Dalle Spade 1953: 338–39 = *ByzAD*, document. *Formulae* (ed. Ferrari dalle Spade), no. 1.

31 Cf. Oikonomides 1990.

32 Cf. Spieser 2019.

33 Cf. Parani 2007.

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II.1.1. Author Unknown (December 14, 1142)

Inventory (*Apographe*) of the Monastery of the Theotokos of Xylourgou

LUDOVIC BENDER

Ed.: S. M. Çirkoviç, G. Dagrón, and P. Lemerle, *Actes de Saint-Pantéléèmon*, Archives de l'Athos 12 (Paris, 1982), 73–76

MS.: A single parchment folio¹

Other Translations: Excerpts from the inventory regarding the icons have been transl. in German by H. Belting in *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich, 1990), 583–84, also available in Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 524–25; Belting's transl. is based on the 1873 edition of the text by F. A. Ternovskij in *Akty russkago na svyatom' Afone monastyrya sv. Velikomuchenika i tselitelya Pantelejmona (Acta, praesertim Graeca, Rossici in monte Atho monasterii)* (Kyiv) nr. 6, 51–67. Excerpts concerning the icons have also been transl. into English, based on the *Archives de l'Athos* edition, by Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon*, 218–19.

Significance

The Xylourgou inventory, one of the longest monastic inventories preserved, is a rare document given that it was redacted at the promotion of a new abbot.² It is especially interesting for the very wide range of the items listed and the detailed descriptions of some of the artefacts, which includes specific terminology. The richness of many objects, as well as the very high number of icons, indicates the importance and wealth of this monastic foundation.

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1 The document is identified as no. 7 in the *Actes de Panteleemon*, while in the Kyiv edition it is identified as no. 6. This parchment was found together with other papers in a pile numbered “3,” but the editors have no comment regarding the significance of this number. Not consulted.

2 Monastic inventories were more often written at the time of composition of the foundation charters or upon the sale or donation of a monastic foundation for the benefit of another. However, the monastery of the Eleousa, near Strumica, did not have a list of its belongings in the beginning. Its *Rule*, dating towards the end of the eleventh century, actually prohibited it. An inventory was nonetheless written, but at a much later date (1449): Bandy 2000: 172, 186; Bandy and Ševčenko 2000: 1667. For the edition of the document see Petit 1900–01: 114–25.

The Author

The document was drawn up by a commission sent from the *Mese* (Μέση), the central authority of the monastic federation of Mount Athos.³ The head of the commission was the steward (οικονόμος) of the *Mese*, the monk Arsenios. He was accompanied by the overseers (ἐπιτηρηταί),⁴ namely Methodios, abbot of Kale Agra (Galiagra), Gregory, abbot of Rabdouchou, and Thomas, abbot of Papa Eliou. Other members of the monastic community of Athos were also present. Among them, only Barlaam, steward of Vatopedi, is named.⁵ The scribe responsible for writing the inventory is anonymous.

Text and Context

The monastery of Xylourgou – the present-day skete of Bogorodica – is located in the northeastern part of the Athos peninsula. The origin of its name (meaning “of the Carpenter”) is not known. It possibly refers to the former profession or special skills of its original founder, which is otherwise unknown.⁶ The monastery was inhabited from the eleventh century by monks from Rus.⁷ It later merged with the monastery of Saint Panteleemon, with the thriving community of Xylourgou taking over this declining foundation in 1169. A reorganization of the two monasteries followed. Xylourgou – probably of a smaller size – became an annex (παράμοναστήριον) of Saint Panteleemon under the authority of a single abbot.⁸ After the installation of the Rus’ at the Panteleemon monastery, Xylourgou disappeared from the sources, certainly indicating its rapid decline.⁹

The surviving manuscript of the inventory is considered by modern scholars to be the original document. It consists of a single parchment (450 × 260/280 mm) written on both sides.¹⁰ The text is comprised of three parts, all written by the same hand.

The first and main part of the document lists the movable property belonging to the monastery. It was completed on December 16, 6651 (= 1142), following the appointment of the monk Christophoros as the new abbot of the Xylourgou monastery. Despite the official character of the delegation from the *Mese*, the document is not signed and so it is not a valid legal document. It could only have value within the monastic community of

3 Papachryssanthou 1975: 152.

4 For the offices of the steward and the overseer see Papachryssanthou 1975: 151–59.

5 For the detailed prosopography of the document see Çirkoviç *et al.* 1982: 66–67.

6 Çirkoviç *et al.* 1982: 4.

7 The earliest document, dated to 1016, is signed, among others, by Gerasimos, abbot of the monastery of the Rus’ (μονή τοῦ Ρῶς): Lemerle *et al.* 1970, 1: 157, l. 37 (doc. no. 19). The monastery must be identified with Xylourgou, but it is only mentioned for the first time under this name in 1030: Çirkoviç *et al.* 1982: 4 and 30, l. 11 (doc. no. 1). If Rus’ were originally Scandinavians, the term was later transferred in Byzantine sources to Slavic-speakers: “Rus’” S. Franklin, *ODB*, s.v.

8 Çirkoviç *et al.* 1982: 8–9, 76–86 (doc. no. 8).

9 Çirkoviç *et al.* 1982: 10.

10 Çirkoviç *et al.* 1982: 65; it is now preserved in the archives of the new monastery of Saint Panteleemon; a reproduction of the document is available in Çirkoviç *et al.* 1982, pll. XIV–XVII.

the Holy Mountain. That said, it is possible that a signed copy of the document was kept at Karyes, but such a document does not survive.

The inventory is organized according to the locations where the items are stored or displayed inside the monastery, starting with the church and moving to more common storage areas (ll. 1–43). It includes objects ranging from the most valuable artefacts to implements and food supplies. The list begins with objects located in the sanctuary of the church: the altar cloth seemingly in place on the holy table, adorned liturgical books, crosses, icons, curtains for the central door of the templon screen and other cloths, censers, candelabras, liturgical vestments, sacred vessels, reliquaries, and enkolpia, and finally liturgical and other richly ornamented cloths (ll. 4–20).

The inventory continues with the listing of icons outside of the sanctuary (ll. 21–24), starting with the most valuable ones. They are followed by lamps and candelabra of different types, as well as by hanging decorations (l. 25). The redactor of the text then turns to the liturgical books, which were exclusively Slavic (ll. 26–27). He continues with the enumeration of archival documents, common clothes, tools and implements, and dry food (ll. 28–34). Fishing implements and boats, as well as a mule and its equipment are also enumerated (ll. 35–37). The scribe further draws a list of the monastery's debts and of the money lent by it (ll. 38–41).¹¹ This first part of the inventory ends with the date and a reference to the responsibility of the new abbot Christophoros for the items (ll. 42–43).

A second section (ll. 44–49) is amended to the main inventory. It is not known whether it was added immediately after the completion of the first part or at a later date, but it is visibly the work of the same scribe. This second section comprises objects “brought” to the monastery by a monk called Lazaros. It includes holy vessels for the liturgy, reliquaries of different types and shapes, and a censer. They were most likely the equipment of a church belonging to Lazaros or for which he was responsible before his coming to Xylourgou.

The third and last section of the document (ll. 50–59), also written by the same hand, contains significant textual lacunae. It was added to the *verso* of the folio, and includes icons acquired by the monastery at a later date, as well as two veils for the chalice. Only richly decorated icons are described in detail, with most of them bearing representations of the Mother of God.

The style in which the inventory is written is, given the nature of the document, naturally very simple and, at times, almost telegraphic. It contains many recurrences of words, such as “another” (ἕτερος) used to introduce the items. The scribe also makes a repetitive use of the participle of the verb “to have” (ἔχω). Those participles are freely translated here as “having/which has,” “containing,” “adorned,” or “with,” according to the context.

The author of our inventory is not rigorous regarding the use of accents and breathings, as well as with the spelling. The reading is sometimes made difficult by a few grammatical inconsistencies, making the descriptions of complex artefacts harder to understand. The

¹¹ This section (ll. 27–41), not related to art works, is not included in this contribution; see instead Çirkoviç *et al.* 1982: 74–75. The terms and related artefacts are further discussed in the online database *ByzAD*.

main difficulties, however, lie in the rare vocabulary used. The descriptions of items, especially of the most valuable ones, introduce specific terms regarding materials, techniques, and ornaments. Some of the words do not have proper equivalents in English and are rendered in the present translation with periphrases.

In the translation, the items are presented as a paginated list, contrary to the original document where they compose continuous paragraphs. The reason for this choice is to make the translation more comprehensible, while keeping it close to the original content and the spirit of the inventory.

Text

[p. 73] Μη(νι) δεκεμβρ(ίω) ιδ´ ἰν(δικιτιῶνος) ζ´ ἐπιδημήσαντ(ες) ἐν τῇ μο(νῆ) τ(ῆς) ὑπερά-
 γ(ίας) Θ(εοτό)κου τ(ῆς) ἐπιλεγομ(ένης) τοῦ Ξουλοργ(οῦ) ὃ τε (μον)αχ(ός) ||² κῦρ Ἄρσε-
 νιο(ς) (καί) οἰκο(νό)μ(ος) τ(ῆς) Μέσ(ης) καί αὐτῶν τ(ῶν) ἐπιτηρητ(ῶν), τοῦ (μον)αχ(οῦ)
 κῦ(ρ) Μεθοδ(ίου) (καί) ἡγουμ(έν)ου τ(ῆς) Καλ(ῆς) Ἄγρας, τοῦ (μον)αχ(οῦ) κῦ(ρ) Γρη-
 γ(ο)ρ(ίου) ||³ (καί) ἡγουμ(έν)ου τ(ῆς) μο(νῆς) τοῦ Ῥαβδ(ού)χ(ου), καί του (μον)αχ(οῦ)
 κῦ(ρ) Θωμᾶ (καί) ἡγουμ(έν)ου τοῦ Παπ(ᾶ) Ἡλιοῦ, ἄλλα μ(εῖν) (καί) τοῦ οἰκο(νό)μ(ου)
 τοῦ (μον)αχ(οῦ) κῦ(ρ) Βαρλαᾶμ τ(ῆς) ||⁴ λαύρ(ας) τοῦ Βατ(ο)πεδ(ίου) (καί) ἡγουμ(ένων)
 οὐκ ολίγ(ων), γέγων(εν) ἀκριβ(ῆς) ἀπόγραφ(ῆς) τ(ῆς) παρού(σης) ἀ(γίας) μο(νῆς) ἔχου-
 σα οὗτ(ως). Ἐν πρώτ(οις) ||⁵ εἰσι(ν) ἐν τῇ ἀ(γία) ἐκκλη(σία) ἔσωθ(εν) τοῦ ἀ(γίου) θυσια-
 στηρ(ίου) ἡ ἀ(γία) τράπεζα ἔχουσα ἐνδυτ(ήν) λινὴν παλαιάν, εὐαγγέ(λια) δύο ||⁶ ὦν τὸ
 μ(έν) ἐν ἔχον στ(αυ)ρούς ἀργυρ(οὺς) διάχρυ(σους) δύο, γαμάτ(α) δ´ (καί) ἀμύγδαλα δ´,
 καρφ(ία) μ´, κομποθ(ήκας) ζ´, καί εἰς τ(ὸ) ||⁷ ἔτερον(ον) μέρος(ς) καρφία κα´ τὰ ἀμφ(ότ)ερ(α)
 ἀργ(υ)ρ(ά), τὸ (δὲ) ἔτερον ἔχον στ(αυ)ρὸν ἀργ(υ)ρ(όν), τ(ήν) σταύρωσι(ν) καί βούλ(ας)
 ιζ´ ἀργ(υ)ρ(άς) · εὐχολόγ(ιον) ἔχον στ(αυ)ρὸν ἀργ(υ)ρ(όν), ||⁸ γαμμάτα δ´, καρφ(ία) μδ´
 (καί) κομποθ(ήκας) δ´ καί ἐτέρα(ς) θ(ήκας) δ´ · στ(αυ)ρὸς ἀργ(υ)ρ(ός) τζάποτο(ς) (καί)
 ἔτερο(ς) στ(αυ)ρὸς ἀργ(υ)ρ(ός) · εἰκόνες ἔσωθ(εν) ||⁹ τοῦ βήμ(α)τ(ος) [p. 74] δέκα · εἰκὼν
 ἐτέρα ὁ ἄγ(ιος) Συμε(ὼν) ἐπι στύλ(ου) καί τ(ήν) ἀ(γίαν) Μάρθ(αν) (καί) τ(ὸν) ἄ(γιον)
 Κώνωνα (καί) δύο ἀγγελήκεια ἄνωθ(εν) ἔχουσαι φεγγεῖα ἀργ(υ)ρ(ά) ||¹⁰ ἔγκαιστα τὰ ἀμ-
 φ(ότ)ερ(α) · σκεπάσμ(α)τ(α) τ(ῆς) ἀ(γίας) τραπέζ(ης) λινὰ β´ · βηλόθ(υ)ρ(ον) τοῦ βήμ(α)
 τ(ος) βελέσ(ειν) ἄσπρ(ον) · μανδ(ή)λ(ια) δύο λινὰ · θυμί-||¹¹ ἄτοι χαλκοὶ δύο · μανουᾶλια
 τ(ῆς) εἰσόδ(ου) β´ ἔχοντ(α) τὰ ἀμφ(ότ)ερ(α) ἀνακρυ(ῶν) ἔξ, καί ἔτερα μαν<ου>άλ(ια) χαλ-
 κὰ χυτὰ δύο ||¹² καί σιδηρὰ β´ · κατζήν χαλ(κὸν) ἐν · ἀλαγές δύο · ἐπιτραχίλ(ιον) χρυ-
 σοῦν ρούσι(κον) α´ (καί) ἔτερα δύο φουφούδ(ια) · ὑπο-||¹³ μάνι(κα) ζυγ(ή) μία λευκὰ ὀξέα
 ἔχοντ(α) μαργέλ(ια) χρυσά · δισκοπωτ(ή)ρ(ιον) ἀργ(υ)ρ(όν) διάχρυ(σον) ἔχον εἰκόν(ας)
 τρεῖς τ(ήν) δέησι(ν) χωρὶς ||¹⁴ λαβήδ(ος) ἀστερήσκου καί ἡτμοῦ · ἔτερον(ον) δισκοποτ(ή)
 ρ(ιον) χαλ(κὸν) μετὰ τ(ῆς) ἀκολουθ(ίας) αὐτ(οῦ) · θίκη τοῦ τιμ(ίου) ξύλ(ου) ἀργ(υ)ρ(ά)
 διάχρυ(σος) ἔσωθ(εν) ἔχουσα ||¹⁵ θή(κας) ζ´, ἐν αὐτ(αῖς) κείμ(εν)α λήψανα ἀγῖ(ων), σκε-

Translation

[p. 73] On the 14th of December, in the 6th indiction, are present in the monastery of the Most Holy Mother of God of Xylourgou the monk Arsenios steward of the Mese, and the overseers, the monk Methodios abbot of Kale Agra, the monk Gregory abbot of the monastery of Rabdouchou, the monk Thomas abbot of Papa Eliou, the steward and monk Barlaam of the laura¹ of Vatopedi, and a number of abbots, to establish the precise inventory of this holy monastery, which owns the following <items>.

To begin with, in the holy church, inside the holy sanctuary, there are:

The holy altar, which has an old linen *endyte*,

two Gospel <lectionaries>, of which the first has <on one side> two silver-gilt crosses, four gamma<-shaped ornaments>, four almond<-shaped ornaments>, forty nails, seven fasteners and, on the other side, twenty one nails all made of silver; the other <Gospel lectionary> has a silver cross <with the depiction of> the Crucifixion and seventeen silver bosses;

an *Euchologion*² adorned with a silver cross, four gamma<-shaped ornaments>, forty-four nails, four fasteners and four other clasps;³

a cross of silver repoussé⁴ and another silver cross;

ten icons, <also> inside the sanctuary [p. 74];

another icon <depicting> saint Symeon on the column, saint Martha, saint Konon and two small angels in the upper part, which have⁵ silver nimbuses, all nielloed;⁶

two linen covers for the holy altar;

a white cotton curtain for the door of the sanctuary;

two linen cloths;

two copper <alloy> hanging censers;⁷

two candelabra for the Entrance⁸ both adorned with six ornaments of rock crystal,⁹

two other candelabra of cast copper <alloy> and two of iron;

one copper <alloy> standing censer;¹⁰

two sacerdotal garments;

one gold<embroidered> Slavic stole and two other of samite;¹¹

one white and purple pair of cuffs that have gold-<embroidered> borders;

a set of a paten and chalice of gilt silver adorned with three depictions <forming> the *Deesis*,¹² without spoon, asterisk or strainer;¹³

another set of a paten and chalice of copper <alloy> with its accessories;

a silver-gilt <reliquary->casket of the Precious Wood that has inside six compartments containing relics of saints; the compartments have golden lids; the Precious Wood,¹⁴ covered with gold, has <a depiction of> the Crucifixion; the lid of the casket of the Precious Wood is silver-gilt, adorned all around with small pearls and 18 glass <paste> gems and with <a depiction of> the Crucifixion; and inside, on the compartments of the relics, this casket is adorned all around with small pearls;¹⁵

πάσμ(α)τ(α) ἔχουσαι αἱ θή(και) χρυσά · τίμ(ιον) ξύλον περιχρυσιστόμ(ενον) ἔχ(ον) τ(ήν) στ(αύ)ρωσιν, σκέπασμα τ(ῆς) ||¹⁶ θή(κης) τοῦ τιμ(ίου) ξύλ(ου) ἀργ(υ)ρ(όν) διάχρυ(σον) γύρωθ(εν) ἔχ(ον) μ(α)ργαριτ(ά)ρ(ια) ψυλία (και) ύαιλία ιη κ(αί) τ(ήν) στ(αύ)ρωσιν, (και) αὐτῇ ἡ θίκη γύρωθ(εν) ἔσωθ(εν) εἰς τ(ὰς) θήκ(ας) τῶν ληψάν(ων) ἔχουσα μ(α)ργαριτ(ά)ρ(ια) ψυλία · ἐγκόλπ(ιον) ||¹⁷ χαλκ(όν) ἔχ(ον) ἔσωθ(εν) λίθ(ον) τίμιον (και) τίμ(ιον) ξύλ(ον) δέδεμ(ένον) ἀργ(υ)ρ(όν) διάχρυ(σον) · ἔτερ(ον) ἐγκόλπ(ιον) χαλκ(όν) ἀργ(υ)ρ(όν) τζάποτ(ον) ἔχ(ον) ἔσωθ(εν) ἄ(για) λήψανα (και) λήψανα ἄλλα διάφό(ρων) ἀγι(ων) πέντ(ε) κεκολλημ(έ)ν(α) ἐν ξυλ(ι)νῇ θή(κῃ) μετὰ ||¹⁸ δάνου θυμιάματο(ς) · ποτηροκαλ(ύ)μματ(α) βῶν τὸ ἐν κ(α)τ(ά)βλάτ(ιον) · βλάτ(ιον) κ(α)τ(ά)βλάτ(ιον) ἔχ(ον) γρύψ(ους) · ἔτερ(ον) βλάτ(ιον) κ(α)τ(ά) σφηκτ(οῦ)ρ(ιον) λεοντάρ(ια) μ(ε)τ(ά) ἐνδύμ(α)τ(ος) κουκουλαρ(ι)κου · ἔτερ(ον) βλάτ(ιον) κωμ(ά)τ(ιν) φουφούδ(ιν) · ||¹⁹ ἔτερ(α) βλάτ(ια) ἔχοντ(α) ἀετ(οῦς) διπλ(οῦς) · ἐνχείριν ἐν τ(ῆς) Θε(εοτό)κου βλάτ(ιον) ρουσί(κον) ἔχ(ον) περιφέ(ρια) χρυσά (και) στ(αυ)ρον ὄμοι(ον) · τροχ(ιον) ἐν μ(ε)τ(ά) πετην(ῶν) δύο · ἔτερ(α) ἐνχείρια δύο κατὰβλάτ(ια) ὦν τὸ ||²⁰ ἐν ἀναρθηκοτ(όν) ἐνζούδον (και) ἔτερ(ον) παλαι(όν) ρούσι(κον). Διὰ τ(ῶν) ἀγ(ίω)ν εἰκόν(ων) · εἰκῶν ἡ ὑπεράγ(ια) Θε(εοτό)κος λεμ(ιν) δέησ(ις), ἄνωθ(εν) εἰστορία τοῦ Κυ(ρίου) ἐπιγρα(φῆν) φέρ(ουσα), ἐκ(α)ταβά-||²¹σ. ἔχουσα φεγγ(ήν) ἀργ(υ)ρ(όν) διάχρυ(σον) (και) {εἰστ(α ?)} ἐπιμάνι(κα) ἀργ(υ)ρ(ά) διάχρυ(σα) · ὄμοι(ως) (και) ὁ Χ(ριστὸς) φεγγ(ίν) ἀργυρ(ο)ν(ν) διάχρυ(σον) και ἐπιμανί(κου) ἐνὸς(ς) μ(ε)τ(ά) περιφερι(ῶν) ἀργ(υ)ρ(ῶν) διαχρυ(σον) ἔχοντ(α) γύρωθ(εν) εἰκό(νας) διαφό(ρους) ||²² μ(ε)τ(ά) ύαιλί(ων) μ(ε)τ(ά) κανδίλ(ας) ἀργ(υ)ρ(ᾶς) μετὰ τοῦ βασταγίου αὐτ(ῆς) · ἔτεραι εἰκονήτ(ζ)αι μι(κραι) ε ἡ δέησ(ις) ἔχ(ον)τ(ες) φεγγ(ία (και) ἐπιμάνικ(α) ἀργ(υ)ρ(ά) ἔγκαυστ(α) · εἰκὼν μ(ε)γ(ά)λ(η) στασίδ(ιν) ὁ Κ(ύριος) ἡμ(ῶν) (και) Θε(εὸς) Ἰ(ησοῦς) Χ(ριστὸς) μ(ε)τ(ά) χρυσο-||²³πετ(ά)λ(ου) ἔχοντ(α) στ(αυ)ρὸν ἐπὶ κεφαλ(ῆς) ἀργ(υ)ρ(όν) διάχρυ(σον) ἔχ(ον)τ(α) (και) λίθ(ους) ἐν τούτ(ω) ιε και ἐπιμάνι(κα) ἀργ(υ)ρ(ά) διάχρυ(σα) · τέμπλ(ων) τ(ῆς) ἀ(γίας) ἐκκλη(σίας) ἐν μ(ε)τ(ά) χρυσωπ(ε)τάλ(ου) ἔχ(ον) τ(ὰς) δεσποτ(ι)κ(ὰς) ἔορτ(ὰς) · ἐτέρ(αι) εἰκόναι μεγάλε ται ||²⁴ (και) μικρ(αι) ὑλογραφία ἐνενηκοντ(α) · κόσκηνα χαλκ(ὰ) τ(ῶν) πολυκανδ(ή)λ(ων) μετὰ τ(ῶν) βασταγί(ων) αὐτ(ῶν) ἐπτά, μ(ε)τ(ά) (και) τ(ῶν) ἀβιν(ῶν) μικρ(ῶν) και μ(ε)γ(ά)λ(ων) θ · δρακόντ(ια) πέντ(ε) χαλκ(ὰ) · καμάρια χαλκ(ὰ) χυτ(ά). ||²⁵ μ(ε)τ(ά) τ(ῶν) χερί(ων) αὐτ(ῶν) · κανδ(ῆ)λ(αι) ύαιλιναι μ(ε)τ(ά) τ(ῶν) βασταγί(ων) αὐτ(ῶν) ἐπτά · μανδ(ῆ)λ(ια) λινα ἄνωθ(εν) τῶν εἰκόν(ων) β (και) ἀεῖρ εἶς · ὦα στρουθ(ο)

a copper <alloy> enkolpion containing a <fragment of the> Precious Stone¹⁶ and a <fragment of the> Precious Wood bound with gilt silver;

another *enkolpion* of copper and silver repoussé¹⁷ containing holy relics and five other relics of various saints;¹⁸ they are embedded, inside a wooden compartment, in dry resin incense;¹⁹

two veils for the chalice, one of which is made of a silk fabric of the highest quality;²⁰

a silk cloth of the highest quality²¹ adorned with griffons;

another silk cloth <with> lions on the outer fabric, with a lining of a second quality silk fabric;²²

another silk cloth, a piece of samite;²³

other silk cloths, adorned with double<-headed> eagles;

one silk Slavic²⁴ encheirion <with the depiction of> the Mother of God, which has gold-<embroidered> borders and a cross also <gold-embroidered>;

one <cloth> roundel²⁵ with two cocks;

two other encheiria made of a silk fabric of the highest quality,²⁶ one of which has animals²⁷ <embroidered> with the thread making loops,²⁸ and the other is an old Slavic²⁹ one.

Concerning the holy icons:

An icon <depicting> a bust-length Most Holy Mother of God and <as in> supplication,³⁰ <with> an image of the Lord in the upper part, bearing an inscription, . . .; <the Mother of God> has a silver-gilt nimbus and silver-gilt cuffs, . . .;³¹ similarly Christ also <has> a silver-gilt nimbus and one <silver-gilt> cuff; <the icon has> a silver-gilt frame adorned all around with various depictions and glass <paste> gems <it is also accompanied> by a silver lamp and its suspending chains;³²

five other icons, small, <depicting> a *Deesis*,³³ which have nimbuses and cuffs made of nielloed silver;

a large icon <depicting> Our Lord and God Jesus Christ standing, with gold-leaf;³⁴ it has a silver-gilt cross on the head,³⁵ with 15 gems on it, and silver-gilt cuffs;

the *templon* <beam> of the holy church, with gold-leaf;³⁶ it has the <depictions of the> Lord's Feasts;³⁷

ninety other icons, large and small, painted on wood;³⁸

seven piercework <discs>³⁹ of the *polykandela* with their suspending chains, nine <pierce-work discs of the *polykandela*> with their suspending <metallic> straps short and long;

five copper <alloy> dragon-shaped brackets;⁴⁰

. . . arches of cast copper <alloy> with their hand<-shaped brackets>;⁴¹

seven glass lamps with their suspending chains;

two linen veils before the icons and one *aer*;

two ostrich eggs.⁴²

Slavonic books:

Five Apostoloi,⁴³

καμίλ(ων) β. Βιβλία ρούσι(κα) ἄπόστ(ο)λ(οι) ε, ||²⁶ παρακλητ(ικαί) β, όκταήχοι ε, εἰρμο-
 λόγια ε, συνάξάρια δ, παροιμ(ίαι) μία, μιναία ιβ', πατερι(κά) β, ψαλτ(ή)ρ(ια) ε, ό άγ(ιος)
 Έφρέμ, ό άγ(ιος) Παγκράτ(ιος), όρολόγ(ια) ε, ||²⁷ νομοκανδν α. [...]

[p. 75] ||⁴² Ταϋτ(α) πάντ(α) παρεδώθ(η)σ(αν) πρ(ου) τ(ών) άνωθ(εν) εἰρημ(έ)ν(ον) δη-
 λαδ(ή) τ(όν) (μον)αχ(όν) κϋ(ρ) Χριστοφόρ(ον) (καί) ηγούμ(ε)ν(ον) τ(ῆς) μο(ν)ῆς τοϋ Ξυ-
 λ(ου)ργου, μη(νι) δεκεμβρ(ίω) ιδ ||⁴³ ἰν(δικτιῶνος) ς ἔτους ,σχνα'.

||⁴⁴ Ἡσὶ δέ ά πρὸ(σ)ῆφερ(εν) ό άδελφὸς Λάζαρο(ς) ταύτα ||⁴⁵ δισκοποτί(ριον) άργ(υ)
 ρ(όν) διαχρησον ἔχον αστερ(ίς)κον κε λαβήδ(α) τὰ άμφὸτ(ε)ρ(α) άργ(υ)ρ(ά) διαχρυ(σα) ἄ-
 στ(αυ)ρος ξύλ(ι)νο(ς) εντημένο(ς) άργ(υ)ρ(ός) διαχρυ(σος) ἔχον ἔσοθ(εν) άγια δι-||⁴⁶ ά-
 φορα ἑθήκ(η) ξύ(λι)νος τζαπομ(έ)ν(η) άνωθ(εν) διάχρυ(σος) ἔχον τ(ήν) στ(αύ)ρωσην,
 ἔχον μέσον τίμ(ιον) ξύλ(ον) σμικρ(όν) και διάφορ(α) άγια ἄ ||⁴⁷ ετ(ε)ρ(ος) τίμ(ιος) ξύλ(ι)νος
 στ(αυ)ρος εντ(η)μένο(ς) μετα ασιμ(ίου) διαχρυ(σος) μετα ἑθήκης και πετάλ(ου) ἑνκόλ-
 π(ιον) άργ(υ)ρ(όν) διαχρυ(σον) ἔχον β θηρία (καί) ἔσοθ(εν) γ τίμ(ια) ξύλ(α) ||⁴⁸ εχον εις τ(ὸ)
 βαστάγ(ην) μαργ(α)ρ(ι)ταρίτζη β τὸ ὦλον με την χήμεψιν ἑτ(έρα) εθηκήτζα ἔχον μέσον
 τίμ(ιον) ξύλ(ον) μικρ(όν) και λη-||⁴⁹ θαρίτζη δ το ὦλον αργ(υ)ρ(όν) ἑ κατζήν αργ(υ)ρ(όν)
 μετα τοϋ διλαζήου.

two *Parakletikai*,⁴⁴
 five *Oktoechoi*,⁴⁵
 five *Heirmologia*,⁴⁶
 four *Synaxaria*,⁴⁷
 one book of the Proverbs,
 12 *Menaia*,⁴⁸
 two *Paterika*,⁴⁹
 five Psalters,
 one <Life of> saint Ephrem,⁵⁰
 one <Life of> saint Pankratios,⁵¹
 five *Horologia*,⁵²
 one Nomokanon.⁵³

...

[p. 75] All the items mentioned above were handed over to the monk Christophoros abbot of the monastery of Xylourgou, on the 14th of December, 6th indiction, in the year 6651 [= 1142].

Here are the things that brother Lazaros brought <to the monastery>:

A set of a paten and chalice of gilt silver, with an asterisk and a spoon, both silver-gilt;
 a wooden cross covered with gilt silver, containing various relics;
 a wooden <reliquary->casket, with gilded repoussé⁵⁴ on the top, and with <a depiction of the> Crucifixion; it contains a small <fragment of the> Precious Wood and various holy <relics>;
 another precious wooden cross, covered with gilt silver, with a compartment and <gold->leaf;⁵⁵
 a silver-gilt *enkolpion* with two wings and containing three <fragments of the> Precious Wood; it has two small pearls in the chain; the entire <*enkolpion* is> enameled;
 another <reliquary->casket, small, having inside a small <fragment of the> Precious Wood and four small gems, the entire <casket> is of silver;

⁵⁰ ποτηροκαλυμα(τα) β κ.ο... β ἔχον το μ(έν) ἔν ... γρύψ(ους) καί τὸ ἔτ(ε)ρ(ον) λεο-
 ντ(ά)ρ(ια) μετα και μαργ(α)ρ(ι)ταρίον · ⁵¹ ἦκον ὁ Χριστος μετὰ περιφερίου ἀργ(υ)ρ(οῦ)
 διαχρυ(σου) και το φεγγ(ήν) αυτ(οῦ) χειμευτ(όν) ἔχον και ληθ(ά)ρ(ια) ν και το στεφάν(ην)
 αυτου μ[ετ]ὰ μαργαρητ(α)ρ(ίωv) ⁵² [καί τὸ φεγγίν] αυτου ληθαρια θ´ · ετ(έ)ρ(α) εικόν η
 υπεραγια Θε(οτό)κος δέησ(ις) τζαποτ(ή) διάχρυ(σος) εχον και ⁵³ μαργαριτ(ά)ρ(ια) δια-
 φορα · ετ(έ)ρ(α) ἦκόν υπεραγια Θε(οτό)κος αρησθε- [p. 76] ροκρατούσα μετα περιφερίου
 αργ(υ)ρ(οῦ) καί φε-⁵⁴γγειου και υπομανίκου ενος τα αμφότε(ε)ρ(α) διάχρ(υσα) · ετ(έ)ρ(α)
 ἦκόν γ´ ὁ Χ(ριστό)ς ἡ Θε(οτό)κος καί ὁ Πρ(ό)-⁵⁵δρομος μετὰ περιφερίου αργ(υ)ρ(οῦ) και
 φεγγειου, εχον ὁ Χ(ριστό)ς καί η Θε(οτό)κος πρό(ς) ἔν ηπομάνικον τὰ αμφότε(ε)ρ(α) διά-
 χρυ(σα) · ⁵⁶ ἔτέρα εἰκόν ἡ ὑπεραγία Θεοτόκος αριστεροκρατουσα ἀργυρά διαχρυσος μετα
 φεγγειου · ⁵⁷ ετ(έ)ρα ηκον η υπεραγια Θε(οτό)κος αργ(υ)ρ(ά) διαχρυ(σος) εχον και
 μαργ(αρι)τάρια · ⁵⁸ ετ(έ)ρ(α) ηκόν..... Θε(οτό)κος λεμ(ιν) ἀργ(υ)ρ(ά) διάχρυ(σος) · ⁵⁹
 ἔτ(ε)ρ(αι) ηκονες ιβ´ · [μηναῖον ἔχον] τοὺς ιβ´ μινας · ετ(έ)ρ(α) ἦκόν σκουτ(ά)ρ(ιον) (καί)
 αὐτ(ή) ηλογραφία ἔχον διαφόρους αγί(ους).

a silver standing censer with its tong.⁵⁶

Two veils for the chalice;

two ..., the first of which is <adorned with> griffons, and the other <with> lions and pearl<s>;

an icon <depicting> Christ with a silver-gilt frame; its nimbus is enameled and is also adorned with 50 gems; the rim <of the nimbus> is adorned with pearls and ... nine gems;⁵⁷

another icon of the Most Holy Mother of God <as in> supplication,⁵⁸ of gilded repoussé, adorned also with various pearls;⁵⁹

another icon <depicting> the Most Holy Mother of God holding <the Child> in her left arm,⁶⁰ [p. 76] with a silver frame, and with a nimbus and one cuff, both gilded;

another icon <with the> three <depictions of> Christ, the Mother of God and the Forerunner, with a silver frame and a nimbus;⁶¹ Christ and the Mother of God have one gilded cuff <each>;

another icon <depicting> the Most Holy Mother of God holding <the Child> in her left arm,⁶² of gilt silver with a nimbus ...;

another icon <depicting> the Most Holy Mother of God ... of gilt silver, adorned also with pearls;

another icon ... <depicting> a bust-length Most Holy Mother of God, of gilt silver;

twelve other icons; ... of the twelve months;⁶³

another icon, shield-like,⁶⁴ painted on wood⁶⁵ as well, having <depicted> different saints.

Commentary

1. The name “laura” originally described a type of monastic community representing a compromise between the eremitic and the communal way of life. The monks lived as solitaries during the week, dwelling in dispersed monastic cells distant from the central monastic complex. They assembled on weekends at the main church of the monastery for the religious services. As this type of monasticism later declined, the meaning of the word changed and came to refer also to communal monasteries in which only a very limited number of monks might be allowed to live as solitaries. The uses of the word created a strong symbolic link to the original lauras of Palestine.¹²
2. The *Euchologion* is a prayer book used for all religious services.
3. Valuable book bindings include fittings and ornaments of different types and shapes, and made of precious materials. In the corners of the two covers are found ornaments in the shape of a gamma (Γ). For this reason, they are called *gammatia* or *gammata* (γαμάτα, l. 6; γαμμάτα, l. 8). Other elements decorating the covers are round bosses (βούλαι, l. 7) and ornaments in the shape of almonds (ἀμύγδαλα, l. 6). They serve both the purposes of embellishing the covers and protecting them. The different elements are fixed by nails or studs (καρφία, ll. 6, 7, 8) usually also made of precious metal.¹³

All three of the books kept in the sanctuary of the church of Xylourgou – the two Gospel lectionaries and the *Euchologion* – are also adorned with crosses. The cross on the second Gospel lectionary bears a depiction of the Crucifixion. A cover of a Gospel of the Monastery of Dionysiou on Mount Athos presents a very similar arrangement, with *gammatia* and bosses around a central cross with the Crucifixion.¹⁴ Another comparable, yet more elaborate, example is the Armenian Barzdžrberd Gospels of the thirteenth century.¹⁵

Byzantine book fastenings are usually composed of two parts, a peg or pin – inserted in the edge of the upper cover – and a leather strap or plaited thong with a small metallic loop – attached to the lower cover.¹⁶ Instead of straps and braids, metallic-hinged clasps are also employed. This is the case for the first of the two Gospel lectionaries of the inventory and, most likely, for the *Euchologion* as well. They are called here *kompotheke*. This composite word is formed on *kompos* – which designates the peg – and *theke* – which corresponds here to the metallic-hinged part of the fastener.¹⁷ The Gospel lectionary had seven such fasteners. The *Euchologion* had four, and four other *thekai*. The fact that the scribe uses also the word *thekai* here, instead of *kompothekai*, does not necessarily mean that these fasteners were of a much different type.

12 Papachrysanthou 1973: 158–80.

13 For the terms see *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v.

14 Evans 2004: 121–22, fig. 5.5.

15 Evans 2004: 270, cat. 156.

16 Atsalos 1977: 33–41; Durand 1992: 467–71.

17 “Kompothèkè,” *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v.

For an example of book binding with such fasteners, the MS. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Gr. I, 55 (coll. 967), late fourteenth/early fifteenth century.¹⁸

4. The word *tzapotos* (τζάποτος, ll. 8, 17; τζαποτός, l. 52) describes a kind of metal treatment. It is translated here as “repoussé,” but it certainly encompasses both this technique – in which the metal is ornamented by hammering from the reverse of the object – and chasing, the opposite technique that consists in working on the obverse. It may also describe engraving or other techniques.¹⁹ The rare participle *tzapomenos* (τζαπομένος, l. 46) is surely used with the same meaning below.
5. The grammar is inconsistent. The agreement of the participle “having” (ἔχουσαι, l. 9) is obviously a mistake since there is no feminine plural antecedent in the sentence. It must refer collectively to the painted figures on it.
6. Among the icons located in the sanctuary, the only one being described is a composition depicting Symeon Stylite the Younger on his column. His mother Martha and his disciple Konon are certainly placed on each side of his column. The composition further includes two small angels on the upper part of the icon. This specific iconography was popular, especially on pilgrimage artefacts.²⁰
7. Two different types of censers were used in religious contexts: the *thymiatos* (θυμιατός, ll. 10–11), or *thymiaterion*, which is a type of thurible with suspending chains, translated as “hanging censer”; and the *katzion* (here κατζήν, ll. 12, 49), a small incense burner with a long handle and a small foot, translated as “standing censer.”²¹ Both types can be ornamented with images, but none of the censers mentioned in the inventory appears to have had such decoration. The *dilabion* (here διλάζιον, l. 49) mentioned in relation to one of the standing censers is a tong. It is used to handle the piece of charcoal that is placed in the censer to burn the incense.
8. The expression “of the entrance” (τῆς εἰσόδου, l. 11) is ambiguous. It does not refer to the physical entrance in the *templon* screen to the sanctuary, but to the ritual processions of the Little and Great Entrances. These processions take place during the liturgy inside the church, during which a porter carries a candlestick or small candelabrum.²²
9. The word *anakryon* (ἀνάκρυον, l. 11) is a hapax. It must be compared to the adjective *kryos*, “cold,” which can also refer to rock crystal.²³ The *anakrya* here are certainly constitutive parts, or ornaments, made of rock crystal, of the candelabra. In

18 Evans 2004: 271–72, cat. 157; for a descriptive illustration of a bookbinding see Durand 1992: 467.

19 Pitarakis 2009–10: 134; “tzapotos,” *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v.

20 E.g., see the token from the Cleveland Museum of Art, dating c.1100: Verdier 1980: 17–27; Drewer 1991–92: 263, fig. 6; 267; Evans and Wixon 1997: 385–86, cat. 255. On the iconography of Symeon the Younger see also Jolivet-Lévy 1993: 35–47.

21 “Censer,” L. Bouras and A. Kazhdan, *ODB*, s.v.; “thymiatos,” “katzion,” *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v.

22 Xanthopoulou 1997: 169 n. 25; “εἴσοδος,” Clugnet, s.v.

23 “Κρύος,” LSJ, s.v. and Kriaras-Kazane, s.v.

a document from the Xenophon monastery, the word *krion* is surely used with the same meaning (μανουάλια ἀργυρά δύο μετὰ κριῶν καὶ κατασειστῶν).²⁴

10. *Katzen* see n. 7.

11. The *phouphoudin* is a type of silk fabric, possibly the heavy and luxurious samite.²⁵

12. Art historians came to use the term *Deesis*, “prayer” or “supplication,” to make reference to the common image comprising the Theotokos, saint John the Forerunner, and Christ in the middle. The word *deesis*, however, was used by the Byzantines less strictly to describe different compositions representing a prayer or invocation.²⁶

The redactor of the Xylourgou inventory uses this word four times. In the first occurrence (l. 13), it describes three depictions on a set of paten and chalice. The three images surely correspond to the well-known composition with Christ, the Theotokos, and saint John the Forerunner. The third occurrence (l. 22) of the word corresponds to the same composition, but in this case an “extended” version of that iconography, most likely with two angels flanking the three main characters.

In two other instances (ll. 20, 52), the word is employed for depictions of the Theotokos alone. In both cases, she was certainly depicted in a three-quarter position, in an attitude of imploration, corresponding to iconographic types often described by scholars as the “Virgin *Hagiosoritissa*” or, when she holds a scroll, as the “Virgin *Paraklesis*.”²⁷ For an extant example of the *Paraklesis* type, see the twelfth-century icon of the Theotokos from the monastery of Saint-Neophyte in Paphos (Cyprus);²⁸ see also n. 32.

13. The main liturgical vessels are the paten (δίσκος) and the chalice (ποτήριον). They are commonly referred to by the composite word *diskopoterion* (δισκωποτήριον, l. 13; δισκοποτήριον, l. 14; δισκοποτήριον, l. 45). Also, in inventories, they are often accompanied by their matching accessories: the asterisk (ἀστερήσκος, l. 14; ἀστερίσκος, l. 45), the spoon (λαβὴς, ll. 14, 45), and the strainer (ἡπίμος, l. 14). The asterisk is composed of crossed metal bars. Placed over the Eucharist bread, the asterisk protects it from contact with the veil. The spoon is used to distribute wine-soaked bread from the chalice. The last implement, the strainer, serves to filter impurities from the Eucharistic wine.²⁹

14. The Precious Wood, or Holy Wood, is the relic from the Cross on which Christ was crucified.

15. Lacking a systematic approach to the object, the description of this *staurotheke*, or reliquary of the True Cross, is difficult to follow. The fact that the same word, *theke* (θήκη, also written θίκη), is used to describe both the casket itself (ll. 14, 16) and the small compartments inside the casket (ll. 15, 16) is confusing, as are the mentions

24 Ed. D. Papachryssanthou, *Actes de Xénophon*, 73, l. 142; “κριόν,” *ByzAD*, artefact no. 4222.

25 “Phouphoudin,” *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v.

26 See Walter 1968: 311–36 and *idem*. 1970: 161–87; Cutler 1987: 145–54; “Deesis,” A. Weyl Carr, *ODB*, s.v.

27 “Virgin Paraklesis” and “Virgin Hagiosoritissa,” Ševčenko, *ODB*, s.v.

28 Belting 1990: 271; 276, fig. 150.

29 On liturgical vessels see Pitarakis 2009: 309–29.

of two depictions of the Crucifixion. We understand that one was on the lid of the reliquary-casket, and the other one on the gold covering or encasing for the Precious Wood of the True Cross.

Extant examples of such reliquaries give useful comparisons, helping to visualize the *staurotheke* of Xylourgou. Certainly the most famous of them is the Limburg Staurotheke, made in the tenth century. It is a richly ornamented casket with a lid. Inside, it contains fragments of the Holy Wood made into a crucifix and, around it, further relics.³⁰ This disposition is certainly comparable to the *staurotheke* of Xylourgou. The reliquary triptych (1293) of the Skevra Monastery, despite being of a different type, also offers an interesting comparison. It contains a cross covered with gold, with the gold having depicted a Crucifixion,³¹ like the Precious Wood in our inventory.³²

16. We do not know from which sacred stone this fragment comes, but we may assume that it is a relic from the Holy Land related to the Passion of Christ.
17. *Tzapotos* see n. 4. The term *chalkos* (χαλκός) is not translated as “copper alloy” here as in the other instances of the word. It is most likely sheets of copper, and of silver, that are covering the wooden compartment of the *enkolpion*.³³
18. It is not clear why the author differentiates the holy relics (ἅγια λήψανα, l. 17) from the five other relics of saints (λήψανα ἄλλα διάφόρων ἁγίων πέντε, l. 17). It seems to suggest a distinction between the main relics, perhaps fragments related to the Passion and relics of saints.
19. The *danou thymiamatos* (δάνου θυμιάματος, l. 18) must be some kind of incense or balm (θυμίαμα), but the word δάνος creates difficulties. One must certainly read δανός, “burnt” or “dry,” despite the displacement of the accent.³⁴ In which case, we may understand that it is some kind of perfumed resin, which was melted in order to embed the small relics.³⁵
20. The word *blattion* (βλαττίον, from βλάττα, the purple), despite its original meaning, refers to a silk fabric regardless of its color.³⁶ It is not known what the exact meaning of *katablattion* (καταβλαττίον, here κατάβλάτιον, ll. 18, 19) is, but it must describe a certain type or quality of the textile.³⁷ It is possible to assume that the term describes a silk cloth of the highest quality.³⁸
21. *Katablattion* see n. 20 above.

³⁰ Ševčenko 1994: 289–94; see Heuser and Kloft 2009.

³¹ Evans 2004: 134–36, cat. 71.

³² For other comparisons, see Evans and Wixom 1992: 74–77, cat. 34–35; 79–81, cat. 37–40.

³³ For a comparison see the gold repoussé *enkolpion* from the Hermitage: Zalesskaya 2002.

³⁴ Çirkoviç *et al.* 1982: 69.

³⁵ On the question of resinous substances used in conjunction with reliquaries, as well as for a further discussion on this passage of the inventory of Xylourgou, see Pitarakis 2006: 107; for an example of the use of resinous substance in a reliquary to embed a fragment of the Precious Wood see Zalesskaya 2002: 135.

³⁶ Guillard 1949: 333–48.

³⁷ “Katablattion,” *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v.

³⁸ As proposed by Bandy and Ševčenko 2000: 1676 n. 22.

22. We understand that this cloth is a veil composed of two layers of different fabrics. The first is a precious silk decorated with motifs of lions, but the expression *kata sphektourion* (κατὰ σφηκτούριον, l. 18) is difficult to interpret. *Sphektourion* or, more properly, *sphinktourion*, is a rare word. It usually refers to a piece of a garment, particularly an ample coat. It seems to be used figuratively here to describe the precious silk fabric as the upper layer, with the second layer being the lining, which is here called *endyma* (ἔνδυμα, l. 18).³⁹ The adjective *koukoularikos* (κουκουλαρικός, l. 18) is understood as describing a kind of lesser silk fabric.⁴⁰ In Modern Greek, the word still refers to a certain quality of silk.⁴¹
23. *Phoupoudin* see n. 11.
24. The document lists a few items labeled as *rousikos* (ρούσικος), which is very unusual for Byzantine monastic inventories, yet expected in the context of a Slavic foundation. The term *rousikos* is translated here as “Slavic,” or “Slavonic” when it describes books. Among the “Slavic” items in the inventory are a basin (λεκάνι, for λεκάνη) and a cloak (κάπα, instead of κάππα). They are part of the section from the inventory comprizing common implements, which is not included in the present translation.⁴² The other objects are a stole (ἐπιτραχίλιον, l. 12) and an *encheirion* (ἐνχείριον, l. 19). It would be very interesting to be able to understand what led the delegation from the *Mese* to identify each of those items as *rousikos*. Unfortunately, it cannot be inferred from the text alone. The question, obviously, does not apply to the books, which were written in a different language.
25. *Trochion* (τροχίον, l. 19), “wheel,” certainly describes here the round shape of the cloth, hence the translation “roundel.”
26. *Katablation* see n. 20.
27. The adjective *enzoudos* (ἐνζούδος, l. 20) is a deformation of *enzodos* (ἐνζώδος), which means “having figures of animals.”⁴³
28. *Anarthekotos* (ἀναρθηκοτός, l. 20), or *narthekotos*, is a rare word describing an embroidery technique. It derives from the word *narthex* for the reason that a small stick, often a reed, is used to fashion loops of thread visible at the surface of the fabric.⁴⁴
29. *Rousikos* see n. 24.
30. *Deesis* see n. 12.
31. The editors read ἑκαταβάς here (l. 21). We do not know the meaning of this word, which seems to be corrupted.
32. This icon of the bust-length Theotokos is certainly the most important cult image of the church. Not only is it richly ornamented, but it has its own lighting, suggesting that it was presented more or less permanently inside the church. The use of the word

39 “Sphinktourion,” “endyma,” *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v.

40 Çirkoviç *et al.* 1982: 70; “κουκουλαρικός,” Kriaras-Kazane, s.v.

41 “Κουκουλαρικός,” Triantaphyllides, s.v.

42 See instead Çirkoviç *et al.* 1982: 74, ll. 28; 75, l. 33; “λεκάνι” and “κάπα,” *ByzAD*, artefact nos. 2731 and 2743.

43 Çirkoviç *et al.* 1982: 70–71.

44 “Narthèkotos,” *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v.

deesis certainly indicates that the Theotokos is depicted in an attitude of supplication. The composition also has an image of Christ in the upper part, probably a smaller-size figure painted in one corner of the icon, as on an Italian icon now in the Cini Collection in Venice.⁴⁵ The icon of our inventory also has an inscription. The syntax of the text seems to suggest that the image of Christ is bearing the inscription, but it was in all likelihood written on a scroll held by the Theotokos. This description corresponds to the iconographic type of the Virgin *Paraklesis*.⁴⁶ For extant examples see, among others, the Theotokos, painted next to the *templon* screen, in the Panagia Arakiotissa in Cyprus, dated to 1192 and an icon of Spoleto also of the twelfth century.⁴⁷

33. *Deesis* see n. 12.
34. The expression *meta chrysopetalou* (μετὰ χρυσοπετάλου, ll. 22–23; μετὰ χρυσωπετάλου, l. 23) indicates that the icon is gilded with leaves of gold. Gold leafing was common on wooden icons of a certain standard. It was applied mostly to the nimbus of the saints and to the background of the image, but eventually also to specific details. It seems that the word *petalon* (πέταλον, l. 47) is used below with the same meaning.⁴⁸
35. The position of the cross on the head (ἐπὶ κεφαλῆς) would be very surprising unless we understand that it was actually in the nimbus of Christ, with the arms of the cross radiating from the head.
36. *Chrysopetalon* see n. 34 above.
37. What is described by *templon* (τέμπλων, l. 23) is not the well-known screen of the sanctuary in its entirety, but only its architrave or epistyle, which we usually call “*templon* beam.” The *templon* beam of the church at the monastery of Xylourgou is certainly a wooden panel in one piece. On it are depicted the Lord’s Feasts, which correspond to the scenes of the most important events of the life of Christ. It was a very common subject for *templon* beams.⁴⁹
38. *Hylographos* (ύλογραφίος, l. 24; ηλογραφίος, l. 59) literally means “painted on wood.” Since most of the icons produced were painted wooden panels, this precision is usually not given in inventories, unless the author uses it to differentiate simple icons from others made of – or covered with – precious metal.
39. The *koskinon* (κόσκηνον, l. 24) is a sieve, but the term is also used by analogy to describe piercework objects, especially of metal.⁵⁰ In this case, it most probably describes the disc of the *polykandèlon*, which was supporting multiple small glass lamps.
40. We do not know the exact shape of the *drakontion* (δρακόντιον, l. 24) but it was most likely a type of lamp or a kind of bracket to which lamps were suspended. The name

45 Belting 1990: 357, fig. 188.

46 “Virgin Paraklesis,” Ševčenko, *ODB*, s.v.

47 Belting 1990: 263, fig. 139; 274, fig. 149.

48 “Petalon,” *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v.

49 See Spieser 1999: 131–64; for extant examples see Nelson and Collins 2006: 170–73, cat. 20; Tsigaridas 1996: 351–61, fig. 296–305.

50 “Koskinon,” *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v.

probably derives from its being a shape reminiscent of a dragon.⁵¹ Laskarina Bouras proposed identifying the *drakontion* with the type of bracket depicted in the paintings of the Evangelistria church in Geraki (twelfth century).⁵²

41. The *kamaria* (καμάρια, l. 24), literally “arches” or “vaults,” are understood in this context as arched metallic ornaments on the *templon* beam to which brackets for holding lamps or candles could be affixed. In this instance, the brackets are called *cheria* (χέρια, l. 24), which literally means “hands.” The reason for this denomination is without doubt the shape of the objects.⁵³
42. Ostrich eggs were used for the decoration of the interior of churches and were certainly considered very valuable. This practice continued during the Ottoman period and was not limited to Christian churches. Travelers to Constantinople witnessed the presence of ostrich eggs among the hanging lamps in Hagia Sophia as well as in other mosques of the city. To this day, pilgrims visiting the monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai can witness the persistence of this tradition.⁵⁴
43. The *Apostolos* is a liturgical book containing pericopes from the Acts and the Epistles of the apostles organized in the order in which they are read during the year.
44. The *Parakletike*, also called Great *Oktoechos*, is a liturgical book containing a repertoire of hymns for the liturgy and offices of weekdays and Sundays. It covers every day of the year except for the period of Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. It is organized in eight parts, each of them corresponding to one of the eight Byzantine musical tones.
45. The *Oktoechos* is similar to the *Parakletike* (see n. 44 above), except that it contains only the hymns for Sundays.
46. The *Heirmologion* is a liturgical book containing the *heirmoi*. The *heirmoi* are the model stanzas on which are based the melody and rhythm of the odes of various canons.
47. The *Synaxarion* contains brief notices or very short biographies arranged according to the date of each saint’s celebration. It can be distinguished from the *Menologion*, a book similarly arranged, but containing longer hagiographical texts. However, the difference between the two types is not rigorous and the terminology not always consistent. The four *Synaxaria* mentioned in our inventory would together have covered the entire year.
48. The *Menaia* are liturgical books containing hymns and other texts for offices of the fixed feasts of the year. They form a set of books, commonly – but not always – twelve in number, i.e. one for each month.
49. The *Paterikon* is a collection of sayings and tales often of the Desert Fathers, the early ascetics who lived mainly in the Egyptian desert.

51 “Drakontion,” *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v.

52 Bouras 1982: 481 and pl. 8.

53 For extant examples of such artefacts see Wamser 2004: 102–07, cat. 138–39; Pitarakis 2015; Pitarakis 2016.

54 For a view of the church with the suspended eggs see Forsyth and Weitzmann 1965, pl. XLIII; Nelson and Collins 2006: 16, fig. 21; on the use and symbolism of ostrich eggs see Galavaris 1978: 69–78.

50. The formulation of the Greek text leaves doubts about the books called “a saint Ephrem” (ὁ ἅγιος Ἐφρέμ, l. 26) and “a saint Pankratos” (ὁ ἅγιος Πανκράτιος, l. 26). The second may be the martyr saint Pankratos of Rome, who did not leave any writing, or another Pankratos, the legendary disciple of saint Peter and first bishop of Taormina. In any case, the book called “saint Pankratos” in our inventory must be a Life of one of those two saints. It is then possible to assume that the first book also contains the Life of saint Ephrem, and not one of the works of this famous Syrian theologian and hymnographer of the fourth century.⁵⁵
51. See n. 50 above.
52. The *Horologion* is a liturgical book containing the invariable elements of the daily offices.
53. The *Nomokanon* is a compilation containing canon law and civil laws regarding the Church.
54. *Tzapomenos* see n. 4.
55. *Petalon* see n. 34.
56. *Katzen* and *dilazeon* see n. 7.
57. The word *stephanion* (στεφάνην, l. 51) from *stephanos*, the “crown,” is ambiguous in this context. It is sometimes used for describing nimbuses, especially when those halos are covered with precious metal revetments,⁵⁶ but here the word *phengion* (φεγγήν, l. 51) is used with this precise meaning. We understand that in this case the *stephanion* describes only the border of the nimbus, its outer circle, hence the translation as “rim.”
- In this partly indecipherable passage, the editors of the document propose καὶ τὸ φεγγήν (l. 52), but this reading cannot be correct. This hypothetical second occurrence of the word *phengion* would imply that the image of Christ has two different nimbuses, which is impossible. The reading of the editors has not been taken into account for the translation of this entry of the inventory.
58. *Deesis* see n.12.
59. This icon is made of a gilded metal – certainly silver – with chased and repoussé ornamentation (τρίζατος, l. 52, see n. 4). In later inventories, the words *kekosmemenos*, *enkekosmemenos* (“decorated”) or *holokosmetos* (“entirely decorated”) are used to describe wooden icons with revetments. In the twelfth century however, when icons are described as made of a precious metal, a doubt remains as to whether they are works entirely of metal or wooden panels augmented by precious revetments. The same uncertainty arises from the description of other icons in the inventory (ll. 56–58).⁵⁷
60. *Aristerokratousa* (ἀριστεροκρατούσα, l. 53; ἀριστεροκρατουσα, l. 56) describes the position of the Theotokos, holding the Infant Jesus with her left arm.

55 For the saints see “Pankratos m. Romae,” “Pankratos ap. ep. Tauromenii,” “Ephraem Syrus diac. Edessae,” *BHG*, *BHG Auct*, *BHG NovAuct*, i.; “Pankratos of Taormina,” Kazhdan, and “Ephrem the Syrian,” Baldwin and Ševčenko, *ODB*, s.v.

56 “Stephanos,” *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v.

57 On precious ornaments on icons see Evans 2004: 243–57; Pitarakis 2009–10.

61. If the singular form of the word *phengion* (φεγγειον, l. 55), “nimbus,” is not a mistake here, only one figure, Christ obviously, had such an ornament.
62. *Aristerokratousa* see n. 60 above.
63. In this partially erased passage, the editors of the text understand that, after the twelve icons, the next item is a *Menaion* for the twelve months of the year (for this liturgical book see n. 48). The mention of a book in between two icons would be unexpected in this section devoted primarily to sacred images. We understand instead that the twelve icons actually correspond to what art historians call “calendar icons.” Few Byzantine examples of this type of icon survive. They display a number of small-scale images of saints in the sequence of their date of commemoration. The saints of the year may be arranged on as little as one or two matchings panels, but twelve, one for each month, is an obvious choice.⁵⁸
64. The term *skoutarion* (σκουτάριον, l. 59) certainly makes reference to the shape of the icon. The Byzantines knew different shapes of shield, but this icon was certainly round. An oval or triangular shape would be extremely surprising, for the reason that, to our knowledge, no icon of such shape is preserved. For an example of a round icon, see the portable mosaic of saint George, dating to the beginning of the fourteenth century.⁵⁹
65. *Elographios*, for *hylographos* see n. 37.

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⁵⁸ On this type of icon and for illustrations see Ševčenko 2002: 51–62.

⁵⁹ Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des Objets d’art, OA 3110: see Durand 1992: 472, cat. 364; Evans 2004: 230, cat. 137. The shape of shields in the depictions of military saints is discussed in Parani, *Reconstructing*, 125–30; Grotowski, *Arms and Armour*, 225–36.

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II.1.2 Kale Pakouriane (early 1070s–before 1103)

Testament of Kale

ALICE-MARY TALBOT

Ed.: J. Lefort *et al.*, *Actes d'Iviron, II, Du milieu du XIe siècle à 1204*, Archives de l'Athos XVI (Paris, 1990) no. 47, 170–83 at 179–80

MS.:¹ Mount Athos, Iviron Monastery, Act no. 47

Other Translations: None

Significance

As one of only two wills from the hand of a woman whose full text survives, the testament of Kale is of enormous importance in shedding light on the properties and possessions of a noblewoman around the year 1100. The list of estates and objects bequeathed by Kale-Maria to her family members, to her servants, to monks, and to monasteries, gives valuable insights on types of fabrics, garments, and household utensils, on the coinage of the time, and on the liturgical books and icons that might be owned by aristocrats. It also demonstrates the close spiritual ties that could exist between a Constantinopolitan family and monasteries on Athos.

The Author

The supposed author of this testament is the nun Maria, formerly Kale, a woman of aristocratic origin and widow of Symbatios Pakourianos, a military leader.² Maria may not have penned the testament herself, but instead she may have dictated her wishes to a notary who supplied the necessary legal formulas.

Text and Context

After Symbatios' death in 1092/93, Kale took monastic vows, but evidently remained in the family home, and headed a house monastery reminiscent of the early Christian period. Her mother, one of her sisters, and some of her servants also became nuns in this informal monastic community. Kale had been designated executrix of his estate by her husband, and took her responsibilities seriously; she herself was very wealthy as a result

¹ Not consulted.

² On Symbatios Pakourianos see PBW Symbatios 101 and Lefort *et al.* 1990: 152; his testament (dated to 1090) has been published in Lefort *et al.* 1990: 154–56 no. 44. On Maria/Kale see PBW Kale 102 and Lefort *et al.* 1990: 173–74; on the couple see also Rotman 2004: 154.

of her own dowry and her inheritance, but did not survive her husband by many years. In 1098, citing her declining health, she had her own last will and testament prepared, and died sometime before 1103. Since she and Symbatios had no children, she foresaw the imminent demise of their branch of the family, and took steps to dispose of her personal property, to place major estates under monastic control, and to emancipate household slaves.

Text

[p.179]

ἔτι θέλω τεθῆν(αι) ἐν τῷ μνήμ(α)τ(ι) τοῦ αὐθ(έν)τ(ου) καὶ ἀνδρό(ς) μου τ(ήν) εἰκόνα μου τ(ήν) μ(ε)γ(ά)λ(ην) τ(όν) Χ(ριστὸ)ν (καὶ) Θ(εό)ν μου καὶ τήν || ἑτέρ(αν) μου εἰκόνα τήν ὑπεραγίαν Θ(εοτό)κον τήν Βλαχερνίτισσ(αν), τ(ὰς) καὶ οὐσ(ας) μετὰ περιφερί(ων) ἀργυρ(ῶν), τ(όν) στ(αυ)ρὸν τ(όν) ἀργυρ(όν) καὶ τὰ δύο μανουάλ(ια) τὰ χυτὰ τὰ ἐξαφώτια. Ἀφήμι τῆ αὐθ(εν)ντρ(ία) καὶ μ(η)τ(ρί) μου εἰς λεγάτ(ον) (καὶ) μνήμ(ης) μου χάρ(ιν) τήν ἀπαλαρέ(αν) μου || τ(ήν) μ(ε)γ(ά)λ(ην) τήν ἔχουσ(αν) ἔγκαυσ(ιν) ἐν τῷ χεῖλει; τὸ βηλάρι(ον) τὸ ὄξυν καὶ χρυσοῦ λίτρ(αν) μίαν ῥωμανάτ(ην). τῆ αὐταδέ(λφη) μου κυρ(ᾶ) Μαρία τῆ προεδρίσση, τὸν μανδ(ύαν) τ(όν) ὄξυν τ(όν) ἔχοντ(α) τὰ μαργαριτ(ά)ρ(ια), τήν θάλασσ(άν) μου τήν ἀληθ(ι)ν(ήν), τὸ ζωσμάτ(ιον) μου τὸ πράσιν(ον) (καὶ) || τὰ βραχιονία μ[ο]ν τὰ χρυσὰ τὰ χειμευτὰ τὰ πλατ(έα) τ(ήν) μίαν ζυγ(ήν). τῆ αὐταδέ(λφη) μου τῆ προεδρί(σση) κυρ(ᾶ) Εὐδοκία, τ(όν) μανδ(ύαν) μου, τὸ χάσδ(ιον) μου τὸ κόκκιν(ον), τὸν ὄντα μετὰ καταβατ(ῶν) χρυσοναρθ(ήκων) καὶ τὸ φακίολιον μου τὸ ἔχ(ον) χρυσὰ γράμματ(α). τῆ αὐταδέ(λφη) μου || τῆ (μον)αχ(ῆ) κυρ(ᾶ) Εἰρήνη, τὸ μεσοσκοῦτελ(ον) τὸ ἄσπρ(ον) τὸ λεῖον τὸ μον(όν) καὶ τὸ καυκί(ον) τὸ διάχρυσ(ον) τὸ σκεπαστ(όν). τῷ Φιλαρέτῳ τῷ αὐταδέ(λφῳ) μου, καφούρια δύο μετὰ ζωναρί(ων) ἔγκαυστ(ῶν) ἐν τῷ μέσῳ καὶ κανεῖ(ον) διάχρυσ(ον) σκεπαστ(όν). τῷ ἀνδραδέ(λφῳ) μου τῷ || προέδρῳ κυρ(ῶ) Σεργίῳ ἀφήμι εἰς μνημόσυν(ον) ἧς εἶχ(ον) πρὸ(ς) αὐτ(όν) ἀγάπ(ης) διὰ χαράγματ(ος) λίτρ(ας) πεντήκοντ(α) τεταρτ(η)ρ(άς). τῷ ἀνεπιῶ μου τῷ Βασιλάκη, τὸ σελοχάλιν(ον) τὸ ὀλόχρυσ(ον) τοῦ ἀνδρό(ς) μου. τῷ [πρ]ωτοβέστη κυρ(ῶ) Λέοντι τῷ ἐξαδέ(λφῳ) μου, τὸ βιβλίον μου || τ(όν) ἅγιον Ἰω(άννην) τῆς Κλήμακο(ς) καὶ τὸ προάστειόν μου τήν Σουδάγ(αν), τὸ ἐν τῷ πετίτῳ τ(ῆς) Μακεδονί(ας) τυγχάν(ον), καθ(ὼς) ἐστὶ καὶ μετὰ πάσ(ης) τ(ῆς) περιοχ(ῆς) καὶ διακρατήσε(ως) καὶ προνομί(ων) αὐτ(οῦ). τοῖς ἐν τῷ Ὁσίῳ α[ὐθ(έν)]τ(αῖς) καὶ ἀδελ(φοῖς) μου, τὸ βραχιονίον μου τὸ κλωστ(όν) τὸ χρυσοῦν || τὸ ἰστοῦν λίτρ(ας) δύο ἐξάγια δώδεκα καὶ τὸ ἱμάτι(ον) μου τὸ ἐξάμιτ(ον) τὸ κίτριν(ον). τὸ δέ γε κατ(ζ)ιον μου τὸ μ(ε)γ(α) τὸ σκεπαστ(όν) τὸ ἀργυρ(όν) (καὶ) τὸ σταμνί(ον) τὸ μ(ε)γ(α) τὸ ἀργυρ(όν), τὸ χερνιβόξεστ(ον) τὸ ἀργυρ(όν), τὸ οἶνανθάρι(ον) τὸ μ(ε)γ(α) τὸ σαρακηνικ(όν), τὸ διώτ(ιν) τὸ διάχρυσ(ον) || τὸ σκεπαστ(όν), τὸ ἕτερ(ον) κανεῖον τὸ διάχρυσ(ον) καὶ τὰ δύο βλατέινα τυλοπροσκέφαλα τὰ καινούργ(ια) θέλω πραθῆν(αι) καὶ δοθῆν(αι) τοῖς ἐν Χ(ριστῷ) αὐθ(έν)τ(αῖς) καὶ ἀδε(λφοῖς) μου. ἀφήμι τῷ Βελκωνᾶ τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ ἀνδραδέ(λφου) μου ἐπιλώρικ(ον) ὄξυν στ(αυ)ρωτ(όν). τῷ δεσπότη(ν) (καὶ) αὐθ(έν)τ(η) μου || τῷ (μον)αχ(ῶ) κυρ(ῶ) Σάββα τῷ μαθητῆ τοῦ π(ατ)ριάρχου ἀφήμι τὸ ἐγκόλπ(ιον) μου τὸ χρυσ(όν) τὸ ἔχον ἔσωθ(εν) τίμι(ον) καὶ ἰστοῦν ἐξάγια εἴκοσι τέσσαρα. τῷ π(νευματ)ικῷ [p. 180] μου π(ατ)ρὶ τῷ (μον)αχ(ῶ) κυρ(ῶ) Θωμ(ᾶ), λίτρ(ας) τρ(εῖς) τεταρτ(η)ρ(άς). τῷ (μον)αχ(ῶ) κυρ(ῶ) Θεοδώ(ρω) τῷ ἡγουμ(έν)ῳ τοῦ ὀσίου π(ατ)ρ(ός) ἡμ(ῶν) Ῥαβουλά, βιβλίον || τ(όν) ἅγιον Βασίλ(ειον) καὶ τὸ ψαλτήριον μου τὸ μικρ(όν) τὸ ἀργυρότ(ζου)ν(ον). τῷ (μον)αχ(ῶ) Συμεῶνι τῷ μαθ(η)τ(ῆ) τοῦ μακαρίτ(ου) πν(ευματ)ικ(οῦ) π(ατ)ρ(ός) μου κυρ(οῦ) Θεοδώ(ρου), τὸ βιβλί(ον) τὸ πανηγυρικ(όν) τὸ ὄν ἐνδευμ(ένον) μετὰ τομαρίου μαύρου καὶ τ(ήν)

Translation

[p. 179] I also wish that my large icon of my Christ and God and my other icon of the supremely holy Theotokos Blachernitissa be placed at the tomb of my lord and husband,¹ as also those <icons> which also have silver revetments, as well as the silver cross, and the two cast lampstands which can accommodate six lamps. I bequeath to my mistress and mother as a legacy and for the sake of my memory the large liturgical platter which has niello on the rim, the purple veil, and one *litra* of gold coins bearing the image of Romanos.² And to my sister Kyra Maria, the wife of the *proedros*, <I bequeath> the purple cloak with pearls, my red cloak, my green girdle, and my pair of wide gold enamel bracelets; and to my sister Kyra Eudokia, the wife of the *proedros*, my red velvet cloak, the one with vertical gold lines on it, and my headcovering with golden letters; and to my sister the nun Kyra Eirene the plain silver platter and the gilded cup with a cover. <I bequeath> to my brother Philaretos two bowls with enamel bands in the middle, and a gilded covered flagon. To my brother-in-law the *proedros* Kyr Sergios I leave as a commemoration of the love which I bore for him 50 pounds of struck *tetartera*.³ To my nephew Basilakes my husband's gilded saddle and bridle. To my cousin the *protovestis* Leo, my book of Saint John Climax and my estate of Soudaga, the one in the fallowland (?) of Macedonia, together with all its environs and control and privileges. To my lords and brethren at the Hosios <monastery>⁴ my spun gold bracelet weighing two *litrai* twelve *exagia* and my six-threaded yellow cloak. My large silver covered censer (*katzion*), and the large silver vessel (*stamnion*), the silver basin and ewer, the large wine jug with Arabic design, the gilt two-handled covered vessel, another gilt vessel, and the two new silk pillowcases I wish to be sold and the proceeds given to my masters in Christ and brethren. I leave to Belkonas, the son of my brother-in-law, the purple coat (*epilorikon*) with a cross on it. To my lord and master the monk Kyr Sabbas, the disciple of the patriarch, I bequeath my golden *enkolpion*⁵ which has inside a piece of the True Cross and weighs 24 *exagia*. To my spiritual [p. 180] father, the monk Kyr Thomas <I leave> three *litrai* of *tetartera*. To the monk Kyr Theodore, abbot of the monastery of our holy father Rabbula,⁶ a book of St. Basil (of Caesarea) and my small psalter with silver clasps. To the monk Symeon, the disciple of my late spiritual father, Kyr Theodore, I leave the *panegyrikon* which is bound with black leather, and the Oktaechos with one canon.⁷ To the most venerable monastery

ὀκτάηχ(ον) τ(ήν) μονοκάνον(ον)· τῆ εὐλαβεστάτη || μονῆ τοῦ Βατοπεδίου, τὰς εἰκόν(ας)
 μου, τήν τε δέησ(ιν) τήν οὔσ(αν) μετὰ περιφερί(ων) ἀργυρ(ῶν) καί τ(ήν) βάπτισ(ιν) τήν
 ὑλογρα(φίαν), καί τὰ ἐπίλοιπ(α) βιβλία τ(ῆς) ἐκκλη(σίας) μου· τῶ ἀ(νθρώπ)ω μου τῶ
 Βάρδ(α), σκουτελοπίνακ(ον) ἀργυρ(όν) λεῖον, φορβάδια δύο ἀπὸ τ(ῶν) ὄντ(ων) εἰς τ(όν)
 || βουν(όν) καί διὰ χαραγματο(ς) λίτρ(αν) μίαν τραχέ(αν) καινούργ(ιαν).

of Vatopedi,⁸ <I leave> my icons, the Deesis with silver revetments, and the Baptism, painted on wood, and the remaining books from my chapel. To my *anthropos*⁹ Bardas <I bequeath> two silver plates, one flat, one concave, without decoration (?), two mares from those on the mountain, and one pound of new struck *trachea*.

Commentary

1. Her husband Symbatios had taken monastic vows on his deathbed, and requested that his body be transported to Athos for burial at the monastery of Iviron, to which he also left valuable estates. It is hardly possible to specify the iconography of the image, as the epithet “Blachernitissa” was employed next to various iconographic types of the Virgin.³
2. Romanos III (r.1028–34).
3. A type of lightweight coin. Probably it refers to the golden *tetarteron* that was introduced by Nikephoros Phokas and was in circulation until 1092 when Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118) introduced a new copper coin with exactly the same name. The golden *tetarteron* initially included 22 carats of gold, but it was gradually debased.⁴
4. An unknown monastery, probably located in Constantinople. It is not listed in Janin, *ÉglisesCP*.
5. A small object adorned with sacred imagery or containing holy relics that was worn on a chain around the neck; see also Glossary.
6. A monastery located near the Gate of Saint Romanos in Constantinople.
7. A *panegyrikon* was a book containing appropriate sermons for feastdays, an *oktaechos* was a liturgical book containing hymns organized under each of the eight Byzantine musical modes.
8. A monastery on Mount Athos.
9. The term “anthropos” indicates an individual in a relation of personal dependence. In this case, it probably refers to an emancipated slave.⁵

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3 See Carr 2002: 78, with further references.

4 See Grierson, *DOC*, vol. 3/1, 28–33; Morriison 2002: 923, 930.

5 Rotman 2004: 154–55, 178–79.

II.1.3 Unknown (late thirteenth–early fourteenth century)

How to Write an Inventory: A Model from a Cypriot Chancellery

LUDOVIC BENDER AND FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: A. Beihammer, *Griechische Briefe und Urkunden aus dem Zypern der Kreuzfahrerzeit: Die Formularsammlung eines koeniglichen Sekretaers in Vaticanus Palatinus Graecus 367*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte Zyperns 57 (Nicosia, 2007) no. 8, 156; previous edition: S. Lambros, “Κυπριακά και άλλα έγγραφα ἐν τοῦ Παλατινοῦ κώδικος 367 τῆς Βιβλιοθήκης τοῦ Βατικανοῦ,” *NE* 14 (1917) no. 11, 23–24

MS.:¹ Vatican City, BAV, Palatinus Graecus 367 (s. XIII/XV), f. 99r

Other Translations: A. Beihammer, as above, 248–49 (German)

Significance

This is the only extant example of a model document for composing inventory lists. It demonstrates the essential information that was expected to be included in such a legal document.

The Author

Unknown; probably a notary living in Cyprus in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth centuries.

Text and Context

Manuscript Vatican City, BAV, Palatinus gr. 367 has miscellaneous content and it was copied in Frankish Cyprus. In its 195 folia, the codex includes liturgical and ecclesiastical texts, various treatises and short notes on, e.g., metrology and logistical methods, as well as book epigrams, epigrams on works of art, epitaphs and other poems.² The manuscript is mostly known for the compilation of letters and charters connected to the activities of a local chancellery following the Byzantine notary tradition in Lusignan Cyprus. Any datable documents included in the collection come from the period between 1214 and 1320. The collection reflects the notarial activity of three generations of secretaries who were from the same family. The texts in it were meant to be used as models for composing new

¹ Not consulted.

² For a detailed description of the manuscript see Beihammer 2007: 43–50; see also Constantinides and Browning 1993 no. 31, p. 153–65. See also Vassis 2015: 329–56.

documents and letters. The collection lacks any organizational principle and covers the realms of official and private correspondence as well as matters pertaining to official, civil, or ecclesiastical, bureaucracy.³ As Alexander Beihammer has noted, this collection vividly demonstrates the coexistence of the new Frankish chanceries and their pre-existing Byzantine counterparts.⁴ The name of the compiler, as well as the name of the scribe of the manuscript, remains unknown.⁵

The inventory presented below follows the standards for Byzantine inventory lists, which could stand alone or be included in founders' testaments.⁶ The text should be read as a template, a model document that was meant to be used by notaries for the composition of similar lists. This is clearly demonstrated by the omission of any details regarding the date of its composition, or the establishment to which the list refers. The template, however, was drawn from a document composed for an extant church. Although the redactor anonymized the document details, such as direct references to monks and mentions of a cemetery church and a dependency, the provided information suggests that this was originally a monastic inventory. Unfortunately, the identity of the monastery and the date of composition of the original document remain unclear.

The language of the list is simple. The single number used for nouns referring to objects that usually appear in multiples (e.g. censers and candelabra) is noteworthy, but may be explained by the function of the text as a template that will be adapted. Furthermore, the terminology used is also rather striking, as less common words (e.g. κρατήρ) have been preferred over more commonly used ones (ποτήριον). Finally, the author announces that textile furnishings are to be included (see ἔπιπλον), but no further details are provided.

3 For an introduction to the collection see Beihammer 2006: 301–08; Beihammer 2007: 63–102, 137–46.

4 Beihammer 2007: 117–30; see also Beihammer 2011: 149–69.

5 For the relevant discussion see Beihammer 2007: 55–62, where previous attributions are also discussed.

6 See, e.g., Michael Attaleiates, *Diataxis*.

Text

Βρεβειον τῶν ἱερῶν ἀπάντων τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς ἁγίας ἐκκλησίας τῆσδε, ἱερῶν σκευῶν, ἁγίων τε καὶ σεβασμίων εἰκόνων, ἐπίπλων, βιβλίων, μανουαλίων καὶ λοιπῶν γεγεννημένου κατὰ τὸν τόνδε μῆναν τῆς ἐνεστῶσης τῆσδε ἰνδικτιῶνος †.

Ἡμέληται μὲν ἕως ἄρτι καὶ παρ' οὐδὲν τοῖς πρὸ ἡμῶν ἐλογίζετο ἢ ὡς ἐν τάξει βρεβείου καταγραφῆ, ἀλλ' ἡμῶν γε οὐ δίκαιον κατεφάνη ἐν παρασχεδαρίῳ εἶναι τὴν τοιαύτην καταγραφὴν καὶ κατάληψιν τὴν ἐνὸς ἐκάστου τῶν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἱερῶν ἀπάντων. διὸ καὶ ἀριδηλοτέραν ταύτην ποιησάμενοι θελήσει καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀπάντων ὀφθαλμοῖς προκείμενα κατεγράφησαν, ἵν' ἔχοιεν καὶ οἱ μεθ' ἡμᾶς τὴν εἶδησιν ἀπλανῆ καὶ μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ κατὰ πλάνην ζημίαν ὑφίσταται †.

Ποτήριον ἄργυρόν· δίσκος· κρατήρ· μυάκια ἦτοι λαβίδες· ἀστερίσκος· ἀτμός· θυμιατόν· ῥιπίδιον· κατζιον· καμπρίον· σταυρός· περιστέρα· κυθροκάνδηλον· κανδήλα· μανουάλιον· ξεστίον· εὐαγγέλια· τετραεῦγγελα· βιβλία ἕτερα τῆς ἐκκλησίας· κονδάκια τῆς ἐκκλησίας· διὰ τῶν σεπτῶν καὶ ἁγίων εἰκόνων· διὰ τῶν ἁγίων εἰκόνων τῶν δοθέντων ἐν τῇ τοῦ μετοχίου τοῦδε· ὁμοίως καὶ διὰ τῶν βιβλίων τοῦ αὐτοῦ μετοχίου· διὰ τῶν ἁγίων εἰκόνων τῶν οὐσῶν ἐν τῷ ναῷ τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τοῦ κοιμητηρίου †.

Translation

Inventory¹ of all consecrated [properties] of our holy church [x], the sacred vessels: holy and venerated icons, textile furnishings,² books, candelabra, etc.; compiled on this [x] month of that [x] indiction.³

The listing [of all the properties of the church] in the form of an inventory has been neglected until now and this has not been taken as a subject of consideration by those who preceded us. But it did not seem right to us that this listing and record⁴ of each one of the sacred [holdings] of the church be kept in a very rough draft.⁵ For this reason we made this clear and in accordance with the will of our brothers.⁶ Everything that was set before our eyes was listed, so that those who will come after us will have a true knowledge [of the holdings] and they will not suffer any damage by anyone due to deceit.

Silver cup; paten; chalice⁷; spoons,⁸ that is to say liturgical spoons⁹; *asterisk*; strainer;¹⁰ [hanging] censer;¹¹ *rhipidion*;¹² [standing] censer;¹³; casket¹⁴; cross; dove;¹⁵ pot-shaped lamp;¹⁶ lamp; candelabra;¹⁷ ewer;¹⁸ gospels; gospel lectionaries; other books of the church; [*Kontakia*].¹⁹ About²⁰ the venerated and holy icons [x]; about the holy icons that were given to the [church] of its dependency [x];²¹ similarly about the books of the same dependency [x]; about the holy icons which are at the church of the All-Holy Theotokos of the cemetery [x].²²

Commentary

1. The Greek term is βρέβειον or βρέβιον. The *Patmos Inventory* that dates to the year 1200/1 is simply entitled κῶδιξ (codex) while Xylourgou is called an ἀπογραφή. Often such lists survive untitled.
2. Despite the original meaning of ἔπιπλα as “implements” or “furniture,” the term is specifically used in Byzantine church inventories to describe sacred veils and altar cloths.⁷ Despite the fact that the author of the inventory has introduced this category, he does not list any such sacred textile. This could be explained as an omission on the part of the scribe, but it is not impossible that the term ἔπιπλα is actually being used here in its original meaning.
3. The omission of any detail about the date or place of composition of this document reveals the role of this text as a model, from the very beginning. Monastic inventories usually refer to the person who compiled the list, the monastery, and the specific date.⁸
4. Κατάληψις is here understood as “mental apprehension” and so “a record.”
5. The Greek word παρασχεδάριον is an hapax. The word σχεδάριον was used to indicate a draft book or portion of a written record.
6. The reference to other monks probably comes from the text from which this template was redacted; cf. also the reference to a dependency/*metochion*.
7. Κρατήρ may have been used here as a synonym for ποτήριον, a term more common for “chalice.” It may also refer to a specific kind of chalice with two handles, because of their similar shapes, and thus be a reminiscence of the large mixing vessel for wine used in Antiquity.⁹
8. Both μύακιν and its lemma μύαξ, the sea-shell, are attested in the meaning of “spoon.”¹⁰ But, as far as we know, it is not used in any other inventory to describe liturgical spoons. It is more common to find the words used to refer to semi-dome vaults and not to implements.¹¹
9. Λαβίς is the specific denomination of the liturgical spoon.
10. On the main liturgical vessels (the paten, the chalice, the asterisk, the spoon, and the strainer) see L. Bender, II.1.1 in this volume.
11. Θυμιατόν. On the difference between the two different types of censers, the θυμιατόν and the κατζίον, see L. Bender, II.1.1 in this volume.
12. The *rhypidion* is a liturgical fan originally serving the purpose of keeping flying insects away from the sacramental bread.¹²
13. Κατζίον see n.10.

⁷ See *ByzAd*, synthesis “epiplon.”

⁸ See for example, the *Patmos Inventory*, 20.

⁹ Pitarakis 2009: 309–29.

¹⁰ LSJ, rev. suppl., s.v.

¹¹ Cf. “μύακιν” and “μύακος,” Kriara, s.v.; see the use of the word in the *Typikon of the Pantokrator Monastery*: 37 (l. 153), 39 (l. 170), 73 (ll. 735, 745), 81 (ll. 860, 866).

¹² See Lampe, s.v. and Clugnet, s.v.

14. By which it is meant, without a doubt, a reliquary casket. For examples of reliquaries called *καμπτήρια* or *καμπτήριτζια* see the Testament of Eusthathios Boilas: 24 (l.132) and the *Patmos Inventory*, 21 (ll. 22–26).
15. Doves as liturgical implements or hanging decorations were in use in both the Western and Eastern Christianity from an early period. Such objects are attested by textual sources as well as material evidence. The most famous specimens are a group of hanging tabernacles in the shape of doves produced in Limoges (France) in the high Middle Ages. Many of them are preserved today.¹³ A silver hanging dove (dated to c.600) from the Attarouthi Treasure found in Syria attests to the use of such objects in the early Byzantine period but, in this case, the dove was not made as a holder for the sacramental bread.¹⁴ As far as we are aware, no hanging dove is preserved from the Middle and Late Byzantine periods. However, there is ample textual evidence for their use. For example, the tenth-century *Book of the Ceremonies* refers to votive crowns with their doves and the twelfth-century poet Theodore Prodromos wrote an epigram for a dove presented by the second wife of Manuel Komnenos, Eirene-Bertha.¹⁵ Also, according to the Russian pilgrim Antony of Novgorod, a golden dove was still hanging above the altar table in Saint Sophia in Constantinople just before the sacking of the city by the Crusaders in 1204.¹⁶ It is unclear how common was the use of doves in churches, since no other inventory list or testament refers to similar objects.¹⁷
16. *Κυθροκάνδηλον*, also called *χυτροκάνδηλον*. A lamp of hemispherical form or, more precisely, one in the shape of a pot.¹⁸
17. Usually *κανδήλα*.
18. Originally from the Latin *sextarius*. The term appears in inventories in various forms and spellings,¹⁹ including composite terms such as *χερνιβούξεστον* (meaning, “the ewer and basin”).²⁰
19. Usually called *κοντακάριον*, this particular liturgical book contains poems chanted in honour of major feasts and saints.²¹ The word *κοντάκιον* has this meaning in, e.g.,

13 Specimens are preserved in the collections of the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Widener Collection at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., and the Metropolitan Museum, New York, among others collections around the world. On the latter see Gaborit 1996: 318–19 no. 105; see also Elbern 2004, Roehrig Kaufmann 1975: 86–96.

14 Elbern 2004 and Frazer 1988; the Attarouthi Treasure is kept at the Metropolitan Museum, New York.

15 Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos, *The Book of Ceremonies*, ed. Reiske, p. 587, 2–4 and Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, no. 34, respectively. See also Hörandner 1987: 245; Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 256.

16 Frazer 1988.

17 The use of liturgical doves in Later Byzantium is a topic that is in need of attention. We are grateful to Ivan Drpić and Maria Parani for their help. Any errors are the authors’.

18 The term *κυθροκάνδηλον* also appears in the eleventh-century inventory of the monastery of Panoiktirmon, that has been published as a part of Michael Attaleiates, *Diataxis*, l. 1802; for examples and further bibliography see Parani *et al.* 2003: 153 (l. 123).

19 LSJ, s.v. “ξέστης”; *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v. “xestion.”

20 Parani *et al.* 2003: 163 (l. 165); *ByzAD*, synthesis, s.v. “cherniboxeston.”

21 E. Jeffreys, *ODB*, s.v. “kontakion.”

the *Testament of Maximos* for the monastery of the Mother of God of Skoteine.²² The same word has been understood to be referring to “a liturgical scroll” in the *Patmos Inventory*.²³

20. As Alexander Beihammer, the most recent editor of the text, notes, the use of the preposition διὰ in the Greek text is peculiar. Beihammer suggests that this mistake probably derives from the process of extracting the current text from an original, existing, inventory.²⁴ The use of the nominative and phrases beginning with the preposition διὰ are not common in extant inventories. For example in the *Patmos Inventory*, sections that include objects from a single category are often identified using the type διὰ + genitive, e.g. διὰ τῶν ἁγίων εἰκόνων.²⁵ In that case, the preposition refers to the phrase ἔχει δὲ οὕτως that is offered in the title of the inventory.²⁶ However, the last title is quoted in the nominative, βιβλία τὰ βαμβικίνα.²⁷
21. On the Greek term *Metochion* see A.-M. Talbot, “Metochion,” *ODB*, s.v.
22. The reference to the specific name of the church probably comes from the original document.

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23 See *ByzAd*, ref. no. 26140.

24 Beihammer 2007: 328 no. 53.

25 E.g. *Patmos Inventory*: διὰ τῶν ἁγίων εἰκόνων (p. 20), διὰ τῶν τιμίων ξύλων καὶ τῶν ἁγίων λειψάνων, διὰ τῶν ἁγίων δισκοποτηρίων (both p. 21), διὰ τῶν βιβλίων (p. 21), etc.

26 See *Patmos Inventory*, p. 20.

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II.2 Describing, Experiencing, Narrating: The Use of *Ekphrasis* (c.1081–1330s)

Introduction

INGELA NILSSON

In a twelfth-century *ekphrasis* by Constantine Manasses, the *Description of the Earth*,¹ the first-person narrator opens with a proem offering a theoretical comparison between painting and sculpture. Painting, he argues, has a greater potential to depict objects and persons realistically, but before he moves on to his own example of this, he turns to the masterpieces of ancient artists. Their works have been described and are still under discussion, says the narrator, such as those by Phidias, Praxiteles, Lysippus, and Parrhasius. Two sculptures are brought up as examples: Myron's cow and the sitting Heracles. The narrator then arrives at his purpose: an urge to describe a work he has seen with his own eyes (23–29):

Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν κἀν ταῖς βίβλοις γεγράφαται καὶ ταῖς ἱστορίαις ἀνάγραπτα φέρεται, ἐγὼ δὲ ζωγράφου χειρὸς ἔργον ἰδὼν καὶ τὰς ὄψεις καταγοητευθεὶς τῷ θεάματι καὶ τῆς εὐτεχνίας ἀποθαυμάσας τὸν ἀνθρωπὸν ἀφιλοκάλου ψυχῆς ἠγησάμην σιωπῆ τηλικούτου ἔργον κατακαλύψαι καὶ τὰ τοῦ πράγματος στήσαι μέχρι καὶ θαύματος. Καὶ τοίνυν χαρίζομαι τούτῳ τὴν γλῶσσαν καὶ ὡς ἐφικτὸν ὑπ' ὄψιν τοῖς οὐκ ἰδοῦσι παρίστημι· ἔχει δὲ ὧδέ μοι τὰ τοῦ θεάματος.

All this has been depicted in books and transmitted in narratives, but since I have seen myself a work of a painter's hand, having had my eyes enchanted by the sight and admiring the skill of the man, I thought that only an enemy of beauty could cover with silence such a work of art and stand alone in admiration of the object's effect. Therefore I now offer my voice to the painting and present it, as far as it is possible, before the eyes of those who have not seen it. The story of the sight is as follows.²

1 Ed. Lampsidis 1991, modern Greek transl. Agapitos 2006. Full title: *Description of pictures set in a circular marble, having at their center Earth in the form of a woman, and all around fruit, sea animals and various other creatures* (Τοῦ φιλοσόφου καὶ ῥήτορος κυροῦ Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ Μανασσῆ ἔκφρασις εἰκονισμάτων ἐν μαρμάρῳ κυκλοτερεῖ, κατὰ μέσον μὲν τυπούντων τὴν γῆν ἐν μορφῇ γυναικός, κύκλῳ δὲ παρόντων ὀπωρῶν καὶ τινῶν ζώων θαλασσίων καὶ ἄλλων διαφόρων). On Constantine Manasses, see C. Messis and I. Nilsson, II.2.2 in this volume. Together we are preparing new editions and commented translations of all the *ekphrasis* by Manasses; see Messis and Nilsson 2015 and 2019.

2 I have deliberately chosen to translate τὰ τοῦ θεήματος with “the story of the sight”; cf. p. 1177 on the narrative characteristics of *ekphrasis*, but also the title formula τὰ τοῦ for, e.g., the novels (“the events of” or “the story of”).



Fig. II.2 Panel with a griffin, 1250–1300, said to be made in Greece or the Balkans.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 2000.81

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The narrator goes on to describe a building of the imperial palace area, a beautifully adorned house that was once an imperial apartment. Marble and rare kinds of stone decorate its floors and walls, and the narrator is particularly impressed by what he thinks is a remarkable painting. He is so impressed that he bursts into a praise of the artist and his skill, at which point someone who is standing next to him – a person who knows the mysteries of arts – explains that the painting is, in fact, a mosaic. The description proper then offers a detailed account of the image: the mosaic has a personification of Earth in the form of a young woman in the middle, surrounded by nine tableaux with different kinds of fruit, birds, and fish.

I should like to take the *Description of the Earth* as a point of departure for a discussion of how *ekphrasis* was used in the Komnenian and early Palaiologan period. At first sight, this *ekphrasis* looks like a typical description of a work of art, consisting of a series of *topoi* that could belong pretty much anywhere in the Greek tradition. It has a proem introducing the complex relation between image and word, underlining the skills of the artist but at the same time displaying the rhetorical skills of its author.³ There is a nar-

³ See also the closure of the *ekphrasis* at 227–28: “I have described the entire artifice of the marble mosaic as a response to the picture and as proof of the art” (Γέγραπται δέ μοι τὸ πᾶν περὶ τὴν μάρμαρον τέχνασμα καὶ εἰς ἀντιγραφὴν τῆς γραφῆς καὶ εἰς τέχνης ἀπόπειραν), where “the art” probably refers to rhetoric but also can be understood as the skills of both artists.

rative frame, presenting the situation in which the object is observed, and the narrator discusses the object with an expert who helps to explain its nature, just as in the *Imagines* by Philostratus. Significantly, the *ekphraseis* by Philostratus also function as hypotexts for this and other descriptions by Manasses.⁴ However, the proem also offers two important indications of how we can understand the *ekphrasis* in its twelfth-century context: the first concerns its rhetorical and literary pedigree, the second its Constantinopolitan setting.

First, the bronze cow of Myron: “Thus Myron created a cow that looked so real that a tender calf was deceived and a bellowing bull was driven to desire” (16–18: ἐντεῦθεν ὁ Μύρωνος βοῦς ἀντικρυς ἔμπνους δεδημιουργηται, ὡς καὶ μόσχον ἀπαλὸν ἀπατῆσαι καὶ ταῦρον μυκητῆν εἰς ἔρωτα ἐφυλκύσασθαι). This statue is not just any ancient work of art, but the object of no less than thirty-six ekphrastic epigrams included in the *Anthologia Palatina* (9.713–42, 793–98). None of these epigrams offers an objective description of the statue; instead, they all “respond to the work by offering tropes of verisimilitude.”⁵ That is, they all take as their starting point “this cow looks so real that . . .,” sometimes in the voice of the cow itself: “If a calf sees me, it will low; if a bull, it will mount me . . .” (*Anth. Pal.* 9.730, 1–2: ἦν μ’ ἐσίδη μόσχος, μυκήσεται: ἦν δέ γε ταῦρος, βῆσεται. . .).⁶ The example of Myron in Manasses’ proem accordingly alludes to an ekphrastic tradition that includes not only elaborate imitation of rhetorical models, but above all intellectual playfulness and sophisticated response to works of art. This is further supported by the proem’s comment on literary tradition vs experience (“All this has been depicted in books and transmitted in narratives . . .”) and also by the narrator’s own response to the image: he bursts out in praise, and then listens to the words of someone who has experience in the arts, following the advice of Lucian not to stand awestruck but to speak: art should produce commentary from the cultured viewer (*pepaideumenos theates*).⁷

Such a reaction is produced by the second work of art that is mentioned in the proem, the realistically depicted statue of a sitting Heracles (18–22):

ἐντεῦθεν Ἡρακλῆς ὁ Διὸς τεχνηέντως ἐσφυρηλάττηται καλὸς καὶ μέγας καὶ ἥρωας καὶ βριαρὸς πλεκτῶ μὲν καλάθω ἐπικαθήμενος, τῇ δεξιᾷ δὲ τὴν κεφαλὴν ὑπάνεχων ὑπὸ βαρυθυμίας ὀκλάζουσαν. εἴποι τις αὐτὸν τὰς ἑαυτοῦ τύχας ὀδύρεσθαι: οὕτως ἔμψυχον τὸ χαλκούργημα, οὕτως αὐτόχρομα ἔμπνουν τὸ ἄγαλμα.

4 See, e.g., Manasses, *Description of the Earth*, 5–16 (cf. Philostratus, *Imagines* 1, proem 1–2); *Description of the Earth* 109–14 (cf. *Imagines* 1.6.1); *Description of the Earth*, 151–63 (cf. *Imagines* 2.26); *Description of the Earth* 215–19 (cf. *Imagines* 1.31.1); see also Manasses, *Description of the Cyclops*, 46–51 (Sternbach) (cf. *Imagines* 2.18.3). For a comparison between the openings of the *Description of the Earth* and the *Description of the Cyclops* in relation to Philostratus see Nilsson 2011, 127–28; on *Description of the Earth*, 151–63 and its relation to Philostratus vs the *Schede tou myos* see Nilsson 2021: 134–38.

5 Goldhill 2007: 16. From a narratological perspective, the device (“you might have thought . . .”) is part of a focalization strategy, turning a “you” into a hypothetical focalizer and thus drawing recipients into the narrative; see de Jong 2014: 68. For another recent study of the cow epigrams see Squire 2010.

6 One could argue that this particular epigram is ethopoietic rather than ekphrastic, but then again the *ethopoia* is in itself ekphrastic but most often with a first-person focalization. For suitable twelfth-century examples see the creative examples by Nikephoros Basilakes in Pignani 1983: 139–232.

7 Lucian, *On the House (De domo)* on which see Goldhill 2001.

Thus had Heracles, son of Zeus, been skilfully wrought, beautiful and large, heroic and strong, sitting on a wicker basket and supporting his head, bent by melancholy, in his right hand. One would say that he was lamenting his fate; so vivid was the bronze work, so filled with life was the statue.

Again, this is not just any statue. It also functions as a reference to the imperial setting of Manasses' *ekphrasis*, since such a work was known to decorate the capital from early on and was probably still standing on the Hippodrome, next to the palace area which is the narrative setting of the *Description of the Earth*.⁸ A few decades later, Niketas Choniates included a similar statue in his description of precious ancient works destroyed by the Latins.⁹ The palace area, invested with imperial meaning and carrying reminiscences of the ancient past of the Byzantines, offered a setting for the *ekphrasis*' beautiful mosaic that represents not only the exquisite luxury of the Graeco-Roman heritage but also the life-like representation achieved by artists and rhetoricians alike.¹⁰

The *Description of the Earth* is in this way characteristic not only of Manasses' own series of *ekphraseis*, all relating to various aspects of the imperial environment,¹¹ but also of the ekphrastic development of the Komnenian century. In line with the general literary trends of the period, marked by an experimental use of the ancient heritage and an intense play with rhetorical conventions, the *ekphrasis* flourished. Just as the ancient handbooks had prescribed, it went well beyond works of art in its attempts to "bring the subject matter vividly before the eyes" of its recipients.¹² The primary aim of an *ekphrasis* was to echo the viewer's experience and perception, offering an interpretative framework for the viewing process, regardless of the object described. An *ekphrasis* could accordingly describe, as above, a work of art or a building, but also – and more often – a city, a person, or an event. It could be composed in prose or verse, short or long, independent or inserted in a longer oration, saint's life, novel or chronicle – the variations were endless.

Preserved twelfth-century *ekphraseis* thus display a wide range of forms and functions. Nicholas Mesarites' elaborate description of the Church of the Holy Apostles and its gardens presents a description not only of the church itself, but also of its setting in lush gardens,¹³ while the shorter *ekphrasis* of the Hagia Sophia, composed by a certain Michael, professor of rhetoric and later deacon of Hagia Sophia, offers a symbolic interpretation

8 For an earlier reference to the statue see *Parastaseis syntomoi*, ch. 37: "And < the statue > was removed [from the basilica] to the Hippodrome to be a great spectacle. But originally it was brought from Rome to Byzantium in the time of Julian the consularis with a chariot and a boat and twelve statues" (transl. Cameron and Herrin 1984: 101). See also the *Suda*, s.v. βασιλική. For a survey and discussion of sources see Bassett 2004: 152–54.

9 Choniates, *History* (ed. van Dielen 1975), 649–50, on which see Papamastorakis 2009: 219–20.

10 On the symbolic meaning of this ekphrasis see also Baseou-Barabas 1994.

11 See Magdalino 1997: 163–64; Nilsson 2014: 158–60 and Nilsson 2021: esp. 25–57.

12 The same formula is repeated in all handbooks from Theon onwards; see, e.g., Webb 2009: 39–59.

13 Text and English transl. in Downey 1957; analysis in James and Webb "To Understand Ultimate Things," and Daskas 2016.

of the church and its cosmological and theological significance.¹⁴ To some extent related to, but yet very different from these two descriptions, is the curious *ekphrasis* of holy places by John Phokas, alias Doukas.¹⁵ Here *ekphrasis* meets itinerary, in what seems to be an attempt to depict and mirror the important relations of Manuel I Komnenos with the crusader states in Palestine.¹⁶ Prodromos' encomiastic *ekphrasis* of Constantinople in *Verses of Farewell to Byzantium* may be interpreted as a piece of veiled *Kaiserkritik*,¹⁷ while the brief verse description of a horse race by Michael Hagiotheodorites appears to echo the situation in which it was performed.¹⁸ These examples show how *ekphrasis*, often composed for occasional settings, demanded commentary and interpretation – they were not mere descriptions. The exegetical discussions of paintings in the novel *Hysmine and Hysminias* offers a perfect case in point: in Makrembolites' novel, looking is displayed as a practice of interpreting and seeing meaning in art, a practice that can in turn be applied to the attentive reading of the text.¹⁹

In all *ekphraseis*, whether independent or inserted in longer narratives, the relation to narration is close and significant. An *ekphrasis* is a representation in words, which means that it is also a narration of specific circumstances.²⁰ In a narrative, description offers a narrative pause, interrupting the presentation of the chain of events and offering details on the properties of places, objects, or persons; description “spatializes” the text as it makes the reader visualize the object described.²¹ At the same time, an *ekphrasis* often implies a narrative, either by means of the narrative frame (“As I was walking around in the palace area . . .”) or in the vivid character of the object or event described (“He seemed to be lamenting his fate . . .”). The spatial character of the *ekphrasis*, offering significant detail and complementing the narrative, and the functional characteristics of the narrative setting (e.g. factual, metaphorical, or symbolic) together fill the description with meaning and, in extension, help us interpret its function. *Ekphraseis* can therefore never be read as mere renderings of factual detail, since such information is not their aim; pure “description,” if included at all, is always subordinate to the description's analysis or response, which has to come from the beholder–listener–reader.

14 Text and English transl. in Mango and Parker 1960. Note esp. the focus on materials and their symbolic significance, e.g. the marble floor of the church as the sea and cf. ll. 169–74 with Manasses' *ekphrasis* of the Cyclops (ed. Sternbach 1902) and the similar description of red stone as human flesh; for the latter see Nilsson 2011: 129.

15 Ed. Troickij 1889; see Messis 2011. See K. Chryssogelos, II.2.3 in the present volume.

16 As has been pointed out by several scholars, the *ekphrasis* by Doukas bears a certain resemblance to the *Hodoiporikon* by Constantine Manasses. A crucial difference from a literary perspective is, however, that Doukas calls his work an *ekphrasis* and employs numerous ekphrastic devices: Messis 2011: 149–60, whereas Manasses inserts *ekphraseis* in an otherwise more or less linear narrative: Nilsson 2012.

17 Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*; analysis in Hörandner 2012.

18 Ed. Horna 1906: 194–97; analysis and partial transl. in Marciniak and Warcaba 2014.

19 Eumathios Makrembolites, *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 2.1–11, 4.5–20. Ed. Marcovich 2001; analysis in Nilsson 2001: 85–86, 126–36.

20 See Nilsson 2005; see also Marciniak and Warcaba 2014. Note also the passage in the *Description of the Earth*, cited on p. 1173 and commented on in n. 3, p. 1173: “the story of the sight was as follows.”

21 On the concept of “spatialization” in a Byzantine context see Nilsson 2001: 40–43, 141–45.

While some *ekphraseis* seem to have had encomiastic or panegyric functions, most notably when describing imperial settings, there are also descriptions of less pleasant events or less admirable objects. Inserted in a historiographical or hagiographical account, such ekphrastic discourse plays an important role in creating emotional response – “reality” is not only beautiful, it is just as convincing when it is ugly or terrifying. Eustathios of Thessaloniki and Niketas Choniates both knew how to explore ekphrastic strategies in their accounts of the brutal attacks of the Barbarian Latins.²² From a rhetorical point of view, there can also be beauty and pleasure in the description of the terrible, which means that a description of war or death can be assigned aesthetic value by the Byzantine beholder.²³ The ekphrastic representation of an event becomes, in a way, a re-enactment for the person who “sees” it by listening to (or reading) the text, which renders it a performative characteristic that is, at the same time, a reflection of the settings for rhetorical performance in Constantinople of the time.²⁴ Michael Hagiotheodorites seems to use an *ekphrasis* of a rather trivial event to make such a point in his description of a chariot race (8–11):

ἐπεὶ δὲ τοῦτον οὐχ ἑώρακας, ξένε,
 ἄγροῖς ἔθισθεις προσμένειν φιλησύχως
 ὡς ἀταράχως προλαλεῖς τοῖς βιβλίοις
 ἰδοῦ θέατρον ἐκ λόγων σοι δεικνύω.

Dear friend, since you did not see it,
 for you quietly stay away in the country
 in order to speak undisturbed with books,
 look, I will show you a theater of words.²⁵

As noted by Marciniak and Warcaba, this “theater of words” probably refers to both the rhetorical re-enactment of the spectacle itself and to its performance.²⁶ The ekphrastic poem, it seems, is not really about a horse race, but rather about the relation between two men of letters, carrying with it the poetic implications of the hypotext by Christopher Mytilenaios.

Poetic *ekphraseis* of this kind are rather common, not the least in the form of recycling of earlier prose descriptions, such as the ones composed by Manuel Philes (c.1275–1345). Such re-writings carry with them allusions to the ekphrastic tradition itself, along with a wider network of literary and artistic connotations. When Philes writes a poetic

22 For Eustathios of Thessaloniki and the use of *ekphrasis* in the *Capture of Thessaloniki* see Nilsson 2013: 15–17; for Choniates, see n. 9, above.

23 See, e.g., Constantine Manasses’ *Description of a crane hunt* (ed. Messis and Nilsson 2019), where the beauty of the hunt is described in terms of war, the aesthetic value and pleasure of which is underlined throughout the long ekphrasis. For a more detailed analysis of this text, see Messis and Nilsson 2019.

24 See the references to performance, reflecting both rhetorical and more wordly entertainment, in e.g., Prodromos, *Verses of Farewell to Byzantium* (on which see Hörandner 2012: 56,1–62) and Manasses, *Description of a Little Man* (on which see Messis and Nilsson, II.2.2, in this volume).

25 Ed. Horna 1906.

26 Marciniak and Warcaba 2014.

paraphrase of Lucian's second-century *ekphrasis* on a painting by a certain Aetion, depicting the marital chamber of Alexander and Roxane, he does not only cast a presumably well-known prose passage (*Herodotus sive Aetion*, 5) into verse, but he also refers to both the literary heritage and ancient art.²⁷ Another poem, attributed in the title to Manuel Melissenos but probably written in the Palaiologan period, uses a similar strategy in recasting part of Manasses' *Description of the Earth* into verse.²⁸ However, while the title of Philes' poem indicates the Lucianic metaphrasis,²⁹ the Melissenos poem does not acknowledge the hypotext,³⁰ but "changes the representation from a mosaic into a picture by the celebrated painter Apelles."³¹ This should not lead us to assume that later *ekphrasis* were more deceptive in terms of their relation to "real" objects, but rather that they often entailed multiple layers of ekphrastic imitation, which made them even more complex and demanding for the reader or listener.

To conclude this brief introduction, the writing of *ekphrasis* can take different forms, ranging from a school exercise to the need to convince, but the effect is always aimed at the receiver, who supposedly was not there to experience whatever spectacle or object was offered but should respond instead to the "image in words." While clearly and most often explicitly building on a long rhetorical and literary tradition, the *ekphrasis* of the Komnenian and Palaiologan periods thus ties in closely with contemporary aesthetic attitudes, literary practices, and socio-cultural functions.

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27 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, ed. Miller 1857, II: 336–37. On Lucian and his use of paintings see Billault 2009, esp. 51–54 on the painting by Aetion.

28 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, 267–68.

29 Τοῦ αὐτοῦ μεταφραστικοῦ ἀπὸ τινὸς τῶν τοῦ Λουκιανοῦ λόγων εἰς εἰκόνα ἔχουσαν ἐζωγραφημένον τὸν τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου γάμον, "Metaphrastic [verses] of the same [author] from one of Lucian's texts on a painted image representing the marriage of Alexander." Of course, we cannot be sure that the title has been provided by Philes himself; it may well have been added by a scribe.

30 Title: Μανουὴλ τοῦ Μελισσηνοῦ εἰς τὴν ἐν τοῖς ἀνακτόροις τοῦ Ἀπελλοῦ γραφὴν, ἣν ὡς ὁ λόγος ἔχει καὶ τράπεζαν εἶναι τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου. This title, too, may have been added by a scribe rather than the author, but in either case it serves to lend a prestigious "art-historical" note to the poem.

31 Maguire, "Truth and Convention," 117. As noted by Maguire, Manasses' *ekphrasis* may imply a partial re-use of the sixth-century *tabula mundi* description by John of Gaza; cf. p. 1176 on Manasses' use of Philostratus' and Hagiotheodorites' *ekphrasis* based on Christopher Mytilenaios. On the *ekphrasis* by John of Gaza see Lauritzen 2015.

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II.2.1 Eustathios of Thessaloniki (c.1115–1195)

Homeric Art Objects in the *Parekbolai on the Iliad*

BAUKJE VAN DEN BERG AND ERIC CULLHED

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MS.: Florence, BML, Plutei 59.2–3 (s. XII)¹

Other Translations: None

Significance

Eustathios' interpretation of Helen's web and Achilles' Shield in the *Iliad* testifies to his views on the relationship between artistic skill and verisimilitude. It discusses Homeric *automata*, alluding to mechanical artworks that are recorded to have existed at the court. He draws attention to Homer's artistic qua rhetorical skill as manifest in the composition of an *ekphrasis* of a visual artwork, an important rhetorical genre in Byzantine literature.

The Author

Eustathios of Thessaloniki was one of the leading intellectuals during the reign of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80). In his early career he probably worked as a private teacher of grammar and rhetoric in Constantinople, and held various positions in the patriarchal bureaucracy. He served as deacon in the Hagia Sophia under patriarch Luke Chrysoberges (1157–69/70), before he was promoted to the position of *maistor ton rhetoron*, teacher and official court orator, around 1168. At some point between 1174 and 1177, Eustathios was appointed archbishop of Myra in Lykia, but before he had taken up his duties Manuel offered him the more attractive see of Thessaloniki. He left for this city in 1178 but returned to the capital one year later, where he presumably attended the wedding of Alexios, heir to the throne, and an ecclesiastical synod in 1180. He had returned to his Thessalonian flock, with which he had a relationship full of difficulties,² by the time the city was captured by the Normans in 1185.³ Eustathios died in Thessaloniki

1 For a description of this manuscript see, e.g., Van der Valk 1971: ix–xxxi.

2 On Eustathios as archbishop of Thessaloniki see Angold, *Church and Society*, 179–96; Magdalino 1997; Schönauer 2005.

3 Eustathios later wrote a historiographical account on the events, ed. S. Kyriakidis; English transl. J. R. Melville–Jones.

around 1195.⁴ After his death he was depicted as a saint in church frescoes as early as the fourteenth century, but the Orthodox church did not officially canonize him until 1988.⁵

Text and Context

A large amount of writings by Eustathios survives: he wrote public orations delivered at various occasions;⁶ homiletical and hagiographical texts; letters, often addressed to high-placed functionaries or former students who enjoyed successful careers in their turn;⁷ essays on various subjects, including, for instance, a criticism of contemporary monasticism;⁸ and philological works, of which the monumental commentaries or *Parekbolai* (“Excerpts”) on Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are the best known.⁹ The Homeric epics retained their ancient place at the core of the school curriculum in twelfth-century Byzantium; moreover, their general cultural significance expanded in the literary culture that flourished under the patronage of the ruling Komnenos clan.¹⁰ Everything from letters to erotic fiction or imperial encomia flowed with quotations from and allusions to Homer, and the skills needed to handle the epics in a sophisticated and innovative manner were in high demand. The essential characteristics of Eustathios’ work reflect this need among its potential users. There is a pervasive focus on how to put the text to creative re-use. This is made clear in the proem of the work where Eustathios enumerates the several types of material that he has included: the *Parekbolai* contain thoughts for prose-writers to quote in the form Homer expressed them;¹¹ methods to admire and imitate; etymological explanations of individual words; wise maxims; historical information; myths, with or without allegorical interpretation; and “numerous other things that are useful for life.”¹² The purpose of the *Parekbolai*, then, goes beyond the explanation of the Homeric text; they anatomize the epics in order to provide building blocks for active literary recycling and imitation.

In what follows, a collection of passages that contain Eustathios’ interpretation of two artworks in the *Iliad*, Helen’s web (*Iliad* 3.125–8) and Achilles’ shield (*Iliad* 18.478–608), is presented.¹³ Eustathios sees a parallel between Helen’s weaving and Homer’s writing, both

4 On Eustathios’ life and work see, e.g., Wirth 1980; Kazhdan and Franklin 1984: 115–95; Browning 1995; Schönauer 2004.

5 For plates of the five frescoes and a discussion see Marković 2010.

6 Ed. Tafel 1832; Wirth 2000; Schönauer 2006.

7 Among the most prominent of his students was, for instance, Michael Choniates, bishop of Athens. Eustathios’ correspondence is ed. F. Kolovou; on p. 5*–7*, she gives a list of Eustathios’ writings, together with the most recent editions.

8 *De emendanda vita monachica*; edition and commentary K. Metzler.

9 The commentary on the *Iliad* is available in the edition by Van der Valk 1971–87. For the commentary on the *Odyssey* see J. G. Stallbaum. For an edition and translation of the first two books see Cullhed 2016, which also includes an introduction to Eustathios’ Homeric scholarship and the Homeric commentaries (p. 1*–33*). For the continuation of this project, see now Cullhed and Olson 2020–.

10 See Basilikopoulou-Ioannidou 1971–72; Browning 1992; Cullhed 2014a: 49–67; Loukaki 2015: 247–57.

11 Nünlist 2012; critique and further discussion in Cullhed 2016: 17*–25*.

12 Eust. *in Il.* 2.27–36.

13 For modern scholarship on the web see, e.g., Bergren 2008: 43–57. The bibliography on the shield is enormous; an overview can be found in Arpaia 2010.

of which present the battles of the Trojan War. This parallel ties in with the *topos* of the close relationship of the visual and verbal arts, going back to the statement attributed to Simonides (sixth–fifth century BCE) that “painting is silent poetry and poetry is speaking painting,”¹⁴ a *topos* recurrent in Eustathios’ discussion of Homer as poet. In Antiquity and Byzantium, it was a common view that visual as well as verbal art presented an imitation of reality and aimed at verisimilitude. The idea that the better the artist, the more lifelike his works underlies Eustathios’ notes on the shield of Achilles. He is especially attentive to the question whether or not the lifelike figures on the shield in fact move,¹⁵ like Hephaestus’ marvelous attendants and the “automatic” tripods forged by the god. His statements should be read against the background of Byzantine ideas on the magical powers of statues as well as the existence of *automata*, mechanical artworks, at the Byzantine court.¹⁶ Visual and verbal art converge in the rhetorical “genre” of *ekphrasis*, of which Homer’s description of Achilles’ shield is an example. In various passages Eustathios points to Homer’s rhetorical skill in composing such a description.

¹⁴ Plutarch, *On the Glory of Athens*, 346f.

¹⁵ See Cullhed 2014b: 192–219.

¹⁶ Further discussion and bibliographical references are in the notes on the relevant passages in the Commentary.

Text**A. Eustathios on Helen's Web***1. On Iliad 3.125–28*

“Οτι εἰπόντος Ὀμήρου, ὡς τὴν Ἑλένην εὔρειν ἢ Λαοδίκη “ἐν μεγάρῳ, ἣ δὲ μέγαν ἰστόν ὕφαινε δίπλακα μαρμαρέην, πολέας δ' ἐνέπασσεν ἀέθλους” Τρώων τε καὶ Ἀχαιῶν, «οὓς ἔθεν», ἤγουν αὐτῆς, “εἴνεκ' ἔπασχον ὑπ' Ἄρηος παλαμάων,” ἤγουν ὑπὸ πολέμου, ἀστείως ἐπεσημήναντό τινες τὸν πέπλον τοῦτον ἀξιόλογον ἀρχέτυπον εἶναι τῆς Ὀμήρου ποιήσεως· ἃ γὰρ ἐκείνη ἐνεπιόκιλλεν ὁσημέραι τῷ πέπλῳ, ταῦτα δέλτῳ ἐντίθησιν Ὀμηρος καὶ ποιεῖ τὴν βίβλον ταύτην ὡσπερ Ἑλένης ἄλλον ἰστόν. διὸ καὶ φιλεῖ τὴν Ἑλένην ὁ ποιητὴς καὶ διατιθέμενος ὑπεραπολογεῖται, εἰς ὅσον ἔξεστι. Σημειῶσαι δὲ καὶ ἐνταῦθα τὸ τῆς Ἑλένης φιλοπευστικὸν καὶ εὐμαθές· δηλὸν γὰρ ὅτι πυνθανομένη καὶ σημειουμένη τὰς ὡς ἐκάστοτε πάθας τῶν δι' αὐτὴν μαχομένων ἐζωγράφει αὐτάς, ἐν οἷς ὕφαινε, Ἰλιάδα τινὰ τεχνωμένη χειρότευκτον. ἐπεὶ δὲ πολλοὶ οἱ ἄεθλοι, διὰ τοῦτο μέγας καὶ ὁ ἰστός. εἰκὸς δὲ καὶ πλείους ἄθλους τῶν Ὀμηρικῶν αὐτῷ ἐμπεπάζσθαι· Ὀμηρος μὲν γὰρ τῇ τοῦ Ἔκτορος ταφῆς τὴν Ἰλιάδα συγκατέλυσε, Ἑλένη δὲ οὐκ ἐξ ἀνάγκης οὕτω, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἐξῆς προέβη ἄν, ὡς εἰκός, τῷ ὑφάσματι. (392.29–41)

2. On Iliad 3.153–244

καὶ Πρίαμος μὲν πεύσεται τῆς Ἑλένης, οἷα γεγυμνωμένους ἄρτι τοὺς Ἕλληνας ὀρῶν καὶ μὴ ἔχων, καθὰ πρὶν, ἐκ παρασῆμων τινῶν γνωρίζειν αὐτούς, ὡς ὀπλων γυμνοῦς. ἣ δὲ ἀποκρινεῖται ὡς εὔ πάλαι εἰδυῖα καὶ λαλήσει πρὸς ἱστορίαν καὶ οὕτως ὁ φιλήκοος ἀκροατὴς μαθήσεται. λαλήσει δὲ τι πρὸς ἱστορίαν καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Πρίαμος παλαιὰ τινὰ διδάσκων. καὶ ὁ Ἀντήνωρ δὲ Τρωϊκὰ τινὰ ξερεῖ. ὁ πλείων δὲ λόγος ὡς διδασκάλῳ τῇ καλῇ Ἑλένη ἀνακείσεται, ἵνα μὴ μόνον ἀέθλους πολεμικοὺς ἐμπάσση τῇ προρρηθείσῃ κατ' αὐτὴν μαρμαρέῃ δίπλακι, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἱστορίας ἐνθήσει τῷ καθ' Ὀμηρον τούτῳ πτυκτῷ πίνακι. (396.43–397.3)

B. Eustathios on the Shield of Achilles*1. On Iliad 17.122*

Σημειῶσαι δὲ ὅτι, καθὰ καὶ ἐτέρωθι δηλοῦται, δίδωσιν ὁ ποιητὴς κατὰ τοὺς παλαιούς τὰ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως ὄπλα τῷ Ἔκτορι, ἵνα εἰς ἴσον αὐτὸν ἀγάγη τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ, Ἡφαιστοτεύκτοις ὄπλοις ἀμφοτέρους κοσμήσας, μὴ καὶ δόξη ὁ Ἔκτωρ διὰ τὸ ἀχρεῖον τῶν αὐτοῦ ὀπλων πεσεῖν ὑπὸ τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ. Προοικονομεῖ δὲ καὶ ὀπλοποιῖαν Ὀμηρος ἐν τούτοις καὶ τὴν ἐν αὐτῇ ἀλληγορουμένην κοσμογένειαν καὶ τὴν αὐτόθι ποικιλίαν. στερηθεὶς γὰρ ὧν εἶχεν ὄπλων Ἀχιλλεύς, ἤγουν τῶν ἐξ Ἡφαιστου, πορίσεται ἕτερα διὰ τῆς μητρὸς Θέτιδος. καὶ τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐπεισόδιον πολλὰ τῇ ποιήσει παρεμβαλεῖ ἀκοῆς ἄξια. (1098.21–26)

Translation

A. Eustathios on Helen's Web

1. *On Iliad* 3.125–28

Homer says that Laodice found Helen “in the hall, where she was weaving a great gleaming web of double fold, on which she was embroidering many battles” of Trojans and Achaeans, “which they were enduring *ethen*,” meaning “for her,” “sake at the hands of Ares,” meaning at the hands of war. Here, some scholars¹ have cleverly indicated that this mantle is a remarkable archetype of Homer's poem. For what she was embroidering on the mantle every day, these things Homer inserts into his text and composes this book as another web of Helen. For this reason, the poet is fond of Helen and defends her as far as possible in laying out the story. Note here too that Helen is inquisitive and eager to learn. For it is clear that while inquiring about and taking note of the sufferings of those who were fighting for her sake on each occasion, she depicted these sufferings in her weavings, crafting some kind of handmade *Iliad*. Since the battles were many, the web therefore is great too, and it is likely that it was decorated with more battles than the Homeric ones. For Homer concluded the *Iliad* with Hector's funeral, but Helen did not necessarily do so, but she probably moved on with her web to later events, too.

2. *On Iliad* 3.153–244

Priam will ask Helen, since he now sees the Hellenes undressed for the first time, and seeing as they are stripped of their arms he is unable to recognize them from their insignia, as was previously the case. She will answer him, because she knows this long since, and will provide an historical account. In this way the reader who is fond of hearing discourses will learn. Priam himself will also provide historical information, teaching ancient stories, and Antenor will disclose some Trojan lore. But the greater part of the episode will be assigned to beautiful Helen as a teacher, in order that she should not only decorate the aforementioned gleaming web with struggles of war according to what she has witnessed herself, but also insert historical accounts into this – to use Homer's words² – folding tablet.

B. Eustathios on the Shield of Achilles

1. *On Iliad* 17.122

Note that, as shown elsewhere too,¹ the poet gives the arms of Achilles to Hector according to the ancients² in order to bring him to a position equal to Achilles, decorating both of them with arms wrought by Hephaestus, lest it should appear that Hector was slain by Achilles because of useless armor. Here, Homer also makes arrangements in advance for the Making of the Arms,³ as well as the allegorical account of the origin of the world that it contains and the diversity that arises from it. For Achilles, deprived of the arms that he had, meaning the arms made by Hephaestus, will be provided with other arms by his mother Thetis. And such an episode will insert many remarkable things into the poem.

2. *On Iliad 18.373–77*

“Ὅτι τρίποδας ἑξήκοσι πάντας ἔτευχεν” Ἡφαιστος “ἑστάμενοι περὶ τοῖχον εὐσταθέος μεγάροιο, χρύσεια δὲ σφ’ ὑπὸ κύκλα ἐκάστω πυθμένι θῆκεν, ὄφρα οἱ αὐτόματοι θεῖον δυσαϊάτ’ ἀγῶνα”, ἢ “δύσονται ἀγῶνα,” ἢ δ’ αὖτις πρὸς δῶμα νεοῖατο, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι.” Ἦν γὰρ τῷ ὄντι θαυμαστὸν αὐτομάτως κινεῖσθαι τρίποδας ὡς οἶά τινος αὐτοκινήτους θέοντας κατὰ τὰ ὑποκείμενα κύκλα, ὃ ἔστι κατὰ τοὺς τροχίλους, οἱ ὡς εἰκός, ἐνείροντο τοῖς τῶν λεβήτων ποσίν, ὡς ἂν εἷς τε τῆν τῶν θεῶν ἄθροισιν δύνωνται—τοῦτο γὰρ ὁ θεῖος ἀγών—καὶ οἶκαδε αὖθις εἰς τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἀπονέωνται δίκην ἐμψύχων. τοιαῦτα γὰρ ὑποτίθενται εἶναι τὰ ἠφαιστότευκτα. ἰστέον γὰρ ὅτι τερατωδῶς ἐμψύχους τοὺς τρίποδας ὁ ποιητὴς πλάττει καὶ αὐθορμήτους ὡς οἶον βαδίζοντας διὰ τῶν ὑποκειμένων τροχίλων. διὸ καὶ τῶν παλαιῶν—Διονύσιος δὲ ἦν ἐκεῖνος—αὐτοκίνητα καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀχιλλεύως ἀσπίδος ὑπώπτευσεν ἠφαιστότευκτα ζῶα τὰ ἐν τοῖς ἐξῆς δηλωθησόμενα, εἰ καὶ ἀντέλεγε, φασίν, Ἀριστόνικος. Σημείωσαι δὲ ὅτι τὰ τοιαῦτα ὑποπτεύονται καὶ λαλοῦνται οὕτω διὰ τὸ τῶν χαλκευομένων τεχνικώτατον, ὡς μικροῦ δοκεῖν τὰ εἰδῶλα ἔμψυχα εἶναι, ὁποῖόν τι καὶ περὶ Ῥοδίων ἰστόρηται, οἷς ἔγεμέ ποτε τοιαύτης τέχνης ἢ νῆσος. καὶ τὰ ζῶδια ἐδόκουν μικροῦ καὶ κινήθησέσθαι ἂν. διὸ καὶ ἀλύσεσιν ἐξεδέσμον αὐτά, ἵνα δῆθεν μὴ κινήθεντα φύγοιεν. ἠνίπτοντο δὲ ἄρα οἱ νησιῶται διὰ τοῦ τοιοῦτου δεσμοῦ τὸ παρ’ ὀλίγον αὐτοκίνητον τῶν ἀγαλμάτων ἐκείνων, ὁποῖά τινα καὶ Δαίδαλος ποιεῖν μυθεύεται. (1148.3–22)

3. *On Iliad 18.376*

Σημείωσαι δὲ καὶ ὅτι τὸ αὐτομάτους μηχανὰς ῥηθῆναι τὰς μὴ δι’ ὕδατος καὶ τοῦ ἐκεῖθεν πνευματικοῦ ἀπαρτιζομένας ἐξ Ὀμήρου ἐλήφθη τοῖς Μηχανοποιοῖς. οὕτω γὰρ αὐτόματος καὶ τῷ Ἡφαιστῷ νῦν ἢ τῆς τῶν τριπόδων κινήσεως μηχανή. [Οὕτω καὶ πύλαι που αὐτόματοι οὐρανοῦ μύκον.] (1148.27–29)

4. *On Iliad 18.378–79*

Ἐν τούτοις δὲ ὄρα ὡς οὕτω παρὰ βραχὺ ἔργου ἔλθῶν ὁμως οὐκ ἀναμενεῖ τελέσαι τὸ ἐπίλοιπον ἔργον Ἡφαιστος, ἀλλὰ σπουδαίως ἀνύσει τὸ τῆς εὐεργετίδος Θετίδος βούλημα, διδάσκοντος καὶ οὕτω τοῦ ποιητοῦ πρὸ ἔργου τιθέναι μάλιστα τοὺς εὐεργετήσαντας. (1148.43–45)

5. *On Iliad 18.417–20*

Ὅτι καὶ ἀμφιπόλους τερατώδεις τῷ μυθικῷ Ἡφαιστῷ διδούς ἀναγκαίως ὑπουργούσας τοῖς κατ’ αὐτὸν ἔργοις φησὶν “ὑπὸ δ’ ἀμφίπολοι ῥώνοντο ἄνακτι,” ὃ ἔστιν ἐρρωμένως, ὡς ἐρρέθη, ἐπονοῦντο ὑπὸ τῷ Ἡφαιστῷ, “χρῦσειαι, ζωῆσιν νεήνισιν εἰοικῦται.” ὃ ἔστιν οὐ ζῶσαι κοινότερον ἄντικρυς, ἀλλὰ θεϊότερον ζωαῖς νεάνισιν ὅμοιαι, ἢ καὶ ἄλλως φράσαι, οὐ νεάνιδες ἄντικρυς, ἀλλὰ εἰοικῦται τοιαύταις, θεῖαι μέντοι οὔσαι. καὶ ἔστιν ἐξηλλαγμένη ἢ ὁμοίότης, ὡς μὴ μόνον τὰ θνητὰ θείοις εἰκάζεσθαι ἐν τῷ “ἀθανάταις δὲ θεαῖς εἰς ὧπα ἐώκει,” ἀλλ’ ἰδοὺ καὶ ἀνάπαλιν. Λέγει δὲ καὶ ὅτι ταῖς τοιαύταις ἀμφιπόλοις «ἐν μὲν νόος ἔστι μετὰ φρεσίν, ἐν δὲ καὶ αὐδὴ καὶ σθένος, ἀθανάτων δὲ θεῶν ἅπο ἔργα ἴσασιν», ἤγουν θεῖα τις ἐνῆν αὐταῖς τέχνη. καὶ μυθικῶς μὲν αἱ τοιαῦται ἀμφίπολοι ἀγάλματα εἶναι δοκοῦσιν ἔμψυχα ἐκ τιμίας ὕλης πυρὶ χωνευθέντα καὶ εἰς ἀνθρωπίνης ἐμψύχους εἰκόνας χεθέντα,

2. *On Iliad 18.373–77*

Hephaestus “was fashioning” tripods “twenty in all, to stand around the wall of his well-built hall, and golden wheels he set beneath the base of each, in order that of their own accord they could enter the divine assembly,” or “would enter the assembly,” “and again return to his house, a wonder to look on.” For it was truly wonderful that tripods moved of their own accord, as though they were some sort of self-moving tripods,⁴ moving quickly with the wheels put underneath them, i.e. on the sheaves, which probably were attached to the feet of the cauldrons, so that they entered the gathering of the gods (for that is the divine assembly)⁵ and returned home again to their own place like inspirited creatures. This is how the objects wrought by Hephaestus are presented to be. For one must know that the poet marvelously fabricates the tripods to be inspirited and self-impelled, walking, as it were, with the sheaves underneath them. One of the ancients therefore – it was the famous Dionysius – thought that the figures wrought by Hephaestus on Achilles’ shield, which will be discussed later on,⁶ moved of themselves, too, even if they say that Aristonicus contradicted this.⁷ Notice that such things are thought and said in response to perfection in the art of metal working, meaning that the images almost seem to be inspirited; something similar has also been related about the Rhodians, whose island was once filled with art of such a kind. And the statues almost seemed to move by themselves.⁸ Therefore, they even used to secure them with chains, lest they should move, that is, and run off. Through such a chain the islanders hinted at the capacity of those statues to be all but self-moving. It is related in myths that Daedalus made statues of such a kind, too.⁹

3. *On Iliad 18.376*

Note that the Mechanics adopted from Homer the practice of calling mechanical devices not operated by water and air pressure produced with water. For in this way Hephaestus’ mechanical contraption for the movement of the tripods is also “automatic.” In the same way the “automatic” gates of heaven groaned somewhere.¹⁰

4. *On Iliad 18.378–79*

Observe here that Hephaestus has just started working on something, yet he will not continue to complete the remaining work, but eagerly accomplish the wish of his benefactress Thetis. In this way, the poet provides the lesson that benefactors should be prioritized over work.¹¹

5. *On Iliad 18.417–20*

Providing the mythical Hephaestus with marvelous attendants who give the necessary assistance for his works, the poet says “and the attendants moved swiftly to support their lord,” i.e. vigorously, as was said,¹² they labored under Hephaestus’ direction, “of gold, resembling living girls,” i.e. they were not simply alive in a more general sense, but resembling living girls in a more divine sense or, to phrase it in a different way, they were not simply girls, but resembling girls, although they were actually divine beings. Variation is brought to the similarity in “she resembled immortal goddesses in her face,”¹³ so that not only mortal matters are likened to divine matters but, evidently, also the other way round.

ὥστε κατὰ τὸν μῦθον καὶ τὰς θεραπαινίδας αὐτὸς ἐδημιούργησεν ἑαυτῷ Ἥφαιστος, οἷα ἔμψυχα, ὡς προερρέθη, χαλκεύειν εἰδώς, ὁ καὶ τῆ καθ' Ἡσίοδον Πανδώρα συμβαλόμενός τι πρὸς γένεσιν. καὶ ταῦτα δὲ λέγει προοικονομῶν τεχνικῶς τὴν δηλωθησομένην ἔμψυχον τοῦ Ἥφαιστου κλυτοτεχνίαν. (1151.22–31)

6. *On Iliad 18.421*

Ἰστέον δὲ ὅτι ἐκ τῶν Ὀμηρικῶν χρυσέων νεανίδων τῶν τοῦ Ἥφαιστου ὀρμηθεὶς ὁ Κωμικός Ἄλεξις τοὺς ἐκ πυρὸς σπινθηρίας κύνας Ἥφαιστου ἔφη ἐν τῷ "καίεται μοι τὸ πῦρ ἦδη," τουτέστιν ἐξάπτεται, "πυκνοὶ δ' ἄττουσιν Ἥφαιστου κύνες," καὶ ὅτι φύσας μὲν καὶ χρυσέας νεανίδας ἐτόλμησε ψυχῶσαι ὁ ποιητής, ραιστήρα δὲ καὶ πυράγραν, τὰ Ἥφαιστου ὄπλα, ὧν μνεῖα ἐν τοῖς ἐξῆς ἔσται, ἀφήσιν ἄψυχα εἶναι, καθὰ καὶ τὸν ἄκμονα, ἵνα μὴ ἀφέληται Ἥφαιστου τὴν χαλκευτικήν. ἐχρῆν γὰρ αὐτῷ μονάζοντι τὰ εἰς τὸ χαλκεύειν τὰ μὲν ἄλλα τεραστίως ὑπουργεῖν ὡς ἔμψυχα καὶ αὐτόθεν κινήτᾳ, πυράγραν δὲ καὶ σφῦραν καὶ ἄκμονα χρηστὰ εἶναι χερσὶν Ἥφαιστου εἰς ἔργον. (1151.40–45)

7. *On Iliad 18.474–82*

Ἐν οἷς σημειῶσαι ὡς μὴ ἔχων ἐν Ἰλιάδι καίριον τόπον τὴν ἐκφραστικὴν ἐνδείξασθαι τέχνην, εἰκότως τὴν ἀσπίδοποιῖαν ἄρτι ἐπλάσατο, ποιήσων τεχνικῶς δι' αὐτῆς ὃ θέλει, ἐν στενωῷ μέντοι, εἰ καὶ ἄλλως πλατύτερον ἐτέρων ἐκφράσεων, ἃς φθάσας ὀλιγοστίχους παρενέσπειρεν. εἰπεῖν δὲ καὶ ἄλλως, ἐξέφρασε μὲν καὶ ἐτέρωθι οὐκ ὀλίγα, καὶ πολλαχοῦ τῆς Ἰλιάδος ἔκφρασις διαγεγᾶ, ἐν στενωῷ δὲ ὅμως, ἐνταῦθα δὲ λειμῶν ἐκφραστικός ἐξήγησεν, ἐνδεικνυμένου τοῦ ποιητοῦ τὴν κατ' αὐτὸν ἐκφραστικὴν δύναμιν, ἧς χάριν καὶ τὸ πλάσμα τῆς ὀπλοποιῖας ἐμηχανήσατο. Ἰστέον δὲ καὶ ὅτι ἐν μὲν τῇ Ὀδυσσεΐα διὰ τὸ μὴ ἐναγώνιον ἐκεῖ τὴν ὑπόθεσιν εἶναι πλείους καὶ διόλου γλυκεῖαι κεῖνται ἐκφράσεις, εἰ καὶ μὴ οὔτω πλατεῖαι. ἡ δὲ παρούσα, εἰ καὶ φύσει φαιδρὰ ἐστὶ διὰ τὸ ἐν ἐκφράσει ὠραῖον, ἀλλὰ οὐ πᾶσα τοιαύτη ἐστίν, ἔχει δὲ τι καὶ δυσπρόσοπτον καὶ τῷ τῆς Ἰλιάδος μεγαλείῳ συνυψούμενον, ἐν οἷς πολέμους καὶ αὐτὴ περιηγεῖται καὶ λόχους καὶ φόνους καὶ τοιαῦτά τινα. τὰ δ' ἄλλα πολλὴν ἔχει φαιδρότητα καὶ λαμπρᾶς μετέχει τῆς ἰλαρότητος, οὐκ ἀφιεῖσα κατανεανιεύεσθαι τῆς Ὀμηρικῆς ὀπλοποιῖας τὴν Ἡσίοδου φιλότιμον ἀσπίδα, ὡς ὁ ἐντυγχάνων εἴσεται. δοκεῖ μὲν γὰρ ἐκείνη Ὀμηρικῶς πεποιηθῆαι ζήλω τῷ κατὰ τὴν ὄλην Ἰλιάδα. ὅποι δὲ τόπου ἐκτίπτει συγκριτικῶ λόγῳ, οὐδὲ ἔστι φράσαι, ἢ ἐς τοσοῦτον μόνον, ὡς εἰ καὶ οὐρανῶν κέγγρον παραμετρήσει τις. (1154.2–13)

He also says that for these attendants “there is understanding in their minds, and in them speech and strength, and they knew the works from the immortal gods,” that is to say: there was some sort of divine art in them. In a mythical sense these attendants seem to be inspirited statues from valuable material smelted by fire and cast into inspirited human images, meaning that according to the myth Hephaestus himself created the handmaids for himself, because he was able, as previously stated, to forge inspirited objects, he who according to Hesiod also contributed in some sense to the coming about of Pandora.¹⁴ Moreover, he mentions these things in order to artfully¹⁵ arrange in advance for Hephaestus’ famous inspirited artistic feat that will be discussed.

6. *On Iliad 18.421*

One must know that, taking his cue from the Homeric golden girls of Hephaestus, the comic poet Alexis called sparks of fire “Hephaestus’ dogs” in “the fire already *kaietai* in me,” that is “is inflamed,” “and many dogs of Hephaestus are racing.”¹⁶ One must also know that the poet ventured to inspirit bellows and golden girls, but the hammer and the fire-tongs, Hephaestus’ tools mentioned later on,¹⁷ he leaves soulless, just like the anvil, lest he should deprive Hephaestus of the art of metal working. For working alone he needed the rest of his tools for metal working to marvelously assist him, being inspirited and self-moving, but a pair of fire-tongs, hammer, and anvil are of good service in Hephaestus’ hands for his work.

7. *On Iliad 18.474–82*

Note here that since the poet did not have a suitable place in the *Iliad* to display his art of description,¹⁸ he fittingly fabricated here the Making of the Shield, in order to use it to make up whatever he wishes according to the rules of the art; in a brief passage, to be sure, even though in other respects it is more extensive than the other descriptions that he earlier sprinkled here and there, which consist of a small number of lines. To put it differently, he described no small number of things elsewhere too and descriptions smile forth in many places in the *Iliad*, yet briefly. Here, however, a meadow of descriptions came into bloom, as the poet displayed his power to produce descriptions. For this reason he contrived the fabrication of the Making of the Arms. One must know that in the *Odyssey*, seeing as the subject matter there is not exciting, there is a larger number of descriptions, always producing stylistic sweetness, even if they are not equally extensive. But the present passage, even if it is naturally bright owing to the gracefulness of description, is not altogether similar, but it has a measure of the horrifying and the exalted, in line with the majesty of the *Iliad*, in that it guides the reader through battles, ambushes, killings, and similar things. But its other parts possess a great measure of brightness and have a share in brilliant cheerfulness, inhibiting Hesiod’s ambitious Shield¹⁹ from prevailing through its youthful vigor over the Homeric Making of the Arms, as anyone who reads it will realize. For the former poem appears to have been produced in emulation of Homer and the *Iliad* as a whole. The degree to which it falls short in a comparison is impossible to express, or at least we can only say this: that it is as though someone should use the sky to measure a grain of millet.

8. *On Iliad 18.482*

Σημείωσαι δὲ καὶ ὅτι τὸ χωρίον τοῦτο πᾶν τὸ τῆς ἀσπιδοποιΐας οὐ μόνον ῥητορικῶς μεταχειρίζεται ὁ ποιητὴς οἷα καιρὸν εὐθετον εὐρηκῶς, ὡς ἔρρέθη, ἀβρότητι ἐκφράσεως κοσμησά τὴν ποίησιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ φιλοσοφεῖ ἐπ' αὐτῷ πολλά. καὶ ὅπως μὲν δεξιῶς καὶ οὐ μόνον σεμνῶς, ἀλλὰ καὶ πιθανῶς καὶ συμμέτρως ἐκφράζει, αὐτόθεν ἔστιν ἀναλέγεσθαι τοὺς τῇ Ὀμηρικῇ ἐντυγχάνοντας δέλτω, οἳ καὶ τῇ τοῦ Ἡσιόδου ἀντιπαραθέντες ἀσπίδι εἵπιοιεν ἂν τοσοῦτον εἶναι πρὸς ἐκείνην ταύτη διάφορον, ὅσον καὶ ἀνθρωπίνου ἔργου πρὸς ἠφαιστότευκτον. (1154.36–40)

9. *On Iliad 18.483–89*

“Ὅτι τὰ ἐν τῇ ἀσπίδι δαιδάλματα τοῦ Ἥφαιστου ἐπιβαλὼν ἐκφράζειν φησὶν “ἐν μὲν γαῖαν ἔτευξεν, ἐν δ' οὐρανόν, ἐν δὲ θάλασσαν,” καλλωπίσας τε τὸ τῆς φράσεως πρόσωπον [...] Ἰστέον δὲ ὅτι ἀρξάμενος, ὡς ἔρρέθη, τῆς ἀσπιδοποιΐας ἐπαναφορικῶς ἐκ τοῦ “ἐν μὲν γαῖαν, ἐν δ' οὐρανόν, ἐν δὲ θάλασσαν, ἐν δὲ τὰ τεῖρεα,” ἐπέμεινε τῷ καλῷ τούτῳ σχήματι καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐξῆς, λέγων· ἐν δὲ δύο ποίησε πόλεις, ἐν δὲ τίθει νεῖον, ἐν δὲ τίθει τέμενος, ἐν δὲ τίθει ἀλωήν, ἐν δ' ἀγέλην ποίησεν, ἐν δὲ νόμον ποίησεν, ἐν δὲ χορὸν ποίικιλλεν, ἐν δὲ τίθει ποταμοῦ σθένος. ἔθετο δὲ οὕτω καὶ μέσον τῆς ἐκφράσεως ἐν στίχῳ ἐνὶ τρία ὅμοια “ἐν δ' ἔρις, ἐν δὲ κυδοιμός, ἐν δ' ὀλοή κήρ,” ὁποῖον καὶ τὸ “ἐν δ' ἴμερος, ἐν δ' ὀαριστύς.” καὶ τοῦτο μὲν οὕτω. (1155.3–15)

10. *On Iliad 18.490–96*

“Ὀμηρος δὲ καλὰς εἰπὼν τὰς ῥηθείσας πόλεις διὰ τὸ ἐξ ὕλης αὐταῖς τίμιον, καὶ μάλιστα διὰ τὸ τοῦ καμάτου ἔντεχνον, γάμον ἐκφράζει πρῶτον, τὸ καὶ πολιτικώτατον ἔργον καὶ τῇ φύσει φίλον. (1157.3–4)

11. *On Iliad 18.493*

Ἰστέον δὲ καὶ ὅτι τὸ “ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει” ἐγράφη οὐχ' ὅτι ἐξηκούετο, ἀλλ' ὅτι τῷ σχήματι τῆς ζωοπλαστίας οὕτως ἐώκει. τοιοῦτον δὲ καὶ ἐξῆς τὸ “αὐλοὶ βοὴν ἔχον,” καὶ τὸ “ἄνδρες ἐνέικεον,” καὶ “λαοὶ ἐπήπυσον,” καὶ “πάϊς ἀεῖδε λεπταλέη φωνῆ,” καὶ “βόες ἐπεσεσέοντο μυκηθμῷ,” καὶ ἕτερα ὅμοια. ἐν πᾶσι γὰρ τούτοις οὐ φωνὴ ἐξηκούετο, εἰ καὶ ὁ φίλος Ἥφαιστῶ μῦθος οὕτως ἐθέλει, ἀλλ' εἰκασμῷ ἐνέφαινε φωνὴν ἢ τῶν ζώων ἀκριβῆς ἐμφέρεια. (1157.24–27)

12. *On Iliad 18.538–40*

Εἶτα φράζων καὶ ὅπως ἐσκεύαστο ἡ Κήρ, ἐπάγει “εἶμα δ' ἔχ' ἀμφ' ὤμοισι δαφνοειδὸν αἶματι φωτῶν,” διὰ τὰ ἐν πολέμῳ δηλαδὴ αἶματα. καὶ τάχα ἡ εἰκὼν αὕτη ἔπεισε τοὺς Λάκωνας ἐν μάχῃ χρᾶσθαι ταῖς πορφυρίσιν. ὅτι δὲ Ὀμηρικῶ ζήλω καὶ ἡ τοῦ Ἡσιόδου ἀσπίς τοιαῦτα δαιμόνια ἔχει ὀμιλοῦντα τῇ μάχῃ, ὁ ἐντυχὼν εἴσεται. Εἶτα δηλῶν ὁ ποιητὴς μὴ ἐψυχῶσθαι τὰ ἠφαιστότευκτα ζῶα ἐνταῦθα, καθά τινες πλέον τοῦ δέοντος

8. *On Iliad 18.482*

Note that the poet treated this whole passage of the Making of the Shield not only rhetorically, seeing as he has found, as previously stated,²⁰ a suitable well-arranged opportunity to embellish his poem with the splendor of description, but he also inserts a great amount of philosophical lore.²¹ The readers of Homer's book can gather from the place itself the manner in which he produced the description skillfully and not only solemnly but also convincingly and symmetrically, and when putting it beside Hesiod's Shield²² they would say that the difference between the latter and the former is as great as that between a human artwork and one forged by Hephaestus.

9. *On Iliad 18.483–89*

When applying himself to describing the decorations on Hephaestus' shield "on it he wrought the earth, on it the heaven, on it the sea," beautifying the countenance of the phrasing ... One must know that having begun, as previously stated, the Making of the Shield with an epanaphora,²³ with "on it the earth, on it the heaven, on it the sea, on it the signs," Homer continued with this beautiful figure of speech in what follows, saying: "on it he made two cities, on it he placed a farmland, on it he placed an estate, on it he placed a threshing-floor, on it he made a herd, on it he made a pasture, on it he furnished a dancing floor, on it he placed the might of a river." In this way he also placed three similar elements in one single line in the middle of the description: on it was Strife, on it was Uproar, on it was destructive Death. Such is also the case with "on it there was desire, on it love-talk"²⁴ So much for that.

10. *On Iliad 18.490–96*

Having called the two aforementioned cities "beautiful" because of the worth of their material, and even more so because of the skillfulness with which the object was wrought, Homer first describes a wedding, the most social of affairs and a dear one by nature.

11. *On Iliad 18.493*

One must know also that the phrase "a wedding song was spurring them on" was written not because it was heard, but because it seemed as if it were so through the shape of the sculpted figure. Similar to this are "pipes were sounding" [*Iliad* 18.495], "men were quarreling" [*Iliad* 18.498], "people shouted in applause" [*Iliad* 18.502], "a child sang with a delicate voice" [*Iliad* 18.571], and "cattle hurried on with bellowing" [*Iliad* 18.575], and other similar examples. In all these cases no voice was heard, even if the myth, which is benevolent towards Hephaestus, wants it that way. Rather, the precise likeness of the figures displayed the voice through conjecture [on the part of the interpreter].

12. *On Iliad 18.538–40*

After this Homer expresses how Hephaestus wrought Death and adds "the raiment that she had about her shoulders was red with the blood of men," because of the many instances of bloodshed in battle. Perhaps this image induced the Laconians to dress in purple when fighting.²⁵ The reader of Hesiod's Shield will know that it, too, has such divine beings mingling in battle in a spirit of Homeric emulation.²⁶ Next, the poet indicates that the figures wrought by Hephaestus here are not inspirited, as some people indulging in

τερατεύονται, ἐπάγει "ὠμίλειον δ' ὡς τε ζωοὶ βροτοὶ ἠδ' ἐμάχοντο, νεκρούς τ' ἀλλήλων ἔρυσον κατατεθνειώτων." ἴσως δὲ καὶ μηχανῆ τινι ἐκινούντο, ἔκκρουστα ὄντα καὶ οὐ διόλου προσηλωμένα τῷ σάκει. καὶ οὕτω ἐφάνταζον τοῖς ὀρώσι τὸ αὐτοκίνητον, ὅποιον δὴ τι πλάττει καὶ Αἰσχύλος ἐν τοῖς Ἑπτὰ ἐπὶ Θήβας. (1160.44–51)

13. *On Iliad* 18.564–65

Καὶ ὄρα τὸ εἰς ποικιλίαν τεχνικὸν τῆς ποιήσεως. τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἔδαφος τῆ ἀλωῆ χρυσοῦν, ἴσως δὲ καὶ τὰ κλήματα, μέλανες δὲ οἱ βότρυες, ᾧ τρόπῳ καὶ ἡ νειὸς ἀνωτέρω ἐμελαίνετο, αἱ δὲ κάμακες ἀργυραῖ, κυανὴ δὲ ἡ κάπετος κατὰ τὴν πρὸ βραχέων μελαινομένην αὐλακα εἰς βάθους ἔμφασιν, τὸ δὲ ὑπὲρ τὴν τάφρον ἔρκος κασσιτέρινον, τοὺς δὲ τρυγῶντας καὶ τοὺς ταλάρους ἀφήκεν εἰπεῖν οἷας ὕλης ἦσαν, ὡς μὴ πάνυ ἀναγκαῖον ὄν, καὶ ἅμα ἐμφήνας τοιαῦτά τινα, ὡς εἰκόσ, εἶναι καὶ αὐτά. (1163.34–38)

14. *On Iliad* 18.571

Ἡ δὲ λεπταλέη φωνὴ συγγενῶς ἔχει τῇ λιγείᾳ φόρμιγγι. ἐμφαίνει δὲ λεπταλέαν φωνὴν ὁ τοῦ Ἡφαίστου φορμιγκτῆς πάϊς τῇ πεφεισμένη καὶ συστόμῳ ὑπανοίξει τῶν τοῦ ζωδίου χειλέων. (1164.25–26)

15. *On Iliad* 18.575

Ἰστέον δὲ ὅτι, ὥσπερ τὸ σχῆμα τῶν κυνῶν ὑπέγραψε γραφικῶς ἐν τῷ "ἰστάμενοι μάλα ἐγγύς" καὶ ἐξῆς, οὕτω καὶ τὸ τῶν βοῶν ἐν τῷ «μυκηθμῶ ἐσσεύοντο», ἦγουν ὡσανεὶ μυκῶμενοι. (1165.3–4)

16. *On Iliad* 18.585

ὅτι δὲ ὡς ἐπὶ ἐμψύχων ζώων, οὐ μὴν ἀγαλμάτων, εἶρηται τὸ "οἱ κύνες δακεῖν μὲν ἀπετρωπῶντο" καὶ τὸ ἐξῆς, καθὰ καὶ ἄλλα πρὸ τούτου ὁμοίως πεποιήνται τερατωδῶς μὲν, γλυκέως δέ, δῆλον. Ζωοῖς γὰρ εἰκότα τετεύχεται δαίδαλα ἐπὶ τῆς ἀσπίδος, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τοιαύτη τερατώδης φαντασία καὶ φράσις ἐπ' αὐτοῖς γίνεται. δῆλον δ' ὅτι πολλὰ καὶ δίχα μύθου ἔργα παρ' ἀνθρώποις ἀπέβησαν ζωοῖς εἰκότα, ὅπως ὦν καὶ παρήχθησαν ὀφθαλμοὶ ἀπατηθέντες τῇ ὁμοιότητι. βοῖ γοῦν, φασί, γεγραμμένη βοῦς ἐπανέστη ἀπατηθεῖς τῇ ὁμοιώσει, ὡς ἐντεῦθεν τὸ τῆς Πασιφάης πάθος, ᾧ βοῦς ξυλίνη ἐμεσολάβησεν ἀπατήσασα καλὸν ταῦρον ζῶντα, μὴ δοκεῖν εἶναι ἀξυνηγόρητον. ἦδη δὲ που καὶ γεγραμμένη, φασί, κυνὶ καὶ περιστερᾷ καὶ χηνὶ τῇ μὲν κύων, τῇ δὲ περιστερᾷ, τῇ δὲ χηνὶ προσῆλθον καὶ ἐπεπήδησαν, φανέντων δὲ ἀδυνάτων, ἀπέστησαν. (1165.38–45)

17. *On Iliad* 18.596

Εἰ δὲ ἀργύρειοι τῶν ὄδε μαχαιρῶν οἱ ἀναφορεῖς, ὅμως ἰμάντας καὶ οὕτω νοητέον αὐτοὺς ἀναλόγως τῇ ὑποκειμένη τῆς ἀσπίδος ὕλῃ. (1166.64–1167.1)

18. *On Iliad* 18.607–08

δῆλον δὲ ὡς πάνυ δεξιῶς πινακογραφικῶς χαρακτηρῖ, ὃν οἱ περιηγούμενοι ἐζήλωσαν, τῇ κατ' αὐτὸν Ὀμηρὸς κοσμοποιεῖα κύκλῳ τὸν Ὠκεανὸν περιέθετο. (1167.37–39)

excessive marvel-talk would have it,²⁷ and adds: “They were joining in battle, fighting like living mortals and dragging away from each other the bodies of the slain.” But perhaps they were moved by some mechanism, too, being embossed and not completely fixed on the shield. Thus they created the illusion of self-movement to those who looked upon them. A similar thing is in fact fabricated by Aeschylus in *Seven against Thebes*.²⁸

13. *On Iliad* 18.564–65

Moreover, observe the poem’s artfulness in variation. For the bottom of the threshing-floor was gilded, as well as, perhaps, the vine-twigs, but the grapes were black, in the same way in which the farmland earlier was made black [*Iliad* 18.548]; the vine-poles were silver, the field-ditch dark like the black furrows a little earlier [*Iliad* 18.548] to suggest depth; the fence above the ditch was made of tin; as for the grape pickers and the baskets, the poet omits to mention of what material they are made, because it was not very necessary, as he at once indicates that these things, too, are such.²⁹

14. *On Iliad* 18.571

The slender voice is akin to the shrill lyre. Hephaestus’ lyre-playing boy displays the slender voice through slightly and narrowly opening the figure’s lips.

15. *On Iliad* 18.575

One must know that, just as the poet indicated the shape of the dogs in a graphical way in “but coming very close [*Iliad* 18.586], [they barked and sprang aside],” so he did with the shape of the cattle in “with bellowing they hurried,” meaning “as though they bellowed.”

16. *On Iliad* 18.585

Notice that the phrase “the dogs turned away from biting” and so on is said as if it refers to inspirited beings rather than images, just as other things were previously made in a similar way, that is to say, both marvelously and with sweetness [of style]. For the decorations on the shield were wrought to resemble living beings. Therefore the way in which they are phrased also becomes a marvelous representation. It is clear that even without myth many works in the human world would turn out to resemble living beings, through which eyes are misled, deceived by the likeness. They say that a bull rose against a painted bull, deceived by the likeness. This lends support to [the story about] Pasiphaë’s passion, for the sake of which a wooden cow deceived a beautiful living bull and gained access to its waist. Moreover, they say that somewhere a dog, a pigeon, and a goose approached and mounted a painted dog, pigeon, and goose, respectively. When it became apparent that it was impossible, they abandoned their tasks.³⁰

17. *On Iliad* 18.596

Even if the belts of the knives here are silver, it still is to be understood that the straps themselves are so, too, in correspondence with the underlying material of the shield.

18. *On Iliad* 18.607–08

It is clear that Homer very skillfully in the style of a map, which those who make geographical descriptions emulate, placed Oceanos in a circle around his creation.³¹

Commentary

A. Eustathios on Helen's Web

1. By "some scholars" Eustathios refers to ancient commentators of Homer. Fragments of the scholarship of Homeric scholars of the Hellenistic and Imperial age have been preserved in the form of *scholia*, i.e. notes in the margins of medieval manuscripts.¹⁷ Eustathios had access to such collections of *scholia* and employed them as a source for his own exegesis; here he probably refers to Schol. T ad *Il.* 3.126–27.
2. The reference is to *Il.*, 6.169, where the expression "on a folding tablet" (ἐν πίνακι πτυκτῶ) occurs.

B. Eustathios on the Shield of Achilles

1. Eust. in *Il.*, 1101.50–54.
2. "The ancients" are the ancient commentators of Homer: see note A.1 above; the reference may be to a lost *scholion*.
3. The episode of Hephaestus forging a new armor for Achilles (*Il.*, 18.468–613), mainly consisting of an *ekphrasis* or description (see also n. 18) of the shield (*Il.*, 18.478–608) was often referred to as the *Making of the Arms* (ὀπλοποιία) or the *Making of the Shield* (ἀσπίδοποιΐα).
4. Hephaestus' "automatic" (αὐτόματος) tripods remind one of the automata that are recorded to have existed in Byzantium,¹⁸ of which the "throne of Solomon" in the Great Palace, with singing birds, roaring lions, and moving beasts, probably driven by air pressure, is a famous example.¹⁹
5. Eustathios indicates that he has paraphrased Homer's words "divine assembly" (θεῖος ἄγων, *Il.*, 18.376) as "gathering of gods" (θεῶν ἄθροισις).
6. See Eust. in *Il.*, 1160.47–51.
7. This debate is mentioned in Scholion T ad 18.483–606, ll. 29–35 ed. Erbse. Aristonicus was a grammarian of the Augustan Age. His treatises and commentaries on Homer are all lost, except for excerpts preserved in the *scholia* of the Venetus A, one of the most important manuscripts with Homeric *scholia*.
8. Eustathios underscores that the images on the shield only *appear* lifelike as a result of Hephaestus' excellence in the art of metal working, a point he makes again in 1157.24–27 below. The same applies to the statues of Daedalus and the Rhodians: their ability to move is a metaphor for the artistic skill with which they were made.²⁰ Eustathios' statements should be read against the background of Byzantine ideas on the magical powers of statues and occult science in general. Statues were often ascribed supernatural, apotropaic, or talismanic powers – whether holy in the case of Christian statues

17 For a concise introduction on the Homeric *scholia* and further bibliography see Dickey 2006: 18–23; references to *scholia* are to the edition by Erbse 1969–1988.

18 On *automata* in Byzantium see Hammerstein 1986: 43–58; Dolezal and Mavroudi 2002: 128–32. See also Trilling 1997: esp. 222–30; Trilling underscores the Byzantines' attention for naturalism in art and connects this to a love of nature on the part of the Byzantine elite.

19 On the "throne of Solomon" see Brett 1954.

20 On verisimilitude see Trilling 1997.

or demonic in the case of pagan ones.²¹ This phenomenon is part of a widespread belief in occult science in the Middle Byzantine period, although there also were sceptics.²²

9. The artistic skill of the Rhodians is discussed in a *scholion* on the seventh *Olympian Ode* of Pindar.²³ Daedalus' "living" statues are mentioned, for instance, in Euripides, *Hecuba*, 838 and Plato, *Euthyphro*, 11c; *Meno*, 97de.
10. *Il.*, 5.749.
11. Eustathios reads in Hephaestus' immediate action upon Thetis' request an ethical lesson on how artists should behave in twelfth-century Constantinople.
12. Eust. *in Il.*, 1151.4.
13. *Il.*, 3.158.
14. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 69–70.
15. Eustathios commonly uses the term τεχνικός, "artful," to refer to Homer's skill in the art of rhetoric. Here, Homer's skill is manifest in the preparatory function of Hephaestus' marvelous attendants, the idea being that their marvel prepares the mind of the reader for the marvel of the shield in the following.
16. Athenaeus, *The Learned Banqueters* 379c = Alexis, fragment 153 K.–A.²⁴
17. *Il.*, 18.477.
18. For Eustathios, Homer is the greatest rhetorician, whose excellent rhetorical skills are also manifest in his composition of *ekphraseis* or descriptions, a rhetorical "genre" that enjoyed great popularity in Byzantine literature. Homer's *ekphraseis* served as models to be imitated by twelfth-century authors of rhetorical prose, the intended recipients of Eustathios' *Parekbolai*.
19. In antiquity, a small-scale epic poem about Heracles' killing of the robber Cycnus, a son of Ares, was attributed to Hesiod. A significant part of its 480 lines is devoted to the *ekphrasis* of Heracles' shield, which Alexandrian scholars like Aristophanes of Byzantium considered an imitation of Homer's *ekphrasis* of Achilles' shield, an assumption that also underlies Eustathios' remarks here and in 1154.36–40 and 1160.46–7 as discussed below.
20. See previous passage (Eust. *in Il.*, 1154.2–13).
21. An allegorical interpretation of the passage is ascribed to Demo, a female philosopher (probably fifth century CE). Her allegorical exegesis of Homeric poetry survives only as fragments in the works of other authors like Eustathios and his contemporary John Tzetzes.
22. On Hesiod's *Shield of Heracles*, see n. 19.
23. *Epanaphora* is a figure of speech consisting in the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive sentences.

21 See, e.g., James 1996, written as a response to Mango 1963; on talismanic powers of Byzantine spolia in San Marco (Venice) see Barry 2010: esp. 34–41.

22 A survey of statements on occult science, including the magical powers of statues, in Byzantine historiography is provided in Magdalino 2006.

23 Schol. Pind. *Ol.* 7.95a, ed. Drachmann.

24 Eds. Kassel and Austin.

24. *Il.*, 14.216.
25. This alleged custom is, for instance, mentioned in a *scholion* on *Il.*, 11.459 (Schol. T ad 11.459) and in a *scholion* on Aristophanes' *Peace* (Schol. in Ar., *Pax* 1173b).
26. Hesiod, *Shield of Heracles*, 248–63. On Hesiod's *Shield of Heracles*, see n. 19.
27. See Eust. in *Il.*, 1148.16–8 as discussed above.
28. Aeschylus, *Seven against Thebes*, 539–42.
29. I.e. made of tin like the fence.
30. Athenaeus, *The Learned Banqueters*, 605ef. The story of Pasiphaë is not mentioned by Athenaeus, but it was well known in Eustathios' time. Pasiphaë, crazed with desire for a beautiful bull after a curse by Poseidon, had Daedalus (see n. 9, p. 1197) forge a beautiful wooden cow that, as a result of Daedalus' skillful art, was very lifelike. Having positioned herself inside the wooden cow, she seduced the bull and had intercourse with him, with the birth of the Minotaur as its result.
31. The Homeric Oceanus is a river surrounding the earth. Eustathios discusses Oceanus more elaborately in *in Il.*, 514.33–43. The notion in classical geography of the ocean surrounding the *oikoumene* persisted in the Byzantine world.²⁵

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²⁵ See, e.g., Kominko 2013: 49–54.

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II.2.2 Constantine Manasses (c.1115/1120–after 1175)

Description of a Little Man

CHARIS MESSIS AND INGELA NILSSON

Ed.: C. Messis and I. Nilsson, “Constantin Manassès, La *Description d’un petit homme*, introduction, texte, traduction et commentaires,” *JÖB* 65 (2015), 188–90; previous edition: L. Sternbach, *Constantini Manassae ecphrasis inedita, Symbolae in honorem L. Ćwikliński (Symbolae philologorum Polonorum, quibus amici et discipuli Ludovico Ćwikliński quinque lustra felicissime peracta congratulantur)* (Lemberg, 1902), 1–10

MS.: El-Escorial, Real Biblioteca, Y II 10, ff. 506r–507v (s. XIII) = E

Other Translations: C. Messis and I. Nilsson, as above (French)

Significance

The *Description of a Little Man* is the only extensive and naturalistic Byzantine description of a man suffering from growth deficiency, with no hints of satire or mockery.¹ At the same time, this *ekphrasis* offers an ambiguous representation of the courtly environment of the twelfth century: on the one hand, the description of entertainment on offer in the imperial setting and thus supposedly appreciated, on the other, a potential critique of such performances and/or of the situation of writers on commission in Komnenian Constantinople. Moreover, the text offers a significant example of the complex relation between the depicted object and its representation, confirming the major concerns of Byzantine aesthetics.

The Author

Constantine Manasses (c.1115/1120–after 1175) is known above all as a historian, due to his composition of the extensive verse chronicle *Synopsis Chronike*, dedicated to *sebastokratorissa* Eirene and probably written in the 1140s.² A fairly large number of other texts by Manasses has come down to us, among which a series of orations, letters, *ekphraseis*, and grammatical exercises (*schede*) which indicate his position in educational circles in Constantinople. He also wrote a novel, *Aristandros and Kallithea* (fragmentarily preserved) and the narrative poem *Hodoiporikon*, recording an embassy to Jerusalem.³ The production as a whole allows us to partly reconstruct the network of aristocratic and imperial

1 Messis and Nilsson 2015: 182–86.

2 For a general introduction to the chronicle see Karpozelos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί και Χρονογράφοι*, 535–57; and Paul and Rhoby 2019: 1–61. On its literary characteristics see Nilsson 2005, 2006.

3 See Aerts 2003 and Nilsson 2012.

patronage to which Manasses belonged, with addressees such as Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, Michael Hagiotheodorites, and John Kontostephanos.⁴ Recurring characteristics in Manasses' literary production are his neologisms and his use of ekphrastic discourse. The former make his personal style recognizable, especially in view of his tendency to recycle his own verses and turns of phrases, whereas the latter has rendered him the epithet "specialist of *ekphraseis*."⁵ Manasses' skillful insertion of description in different genres, along with his five preserved independent *ekphraseis* describing various aspects of Constantinopolitan court life, indeed makes his production a highly interesting object for the study of *ekphraseis* in the middle Byzantine period.

Text and Context

The text describes a little man, originating from Chios, who has come to Constantinople and lives in the imperial palace, where he entertains the aristocrats and supposedly also the court. As a writer closely associated with imperial and aristocratic circles, Manasses frequently used the imperial space as a setting for his *ekphraseis*, independent descriptions as well as those inserted in narrative works. Combined with a style characterized by the recycling of ancient Greek literature, references to the Roman heritage, and biblical allusions, descriptions of the courtly milieu became an important expression of the cultural values of the Byzantine empire, past and present. The present text is no exception, though at first glance it seems to stand in contrast to the typical *ekphrasis* as a discourse expressing the praise of beauty. The man indeed entertains the court, but he is a "monstrous little man" (τεράστιον ἀνθρώπιον) due to his bodily deformation, which is very much the focus of the description. At the same time, there is no attempt to ridicule the little man; his intellectual capacity is underlined and it is rather the behavior of the aristocrats that seems to be caricatured by the author–narrator.

An investigation of the sources used by Manasses may help us better understand the description, using the allusions as clues to the contemporary function of the text. The description of the little man as a "monster" may seem harsh to us, but it is part of a long Greco-Roman scientific (sometimes pseudo-scientific) tradition that investigated bodily deformation and tried to define nature's working in detail.⁶ In the case of humans with growth deficiency, their situation is often compared with similar phenomena among animals, while their intellect is considered to be "unharmful" by their physical predicament. In effect, the term "monster" here does not entail the same connotations as it may for us. Moreover, in the present text the scientific tradition has been combined with that of fiction, represented especially by Homer and Achilles Tatius. Opening with a reference to Philostorgius' account of a man small enough to sleep in a bird's cage, Manasses contrasts

4 The biography of Manasses remains obscure. For an updated presentation of his life and work see Paul and Rhoby 2019: 4–7; on his functions and relations in imperial circles see Magdalino 1997; for a study of his entire literary production see Nilsson 2021.

5 Hunger, *Literatur*, 1, 183 ("ein Spezialist für Ekphraseis"); see also Magdalino 1997: 163–64.

6 Messis and Nilsson 2015, esp. 174–76.

that “fiction” to the reality he has now witnessed with his own eyes. The short introduction to the “natural” phenomenon of growth deficiency draws on Homer and Tattius, as does the following description of the little man whom the author–narrator has encountered at the court. The detailed description of the man’s body contains a vocabulary filled with vegetal and animal imagery, ranging from the partridge of Philostorgius to the hippopotamus of Tattius. His outer appearance, described in such terms, is thus first contrasted with the surrounding crowd of aristocrats (“Among them, the little man was like a small hinny among noble Arabian horses”), but then – more importantly – with his own intellect (“However, what he said made sense and he was in this respect unblemished”). The references to fiction are used in order to underline the “unrealistic” experience, but at the same time to blur the boundaries between what is true and not – nature turns out to reflect and confirm literature.

The references to Homer and Tattius could indicate an educational context for the *ekphrasis*, as an exercise in writing a rhetorical description that employs citation and allusion as part of characterization, drawing on well-known works of the Greek heritage. Does that mean that the little man was just a figment of Manasses’ imagination, or did he indeed see the man at the court and hear him speak? Perhaps that is not the most relevant question, since neither the metaphorical meaning of the little man nor the socio-cultural significance of the description rely on the man’s existence but on our understanding of the author–narrator’s focalization. Our question would rather be whether the detailed description of a potentially unhappy human being could be a way of taunting the futility of the aristocracy, who mocks him by dressing him up and expecting him to fight in front of an audience. For such an interpretation, we need to read some of the remarks ironically (e.g. “this gift [the hat], it seemed, was a joke of one of the aristocrats”) and also acknowledge the occasional tone of sadness in the depiction of the little man’s life (esp. “provided with such thighs and using such legs, he was sent away from home and traveled through cities and went about towns to become a source of income”). Also notable is the absence of praise of the imperial court, which is part of Manasses’ other *ekphraseis*, in addition to the complete lack of satirical touch or mockery of the little man, highly unusual in contrast to other middle-Byzantine descriptions of small people.⁷

Taking all of this into consideration, it is possible that the little man in the text by Manasses functions as both a realistic representation and a literary metaphor. The extreme detail convinces the reader of the reality of the sight, while the intertextual characteristics point in a different direction. The use of the term “performance” [*drama*] in the closing paragraph seems to indicate fiction (in contrast to “sight” [*theama*], which he uses more often), but Manasses’ use of vocabulary is never consistent, and here the word may indicate simply the dramatic aspects of a spectacle. One could imagine a performative context in one of the *theatra* of Constantinople, where the author among peers allows for a certain criticism of the courtly consumption of entertainment to enter his rhetorical discourse. Such a setting does not exclude the educational context suggested above, since

7 Messis and Nilsson 2015: 182–86.

there were no absolute boundaries between classroom and court in the twelfth century, and the critique is subtly hidden and focalized by the narrator rather than Manasses himself. Metaphorically, the little man could thus be seen as the alter ego of the author writing on command for influential patrons. They are both court entertainers, perhaps aspiring to belong, but forever in the hands of “noble” aristocrats whose attention they need, but secretly despise.

Text

Τοῦ Μανασσῆ κυροῦ Κωνσταντίνου ἔκφρασις ἀνθρώπου μικροῦ

Πάλαι μὲν μῦθον ἠγούμην καὶ τερατεῖαν ἀλόγιστον, ὡς ἄρα ποτὲ μικρὸν ἀνθρωπίσκον Αἴγυπτος ἤνεγκεν καὶ οὕτω βραχύσωμον, ὡς ἐν καλαθίσκῳ κοιτάζεσθαι πέρδικος. νῦν δὲ ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς τεράστιον εἶδον ἀνθρώπιον καὶ γεγόνασί μοι τὰ βλέφαρα τοῦ ὀραθέντος ἀπαραλόγιστοι μάρτυρες. οὕτω δὲ ἦν ὀλίγον καὶ ταπεινὸν τοῦ σώματος τὴν ἀνάβασιν, ὡς καὶ κράμβης εὐγενοῦς εἰς ἡλικίωσιν λείπεσθαι.

Τὸ μὲν οὖν ὄλον γένος ἀνθρώπων εὐρίσκεσθαι ταπεινὸν, ὁποίους εἶναι τοὺς ταῖς γεράνοις ἀντιπαλαμωμένους Πυγμαίους ἰστόρησαν ποιηταί, οὔτε ἄλλως καινὸν καὶ ἢ αἴσθησις δεικνύσι. καὶ γὰρ τοὶ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἵπποις, ἀρράβιος μὲν ἵππος γαῦρος καὶ ὑπαύχη καὶ φρουακτίας καὶ ἀελλόπους καὶ σθεναρὸς καὶ τὴν ὀπλὴν καρτερός, ἵππος δὲ σκύθης ταπεινὸς τις καὶ ἀγεννής καὶ τὴν ὀπλὴν ἀπαλὸς καὶ, τὸ ὄλον εἶπεῖν, εἰδεχθῆς καὶ χαμαίζηλος. ἀλλὰ κὰν τοῖς βουσί, βοῦς μὲν κύπριος λεπτός καὶ ὀλιγομέτωπος καὶ κέρας ἅμα καὶ χροῖαν δυσειδής, βοῦς δὲ ὕδωρ πίνων νειλῶν εὐρύτερος, εὐρυγάστρω, ὑψίκερος, εὐρυμέτωπος. ἐὼ λέγειν δελφίνας θαλασσοβίους καὶ ὅσον ἄλλο φύλον τὴν ἄλμην περιπολεῖ· ἀλλὰ καὶ πλάτανος ὕδρηλή πῆ μὲν οὐρανομήκης εὐρίσκεται καὶ λιπαροστέλεχος, πῆ δὲ ταπεινὴ καὶ ἀναυξής καὶ περίγειος· ἐφίκοιτο δ' ἂν αὐτῆς καὶ παιδίσκος ἔτι βρεφοκομούμενος. ὄλον μὲν οὖν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων περὶ τὴν ἡλικίαν ἡμαρτημένον καὶ ἔγνω ἢ φύσις καὶ οἶδε τὸ πάθος, καὶ οὐ πᾶν τι τοῦτο καινόν. ἂν δὲ τι πατὴρ μὲν καὶ μήτηρ καὶ εἴ τις ἄλλοι ταυτογενεῖς εὐ ἔχιοιεν τῆς τῶν σωμάτων ἀναδρομῆς, αὐτὸς δὲ βραχύπους γένοιτο καὶ μικροσκελῆς καί, τὸ ὄλον εἶπεῖν, βρεφώδης πᾶσαν τὴν σύμπηξιν, τοῦτο ἀμβλωμα φύσεως, τοῦτο ἀπότευγμα, τοῦτο τεράστιον.

Τοιοῦτόν τινα μικρὸν ἀνθρωπίσκον καὶ ἢ νῆσος ἤνεγκε Χίος καὶ ἠνέχθη τὸ τέρας ἐπὶ τὴν Βύζαντος καὶ διῆγεν ἐν βασιλείοις. καὶ ἦν ὄχλος περὶ αὐτὸ συντρεχόντων καὶ ἰστοροῦντων καὶ ἀπολαμβανόντων ἐν μέσῳ καὶ θελόντων αὐτῷ προσλαλεῖν. καὶ ἦν τὸ ἀνθρώπιον ἐν μέσοις ἐκείνοις ὡς γίννος μικρὸς ἐν ἵπποις εὐγενέσιν ἀρραβικοῖς· οὕτω δαιμόνιος ἦν ἢ βραχύτης, οὕτως ἀλλοφυῆς ἢ μικρότης. ἐκεῖ τοῦτο κἀγὼ κατείδον καὶ ἐξιστόρησα· καὶ εἶχεν οὕτω τὰ κατ' αὐτόν : περιέκειτο μὲν ἐπὶ κρανὸν ἰκανῶς ἔχον μεγέθους καὶ τηλικούτον ὡς ὑπὲρ ἡμισυ σχεδὸν τῆς ὅλης αὐτῷ τοῦ σώματος ἀναβάσεως· καὶ ἦν, ὡς ἔοικε, τοῦτο τὸ δώρημά τινος τῶν εὐγενεστέρων ἀστείσμα· μελαντέρα τῷ ἐπικράνῳ χροιά καὶ πυκναὶ περὶ αὐτῷ αἰ ραφαί· καὶ εἰς ὕψος ἴσον ἀνέβαινε οὔτε πλατυνόμενον ἐπὶ πλέον οὔτε πυραμιδοῦμενον. τὰ δὲ ἀπὸ κεφαλῆς τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ μέχρι μηρῶν πολλῶ τὴν τῶν κάτω μερῶν ἰσχύνη τε καὶ σμικρότητα ὑπερέβαινε· μέλαινα κόμη, ἀμφιλαφῆς ἢ κόμη, τὸ μῆκος μετρία· περιφερῆς κεφαλή· μέτωπον εὐρυμέτωπον· ὄφρυς λασία· μέλανες ὀφθαλμοί· ῥίς τετανῆ καὶ ὡσεὶ ῥάβδος εὐθεῖα καὶ ἀδροτέρα τοῦ δέοντος· εὐρεῖς οἱ μυκτῆρες καὶ ἐλευθέρως πρὸς τὴν πνοὴν ἀνεώγνυντο· ἢ περὶ τὸ χεῖλος θρίξ πολλή καὶ λασία· τὸ χεῖλος σαρκῶδες· πῶγων δασύς, οὐ τετανόθριξ οὐδὲ καθειμένος εἰς βάθος, μᾶλλον μὲν οὖν κεχυμένος εἰς μετριώτερον πλατυσμόν· μελάντερος ὁ πῶγων καὶ αἰθιοπίζων οἶον τὴν χροῖαν· τὸ πρόσωπον ἐρρυτίδωτο· τὴν ἐπιδερμίδα εἶχε ῥυσσῆν, οὐκ οἶδα εἴτε τοῦ χρόνου τοῦτο βιασαμένου εἴτε καὶ οὕτως εἶχεν ἀπὸ βρέφους εὐθύς· ἢ χροιά τοῦ προσώπου οὔτε κατάλευκος οὔτε κατάκρας αἰθιοπίζουσα, ἀλλ' ἢ κατὰ τοὺς Ἰνδῶν λευκοτέρους ἢ ὁποῖον

Translation

By Constantine Manasses, *Ekphrasis of a Little Man*

I used to consider it a fiction and a nonsensical fairy tale, that Egypt had once produced a tiny little man, with such a short body that he could sleep in a partridge's basket.¹ Now, however, I have seen myself a monstrous little man and my eyes have become indisputable witnesses of the sight. His body was of such a small and modest size, that he did not surpass the height of a cultivated cabbage.

The existence of an entire race of small-bodied men, such as the pygmies fighting against the cranes, has already been explored by the poets;² but experience also shows that such a thing is not at all strange. It can also be noted among horses: the Arabian horse is splendid and stately, haughty,³ and storm-footed, mighty with strong hooves, whereas the Scythian horse is a humble one of low descent and with soft hooves, on the whole, both ugly and dwarfish. Also among cattle, with the Cypriot bull being thin with a narrow forehead, unsightly as regards both horns and skin, while the bull who drinks the water of the Nile is broad-chested, big-bellied, with long horns and a wide forehead. I leave out dolphins who live in the sea and other species who traverse the brine. However, the watery plane-tree too is sometimes high as heaven and has a solid trunk, though sometimes it is humble, undersized and remains close to the ground – even a child who is still an infant could reach it. Nature has known an entire group of men with growth deficiency and still knows this condition, there is nothing new about it at all. If, however, someone's father and mother and even other relatives were well off as regards bodily growth, but he himself were born with short feet and tiny legs and, on the whole, with the entire constitution of a baby, this is an abortion of nature, this is a failure and a monstrosity.

The island of Chios did give birth to such a tiny little man, and this monster was brought to the Byzantine capital where he lived in the palace. A crowd gathered around him there, examining him, enjoying the spectacle, and wishing to talk to him. Among them, the little man was like a small hinny among noble Arabian horses; his shortness was so miraculous, his smallness so strange! I, too, saw him there and examined him; this is what he looked like.⁴ He wore a hat that was fairly big and of such a size that it corresponded to more than half of his own height; this gift, it seemed, was a joke of one of the aristocrats. Its color was very black, and there were stitches all around it, and it was high and straight, neither flattened nor of a pyramid shape. The man's body from head to thighs greatly exceeded the thinness and smallness of the lower part. His hair was black; it was thick and of medium length. His head was round, the front broad, the eyebrows bushy, the eyes black, the nose long and straight like a wand, larger than it should be; his nostrils were wide and opened freely for his breath.⁵ His facial hair was rich and shaggy; the lips were fleshy; the beard was thick, neither long nor stretching down his chest but flowing moderately to the sides; the beard was black, and his skin was dark like that of an Aethiopian. His face was shriveled: the skin had wrinkles and I do not know whether this was the result of the force of time or whether it had been like that since he was a baby. The color of the face was neither all white nor completely black, but rather like the more light

ἄν τὸ πρόσωπον ἄνθρωπος ἔχοι πολλοῖς ἡλίοις συγγυμνασθεῖς· σιμὸς ὁ αὐχὴν, μικρὸς ὁ αὐχὴν, οὐκ ἀνεστηκῶς οὐδὲ ὄρθιος, ἀλλ' οἶον ὑπὸ τοῦ βάρους τῆς κεφαλῆς τυραννούμενος καὶ σφιγγόμενος· ὤμοι στενοί, ὁ δ' εὐώνυμος καὶ γυρός· βραχιῶν ὀλίγος· πῆχυς βραχύς· δάκτυλοι σαρκώδεις καὶ τετανοί, σκληρόδερμοι δὲ καὶ παχεῖς καὶ οἴους ἄν ἔχοι βοηλάτης καὶ σκαπανεύς· μηρὸς ἰσχνὸς καὶ μικρὸς, βλαισὸς ὁ μηρὸς, παλαιστιαῖος ἄν εἴποι τις ὁ μηρὸς· γόνου δὲ ἢ οὐδαμοῦ ἢ κεκρυμμένον καὶ δυσδιάγνωστον· καὶ δεύτερος δὲ μηρὸς διεφαίνετο, βλαισὸς καὶ αὐτός, τοσοῦτον τοῦ πρώτου λειπόμενος, ὅσον ἄν καὶ χειρὸς ἀνθρωπίνης καρπὸς λείποιο πῆχους· καὶ ἐνταῦθα ἦν τὸ τεράστιον· ἐγυροῦτο γὰρ ὁ μηρὸς καὶ εἰς τόξου σκαμβότητα ἐκλίνε· κνήμη λεπτή· σκέλος μικρόν, εἴπερ ἄν ὡς τηλίκον ἔχοι καὶ γέρας· ἔφερε δὲ καὶ ῥάβδον ἐν τῇ χειρὶ καὶ ταύτῃ τὰ πολλὰ ὑπερείδετο, καὶ οὐκ ἀπεικὸς μὲν ἦν, ὅσα καὶ ποσὶ τῇ ῥάβδῳ χρῆσθαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον· οὐ γὰρ τὸ σκέλος ἦν αὐτῷ εὐπαγές οὐδὲ ὁ μηρὸς κραταῖος οὐδὲ στερρὰ τὰ σφυρά, ἀλλὰ τοιοῦτον ἦν τὸ φαινόμενον, ὡς εἴ τις ἀρτιμοσχεύτοις λύγοις καὶ ἀρτιφύτοις βάρους οἰκίας πιστεύσειεν.

Ἐγὼ δὲ εἶδον τὸν ἄνθρωπον καὶ ἀνατείνοντά ποτε τὴν ῥάβδον τὴν ἐν χειρὶ καὶ εἰς μάχην τινὰς προκαλούμενον (ἦν γὰρ τοι καὶ φιλοπαίγμων, εἴ τινας εὐρίσκοι συμπαίστορας), καὶ ὁμως ἀκινδύνως ἰστάμενον· εἶδον δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ τισὶ τῶν προσπαιζόντων ἐμπικραινόμενον καὶ τοῦτο ἐκεῖνο τὸ τῆς παροιμίας εἶπον κατ' ἐμαυτόν· ἔστι κὰν μύρμηκι χολή· ἤκουσα δὲ καὶ λαλοῦντος αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐδόκει μοὶ ποθεν ἀπὸ βάθους ἀναβαίνειν ἢ λαλιά καὶ ὑπόψελλος· οὕτως ἦν ἀμαυρὰ καὶ ἀμφίβολος· συνέσεως δ' οὖν ἦσαν μετέχοντα τὰ λεγόμενα καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖνος τοῦτο γε τὸ μέρος ἀλώβητος. τὸ μὲν οὖν ὅλον τοῦ σώματος ἀναβάσιμον γόνατος ἄν ὑπερείχεν ὀλίγον οὔτε γιγαντοσώμου τινὸς ἀνθρώπου καὶ ὑπερήλικος οὔτε γίνου καὶ πιθηκίσκου καὶ μηδὲ μύκητος πλέον τῆς γῆς ἐξανέχοντος, ἀλλ' ἀνδρὸς ὃν ἡ φύσις δεινῶς συνεπήξατο· τὰ δ' ἀπὸ κεφαλῆς αὐτῷ μέχρι καὶ ῥάχεως προσεκεκῦφει καὶ ἦν προτενής· ἐλέγετο δὲ καὶ ταῦτα, αὐτὸν τοιοῦτοις μηροῖς διοικούμενον, τοιοῖσδε δὲ σκέλεσι χρώμενον ἀπόδημον στέλλεσθαι καὶ πόλεις περιπολεῖν καὶ περιέρχεσθαι ἄστεα εὐρίσκεσθαι τε ποριστικὸν καὶ εὐμήχανον· εἶναι γὰρ κηδεμονικὸν καὶ φροντιστὴν τῶν αὐτογενῶν καὶ ζημίαν ἠγεῖσθαι τὸ οἰκουρεῖν.

Γέγραπται δὲ μοι τὸ πᾶν περὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον δράμα, ἐμοὶ μὲν εἰς παίγνιον, ἄλλοις δὲ εἰς γυνῶσιν οὐ μὴ τεθέανται.

skin of the Indians or like the face of a man who has spent much time in the sun. His neck was crooked and short, neither raised nor straight, but as if oppressed and burdened by the weight of the head. His shoulders were narrow, and the left one was curved. He had short arms and the forearms were short too; his fingers were fleshy and rigid, they had hard skin that was thick and like that of a cattle-driver and digger. His one thigh was thin and short, it was bent, it was “a palm long” as one would say. Either he had no knee, or it was hidden or difficult to see. His other thigh was visible, also bent, as much shorter than the other as the length of a human arm that is missing the forearm. And in this aspect resided the monstrosity: for his thigh was bent and sloped into the curve of a bow. His shank was thin and the foot small – one could say it resembled that of a crane. He carried a stick in his hand and leaned on it most of the time, which was not unreasonable since the man used the stick as a leg. For his leg was not solid, his thigh was not strong, and his ankles were not firm, so the impression was that of someone having confided the burden of a house to newly planted and just barely sprouting twigs.

I once saw this man myself, raising the stick in his hand and inviting someone for a fight⁶ (for he was fond of play, if he could find some playmates) and he was, after all, standing up without danger. I also saw him vexing some of his companions, and I recalled for myself that proverb: “even an ant is capable of wrath.”⁷ I also heard him speak and it seemed to me that his voice came sort of from a depth and was stammering – that is how faint and wavering it was. However, what he said made sense and he was in this respect unblemished. The entire height of his body surpassed by little neither the knee of a gigantic or very tall man, nor that of a hinny or a small monkey or a mushroom that just jutted forth from the earth, but that of a man whom nature had seriously condensed – the part of his body from head to the lower part of his back stooped forward and was stretched out. It was also said about him, that, provided with such thighs and using such legs, he was sent away from home and traveled through cities and went about towns to become a source of income.⁸ For, it was also said, he was provident and took care of his parents and considered it a loss to stay at home.

I have written this entire performance piece about this man, in order to both amuse myself and to inform others of what they have not seen.

Commentary

1. Philostorgius, *Ecclesiastical History* 10.11: “The Egyptian, however, was so extremely short, that he gracefully imitated partridges shut up in cages, and that the latter played and strove with him in jest” (ὁ δὲ Αἰγύπτιος οὕτω κατεβραχύνετο, ὥστε μηδ’ ἀχαρίστως τοὺς ἐν τοῖς κλουβοῖς πέρδικας ἐκμιμεῖσθαι, καὶ συναθῦρειν αὐτῷ πρὸς ἔριν ἐκείνους).
2. Manasses here refers to the famous passage in Homer (*Il.*, 3.3–7) which narrates the battle of the Pygmies with the cranes.
3. Manasses uses in this text the word φρυακτίας for the horse, although in the *Synopsis Chronike* (5379 ed. Lampsidis) and in the eulogy for Michael Hagiotheodorites (325–26 ed. Horna) he prefers the term φριμακτίας for horses and φρυακτίας for men (3358, 3652, 5859).
4. In his portrayal of the little man, Manasses employs the same structure as in his other descriptions of persons; see, e.g., the portrait of the old man in the *Description of the Capture of Small Birds* (135–140 Horna) or the description of the Cyclops in the *ekphrasis* dedicated to him (46–80 Sternbach).
5. The description of the little man has many elements in common with that of the description of the hippopotamus of the Nile in Achilles Tatius, *Leukippe and Kleitophon* 4.2.3.
6. Possible allusion to Lucian, *Symposium or the Lapiths* 18–19, where a very short jester by the name Satyrion performs. Satyrion is also the name of the jester in the novel by Theodore Prodromos, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*.
7. Zenobius III.70 and Diogenianus IV.48.
8. See Messis 2012.

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II.2.3 John “Phokas” (Doukas) (mid–late twelfth century)

A Brief *Ekphrasis* of the Settlements from Antioch to Jerusalem, and the Lands of Syria, Phoenicia, and the Holy Land in Palestine

KONSTANTINOS CHRYSOGELOS

Ed.: A. E. Fadi, “Ἰωάννου Φωκᾶ, Ἐκφρασις ἐν συνόψει τῶν ἀπ’ Ἀντιοχείας μέχρι Ἱεροσολύμων κάστρων καὶ χωρῶν Συρίας, Φοινίκης καὶ τῶν κατὰ Παλαιστίνην Ἁγίων Τόπων” (Unpublished postgraduate thesis, Thessaloniki, 2008); for a review of the previous editions see C. Messis, “Littérature, voyage et politique au XIIe siècle: *l’Ekphrasis des lieux saints* de Jean ‘Phokas,” *BSI* 69/3 (2011), 146–47

MSS.:¹ Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Allacci 51 (Martini 158) (s. XIV–XV), ff. 68r–80v
Mount Athos, Meg. Lavras K 41 (Eustratiades 1328) (s. XVIII), ff. 151r–160r
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Other Translations: A. Stewart, *The Pilgrimage of Joannes Phocas in the Holy Land (in the year 1185 A.D.)* (London, 1889); J. Wilkinson (with J. Hill and W. F. Ryan), *Jerusalem Pilgrimage 1099–1185* (London, 1988), 315–36 (English); A. Külzer, *Peregrinatio graeca in Terram Sanctam: Studien zu Pilgerführern und Reisebeschreibungen über Syrien, Palästina und den Sinai aus byzantinischer und metabyzantinischer Zeit*, *Studien und Texte zur Byzantinistik* 2 (Frankfurt am Main, 1994), 287–305 (German)

Significance

The *Ekphrasis* of Phokas shows in a lucid way how twelfth-century Byzantines perceived art mediated through rhetorical descriptions. It is important to stress though, that the *Ekphrasis* should be used more as a token of Byzantine perception, as well as rhetorical theory and practice, rather than as a testimony of what the aforementioned works of art actually looked like.² In addition, the text is important from a cultural point of view, since the author describes works of art that either no longer exist or have only been preserved fragmentarily.

The Author

Little is known about the author of the *Brief Ekphrasis* (hereafter, *Ekphrasis*). The title of the manuscript that is now preserved in the Vallicelliana Library of Rome attributes the

¹ Not consulted.

² This is aptly stressed also by James and Webb, “To Understand Ultimate Things,” 14.

Ekphrasis to a certain Cretan John Phokas, a clergyman and the son of a monk named Matthew. Above the title there is an unsigned note from his son. Based on these indications, all the editors so far have ascribed the text to this John Phokas.

Messis has noted that in the title of the Vallicelliana manuscript there are at least three levels of subsequent writings, in different colors: the earliest one was written in red, the second one in black, and the latest one in a vivid red colored ink. According to Messis, the earliest writing suggests that the author is not John Phokas but a certain *sebastos* John Doukas. This writing was changed into the third one that ascribes the work to John Phokas, “the most pious priest.” Messis argues that the son of John Phokas attributed the text to his father, who probably was merely a copyist of the *Ekphrasis*.³

If that is the case, the *Ekphrasis* was written by John Doukas who held the title of *sebastos* in the days of emperor Manuel I Komnenos (Manuel is mentioned several times in the text). Still it is difficult to identify him, since contemporary sources include several other persons with the same name. According to Messis, John Doukas, who held the title of *pansebastos sebastos* and also the office of *Megas Hetaireiarches* in the time of Manuel Komnenos is the most plausible choice. John Doukas had taken part in several expeditions undertaken by Manuel, such as in Asia Minor in the 1140s, in Apulia in the 1150s (during which he was captured by the Normans), and in Dalmatia and Hungary in the 1160s. After Manuel’s death (1180), John Doukas was an adherent of the regency government formed by Manuel’s widow, Maria of Antioch, and the *protosebastos* Alexios Komnenos.⁴

The same individual was also the subject of an oration by Eustathios of Thessaloniki. There it is mentioned that Doukas had traveled to Palestine. William of Tyre informs us that he passed by Cilicia and Libya (= North Africa) in 1177 in the capacity of an envoy seeking an alliance with Saladin’s Egypt.⁵ Presumably, both sources refer to one and the same trip, during which Doukas visited the Holy Land. However, the author of the *Ekphrasis* says that he had visited the area in the past, as a soldier under the command of Manuel (ch. 24), so perhaps it was that trip that was the one cited by Eustathios and William of Tyre; provided that the author is indeed John Doukas.

Despite these possibilities, there is lack of secure evidence and thus the case of the author’s identity remains open.

Text and Context

The *Ekphrasis* is a description of Phokas’ itinerary in Palestine.⁶ In the proemium the author states that he wishes to share his experiences from his trip to the places where

3 See Messis 2011: 146–49.

4 For the life and career of this John Doukas see Stone 1999. Some of these facts are based on assumptions, since there were several other contemporary persons with the same name; see on this Karlin-Hayter 1972, who argues against Dimitrios Polemis’ conjecture (*Doukai*: 127–30) that all the primary sources talk about the same person.

5 For Eustathios’ and William’s testimonies see Stone 1999: 157–58.

6 On the subject of authorship see The Author.

God himself has dwelt. It is not until the tenth chapter that he actually describes the Holy Land. Up to that point, Phokas reports on the cities one is able to visit when traveling towards the Holy Land.⁷ The first chapters are filled with short rhetorical descriptions of several cities and locations, including Antioch, Mount Lebanon, Tripoli, and the harbor of Beirut (chs. 2–5).

The description of the Holy Land is not strictly limited to locations mentioned in the Holy Scripture; instead, Phokas displays a vivid interest in Christian Orthodox monasteries, as well as Christian communities in Palestine. His main concern is to demonstrate the continuity of the Orthodox tradition in the East. For this reason, references to the Holy Land are usually accompanied by biblical citations and the monasteries mentioned in the *Ekphrasis* are some of the most renowned Christian hubs since Late Antiquity. For example, Phokas narrates a story of a holy man he met in the St. Gerassimos monastery (in the Jordan valley), who was feeding a pair of lions that had accidentally entered his cave (ch. 23). The tale is reminiscent of St. Gerassimos' own vita, as found in the late sixth-century collection of John Moschos, known as the *Pratum spirituale* (*Spiritual meadow*).⁸ It seems then that Phokas attempts to show that, the Latin presence notwithstanding, Christian Orthodox monasticism and asceticism is alive and flourishing and, most importantly, that there is a straight line connecting this practice with the legendary past of the fifth and sixth centuries.

In doing so, Phokas was not alone. For example, the late twelfth-/early thirteenth-century monastic writer St. Neophytos Enkleistos (= "The Recluse") wrote a piece about Gabriel, a monk in the Palestinian monastery of St. Sabbas. Certain details bear comparison with an earlier account, the Life of St. Lazarus, an early eleventh-century monk.⁹ Apparently a number of twelfth-century authors attempted to build a bridge with the glorious monastic past of Palestine.¹⁰

Despite the fact that it is somewhat difficult to specify the exact date at which Phokas was writing, the *Ekphrasis* can only be fully understood within the historical context of Manuel's foreign policy in the Holy Land during the last decades of his reign.¹¹ At that point, the Byzantine emperor was offering protection to the Latin rulers against the threat of the Muslims. He was also a major patron of the Orthodox populations in Palestine and he attempted to bring about the union of the churches.¹² For his part, Phokas exalts

7 A number of places of pilgrimage in Sidon and Tyre are recorded (ch. 6 and 8, respectively).

8 For the tale of St. Gerasimos and the lion see PG 87/3: 2965–69. For the "lion-motif" in "psychopelitic" (= beneficial for the soul) tales see Wortley 1996: 293–96; cf. also Jotischky 2001: 88.

9 Neophytos the Recluse, *Narrative Discourse on a Certain Monk in Palestine*: 162–75. St. Lazarus' story is to be found in AASS, Nov. 3: 508–88 (extended version), 588–606 (shorter version), and 607–8 (summary).

10 See Jotischky 2001: 85–90: p. 88–89 for Neophytos.

11 For the dating of the text by Allatius and Miller see Fadi 2008: 27–29, Messis 2011: 160–61. Based on the illegible inscription on the manuscript of the Vallicelliana library, Allatius and Miller date the text to 1185 and 1177, respectively; Messis 2011 argues that the text was written shortly after Manuel's death in 1180.

12 On Manuel's politics towards Palestine under Latin rule see Cheynet 2004, esp. 115–18; Augé 2007: 116–20; Hunt 1991: 78–81 (for the mosaic decoration in the church of the Nativity as an Ecumenical statement), 81–83, 85; cf. also Messis 2011: 162–63.

the imperial deeds in the Holy Land, such as the renovation and financial support of a number of monasteries.¹³

Regarding the literary features of the *Ekphrasis*, Phokas' work should be correlated with the tradition of Byzantine pilgrims' accounts. The earliest predecessor of Phokas is Epiphanius Aghiopolites, most probably a monk, who wrote a *diegesis* (narration) of his itinerary.¹⁴ Apparently, Epiphanius' simple and unaffected style was co-opted by Phokas for the part of his text that concerns the Holy Land and the monasteries of Palestine (chs. 10–31). Like Epiphanius, Phokas includes information on the topography of the land, enriching his sightseeing with suitable biblical quotes. He also chooses to speak in the second person to his reader(s) several times.¹⁵ But Phokas goes several steps further: first of all, he starts his work (now an *ekphrasis*, not a *diegesis*)¹⁶ with brief descriptions of the sights encountered while traveling to the Holy Land. Secondly, he adds descriptions of church decorations, eulogies of Manuel, and short stories about ascetics. Thirdly, his presence (the voice of the narrator), although fairly modest, is much more prominent than that of Epiphanius. Altogether, Phokas seems to have used Epiphanius' work only to a certain degree.

Phokas' decision to begin his *Ekphrasis* with ten chapters that are irrelevant to his itinerary to the Holy Land is similar to Constantine Manasses' *Itinerary*, a poem that was written around 1161/62. Manasses' *Itinerary* is divided into four Logoi; the first part of the first Logos narrates the poet's trip towards the Holy Land, starting from Constantinople. After the description of Antioch and before Phokas and Manasses enter the Holy Land their respective authors mention and describe the same locations (Daphne, the fountain of Castalia, Sidon, Tyre, the harbor of Beirut, Ptolemais/Acre).

Another feature of Phokas' *Ekphrasis* is his "borrowing" from earlier sources. For the description of the mosaic in the grotto of the church of the Nativity, Phokas reproduces almost verbatim an *ekphrasis* of a mosaic with the same subject (the Nativity of Christ) from the church of St. Sergius in Gaza. This description, which is incorporated in a eulogy for Marcianus bishop of Gaza, was written by the well-known rhetorician Chorikios of Gaza in the sixth century.¹⁷ The same applies to Phokas' description of a wall painting depicting the Annunciation, found in the house of Joseph in Nazareth, which again is an almost word for word reproduction of a relevant passage from Chorikios' eulogy.¹⁸

Phokas' dependence upon Chorikios is also evident in the proemium of the *Ekphrasis*, a part of which is again a paraphrase from the aforementioned eulogy. Both authors suggest that their *ekphrasis* of the Holy Land and St. Sergius, respectively, have shared goals: to depict with *enargeia* (vividness) the sights to those who have not seen them and

13 For Manuel's activities in Palestine see Jotischky 2001: 86; Augé 2007: 117–18.

14 Epiphanius Aghiopolites, *Itinerary*, ed. Donner (see Primary Sources).

15 On the second-person narrative in Phokas see Külzer 2003: 205.

16 For the close relation between *diegesis* and *ekphrasis* in rhetorical theory see James and Webb, "To Understand Ultimate Things," 6–7.

17 John Phokas, *Ekphrasis*, ch. 27; Phokas' dependence upon Chorikios was first noted by Maguire, "Truth and Convention," 116; see Chorikios of Gaza, *Eulogy of Marcianus*: 15,15–17,6 for the description of the mosaic.

18 John Phokas, *Ekphrasis*, ch. 10; Chorikios of Gaza, *Eulogy of Marcianus*: 14,18–15,15.

to please the ears of those who have seen them.¹⁹ The usage of the word *enargeia* is of great importance, since it was a key term for the rhetorical practice of the *ekphrasis*.²⁰ *Enargeia* is employed by the rhetorician so that the auditor of the rhetorical piece will be able to “see” the object that is being described as if it were set before his eyes. In order to achieve this, the auditor needs to relate the object of the *ekphrasis* (a work of art in this case) to already existing images of related objects that are stored in his “soul.”

It becomes evident, then, that there is a mimetic aspect in the *ekphrasis* on the part of the recipient, which the rhetorician also serves through the *mimesis* of previous literary exemplars.²¹ It is within this theoretical framework that Phokas’ “borrowings” from Chorikios become more justifiable.

19 John Phokas, *Ekphrasis*, ch. 1; Chorikios of Gaza, *Eulogy of Marcianus*: 7, 6–11.

20 For the semantic nuances of *enargeia*, see Papaioannou, “Enargeia.” *Enargeia* was often employed by Christians and Neoplatonists as a synonym for divine truth (*op. cit.*: 51–52). It is tempting to assume that Phokas goes beyond the rhetorical meaning of the term, by also implying that his text will “reveal” the spiritual truth of the Holy Land to the reader.

21 The complex issue of the relation between rhetoric and religious art in Byzantium cannot be elaborated here. On the fact that an *ekphrasis* (the written text) rivals the work of art it describes see James and Webb, “To Understand Ultimate Things,” 7–9; on the spiritual aspect of an *ekphrasis* of religious art see *op. cit.*, 11–14. On the mimetic aspect of religious art in Byzantium as a means to understand the same practice in rhetorical descriptions see James 2003: 65–66.

Texts

(a) Painting (the Annunciation) in the House of Joseph, Nazareth²²

Αὕτη ἡ τοῦ Ἰωσήφ οἰκία μετὰ ταῦτα εἰς ναὸν μετεσκευάσθη περικαλλῆ, οὐ̅περ τὸ εὐώνυμον μέρος, ἐγγύς που περὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον, ὑπάρχει σπήλαιον, οὐ̅ κατὰ τὸ βάθος τῆς γῆς ἠνεωγμένον, ἀλλ' ἐπιπολαίως φαινόμενον, οὐ̅ τὸ στόμιον λευκοῖς μαρμάρους περικαλλύνεται, καὶ τούτου ὕπερ, διὰ τῆς τοῦ ζωγράφου χειρὸς, ὑπόπτερος ἄγγελος κατελθὼν παρὰ τὴν ἄνευ συνοίκου μητέρα μήπω γενομένην, εὐαγγελίους ἀσπάζεται, σεμνῆ σεμνῶς ταλασιουργοῦση περιτυχῶν, καὶ σχηματίζεται μὲν οἷά τις πρὸς ταύτην διαλεγόμενος, ἐκπλαγείσης δὲ πρὸς τὴν ἀνέλπιστον θεάν, ἀθρόως τε τῷ θορύβῳ μεταστραφείσης, μικροῦ τῆς χειρὸς ἐξέπεσεν ἡ πορφύρα. ἦ, καὶ τοῦ θαλάμου ἐξιούσα σὺν φόβῳ, γυναικὶ συγγενεῖ καὶ φίλῃ προσυπαντᾷ καὶ ἀσπασμοῖς δεξιούται ταύτην φιλίους.

(b) Mosaic (the Nativity) in the Grotto of the Temple of the Nativity in Bethlehem²³

Ἐγραψεν ὁ τεχνίτης τῆ ζωγράφῳ χειρὶ ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ σπηλαίῳ, τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ τελεσθέντα μυστήρια. Γέγραπτο γὰρ περὶ τὴν ἀψίδα, ἐν ᾧ τὸ μέγα τοῦ κόσμου μυστήριον, κόρη πρὸς εὐνὴν ἀναπίπτουσα, τὴν μὲν λαιὰν ὑποθεῖσα τῷ τῆς ἐτέρας ἀγκῶνι, τῆ δεξιᾷ δὲ τὴν παρεῖαν ἐπικλίνουσα, καὶ πρὸς τὸ βρέφος ὀρῶσα, καὶ τὴν ἐντὸς σωφροσύνην ἐν τῷ τοῦ σχήματος μεδιάματι, καὶ τῆ τῶν παρεῖων εὐχροία ἐμφαίνουσα. Οὐ γὰρ ἀλλοιοῦται τὸ πρόσωπον, ὡς ὠχρίῳσά τις ἄρτι τεκοῦσα καὶ πρῶτον τεκοῦσα· τὴν γὰρ τῆς φύσεως κρεῖττον ἀξιοθεῖσαν τεκεῖν ἔδει καὶ τῶν κατὰ φύσιν ὀδυνῶν ἀπηλλάχθαι. Ὄνος ἐντεῦθεν καὶ βοῦς καὶ φάτινη καὶ βρέφος, καὶ ποιμένων ἔσμός, ὧν βοῆ τις ἐξ οὐρανοῦ διαθρυλλοῦσα τὰ ὧτα τῶν θρεμμάτων ἀπεβουκόλησε καὶ τὰς οἷς ἀμέλει καταλιπόντες περὶ τὴν πόαν καὶ τὴν πηγὴν νεμομένας καὶ τῷ κυνὶ τῆς ἀγέλης τὴν φυλακὴν ἐπιτρέψαντες, τοὺς αὐχένας αἴρουσιν εἰς αἰθέρα, τὴν ἀκοὴν ἰθύνοντες πρὸς τὴν τοῦ κτύπου φορὰν, ἄλλος ἄλλως ἐστηκότες, ὡς ἂν ἕκαστος ἀτονώτερον ᾤετο, καὶ ῥῆον ἐστάναι, καὶ τοῖς μὲν αἰ καλαύροπες ἀχρεῖοι φαίνονται, τοῖς δὲ τὸ ὄμμα ἥρτηται πρὸς οὐρανόν, τὰς γὰρ δεξιὰς ἀνασπῶντες πρὸς τὴν βολὴν, τεταραγμένως τὴν ἀκοὴν ἀποτείνουσιν. Οὐ μὴν ἐδέησε δευτέρας αὐτοῖς ἀκοῆς· ὀφθαλμοὶ γὰρ ὧτων πιστότεροι. Ἄγγελος γὰρ συναντήσας αὐτοῖς τὴν τοῦ βρέφους ἀνάκλισην ἐπὶ τὴν φάτινην αὐτοῖς ὑποφαίνει, καὶ τὰ θρέμματα μὲν οὐδαμῶς ἐπιστρεφόμενα πρὸς τὴν θεάν ἐξ εὐηθείας ἐφοίτουν, τὰ μὲν νένευκε πρὸς τὴν πόαν, τὰ δὲ πρὸς τὴν εἰρημένην ἀποτρέχει πηγὴν· ἡ δὲ κύων (θυμοειδὲς γὰρ πρὸς ἀλλοτρίους τὸ ζῶον) διασκοπεῖν φαίνεται τὸ τῆς ὄψεως ἄηθες· οἱ δὲ μάγοι τῶν ἵππων ἀποθῶξαντες, καὶ τὰ δῶρα λαβόμενοι ἐν χερσίν, τὸ γόνυ τε κλίναντες, ἐν τρόμῳ ταῦτα τῆ Παρθένῳ προσφέρουσι.

²² John Phokas, *Ekphrasis*, ch. 10, p. 44 cf. PG 133: 936 B–C.

²³ John Phokas, *Ekphrasis*, ch. 27, p. 59 cf. PG 133: 957 D–960 A–B.

Translation

(a) Painting (the Annunciation) in the House of Joseph, Nazareth

Following these,¹ the house of Joseph was rebuilt into a beautiful temple that has on the left side of the sanctuary a grotto, whose entrance is not very deep but rather close to the surface of the earth. Its mouth is decorated with white marble and above it the painter's hand has depicted a winged angel² that is descending [from Heaven] to meet the soon-to-be mother without a husband.³ He greets her with joyful tidings, as he found the revered woman spinning with diligence.⁴ The angel is depicted as if addressing her, but she is frightened by the unexpected sight; so she turns round in confusion and she almost drops the porphyra from her hand.⁵ And after leaving the chamber in fear, she meets a woman, both a relative and a friend,⁶ who embraces and kisses her.

(b) Mosaic (the Nativity) in the Grotto of the Temple of the Nativity in Bethlehem

The artist has painted with his hand what had occurred inside this grotto.⁷ For the world's great mystery was depicted on the arch: a woman lying back on a bed, her left arm placed under the elbow of her other hand, her right leaning on her cheek.⁸ And she is looking at the infant and displaying her inner prudence through her smile and the fresh color on her cheeks. For her face does not alter by turning pale because of her having just given birth for the first time. For since she was deemed worthy of a supernatural birth, it was necessary that she would be relieved of any physical pain.

And there is an ass and an ox and a manger and an infant, as well as a company of shepherds, who were led away from their sheep by a roar that deafened their ears; and so they have left their herds grazing around the grass and the fountain, leaving the sheepdog to guard them. And they raise their heads to the sky and direct their ears towards the onset of the din, each one of them standing up in the most suitable and convenient way. Some of them think that their (pastoral) staff is of no use; others are staring at the sky and despite having their right hand ready to hit (the animals), they are forced to extend their confused ears. They did not need to listen again, for the eyes are more credible than the ears: An angel has met them and revealed to them the place where the infant is lying inside the manger.⁹

And the nurslings were strolling around, inasmuch as their simplicity did not let them have a look at what was happening, and some were bowing towards the grass, others were running off to the aforementioned fountain. Yet the dog (who is courageous towards strangers) seems willing to examine the unusual spectacle. And the Magi, having leaped off from their horses, kneel to offer to the Virgin Mary the presents that they are holding in their hands.¹⁰

Commentary

1. Right before this passage Phokas refers to Mary's first encounter with the angel. The author follows the narration of the apocryphal *Protoevangelium of James*, in which Mary had gone to the fountain outside Joseph's house to fill her pitcher.²⁴ When the angel appeared to her, she became frightened and rushed into the house. Phokas relates this event to the location where the house of Joseph had stood. The temple of the Annunciation was built upon the same site.

Phokas' description of the painting (a fresco or a mosaic) is an almost word for word reproduction of an *ekphrasis* of a painting with the same theme, found in the church of St. Sergius in Gaza, written by Chorikios of Gaza (sixth century).²⁵

2. According to the Gospel of Luke, the angel that greeted Mary was Gabriel.²⁶
3. That is Mary, the mother of Jesus, because she was impregnated by the Holy Spirit.²⁷
4. The fact that Mary was spinning, when the angel visited her, is not to be found in the four canonical Gospels, but in the apocryphal *Protoevangelium of James*. According to this, Mary was ordered by the priests to weave a cloth for the veil of the temple of the Lord. After her first encounter with the angel at the fountain (see n. 1 above), Gabriel reappeared to her inside Joseph's house, as she was weaving the cloth.²⁸
5. According to the *Protoevangelium of James*, Mary was assigned the task of weaving the purple (the *porphyra*) and the red cloth for the veil of the temple of the Lord (ch. X).²⁹
6. This woman is Mary's relative Elizabeth, the wife of Zachary, a priest. The fact that Mary paid a visit to Elizabeth after the Annunciation is recorded both in the Gospel of Luke and the *Protoevangelium of James*.³⁰
7. The *ekphrasis* pertains to the mosaic of the Nativity in the grotto of the church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. Along with the other decorations, the mosaic must have been finished around 1169.³¹ The mosaic survives in a fragmentary condition: only the Infant, Mary (but not her facial expression), parts of the angels and the shepherds to the right of Mary, an ox to the left, and fragments of the Magi are visible today.

As was the case with the description of the Annunciation painting, this *ekphrasis* is an almost verbatim reproduction of a description of a mosaic with the same theme

²⁴ *Protoevangelium of James*, 21.

²⁵ Chorikios of Gaza, *Eulogy of Marcianus*, 14,18–15,15.

²⁶ Lk. 1:26.

²⁷ Lk. 1:35.

²⁸ *Protoevangelium of James*, 21–22.

²⁹ *Protoevangelium of James*, 19–20.

³⁰ Lk. 1:39–56; *Protoevangelium of James*, 22–24.

³¹ For the decoration of the church of the Nativity see Folda 1995: 347–79 (347 for the dating of the murals; 371–79 for the mosaic in the grotto). Cf. Kühnel 1988: 128–47; Hunt 1991: 76–77 for the dating of some paintings in the upper temple as early as 1130. Hunt also suggests that the mosaic decoration in the church was executed by local Orthodox clergy-artists and that Manuel served merely as a patron, protector, and supervisor of the project: Hunt 1991: 79–80.

- from the church of St. Sergius in Gaza, written by sixth-century rhetorician Chorikios of Gaza.³²
8. This woman is the Virgin Mary.
 9. This part of the *ekphrasis* borrows elements from both the Gospel of Luke and the apocryphal *Protoevangelium of James*. Luke mentions an unspecified number of shepherds.³³ The *Protoevangelium* mentions only one, who is ready to hit his sheep with his staff, but his arm is left standing in the air, when he too realizes that something amazing is happening in the sky.³⁴ However, Phokas (and Chorikios before him) says that it was a “sound” or a “cry” that forced the shepherds to look up to the sky, whereas Luke mentions a strong light.³⁵
 10. The Adoration of the Magi is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew.³⁶

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32 See Chorikios of Gaza, *Eulogy of Marcianus*, 15,15–17,6.

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II.2.4 Leo Megistos (c.1140–c.1210)

A Relief of a Muse in Twelfth-Century Constantinople

MARIA TOMADAKI

Ed.: O. Lampsidis, “Die Entblössung der Muse Kalliope in einem byzantinischen Epigramm,” *JÖB* 47 (1997), 110

MS.:¹ Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, gr. 525 (s. XIV), f. 122r²

Other Translations: None

Significance

An example of an ekphrastic poem describing an actual stone relief of a mythological subject and the viewer’s response to it. It shows the interest in ancient Greek culture among the Byzantine elite during the Komnenian period and also provides evidence concerning the patronage of poets by members of the Komnenian aristocracy.

The Author

Leo Megistos (c.1140–1210) was a grammarian in the service of the *hetaireiarches* George Palaiologos, a prominent member of the Komnenian family.³ Only three of his works are known and these are preserved in the codex Monac. gr. 525, a manuscript written in the fourteenth century by a scholar of Trabzon, Andreas Libadenos.⁴ Apart from his *ekphrasis* on the Muse Kalliope, Leo composed two monodies, one in prose and the other in metrical form, both dedicated to George Palaiologos,⁵ whose surname as well as his profession are only known from the title of his prose epitaph. The fact that all the works of Leo are associated with George Palaiologos leads us to the conclusion that they must have been commissioned either by Palaiologos or by another member of his family. Unfortunately, we do not have any additional information about Leo’s life and career.

I am grateful to Dr. F. Spingou and Prof. I. Taxis for their useful remarks.

1 Consulted.

2 For the description of the manuscript see Hardt 1812: 313; Bühler 1987: 170–79; Hinterberger 2005: 26–30.

3 On Leo’s biography and oeuvre see Lampsidis 1999: 113–18; Sideras 1994: 223–24. On George Palaiologos’ biography see Lampsidis 1970: 394–96. PBW Georgios 17002.

4 For the content of the manuscript and Andreas Libadenos see Hinterberger 2005: 25–46.

5 See Lampsidis 1999: 121.

Text and Context

As indicated by the title of the poem, George Palaiologos ordered Leo to compose verses on a stone relief of Kalliope in order to prove his literary abilities, gain his favor and a position in his service. These verses are called “improvized” (αὐθωροί), which were composed on the spot immediately following the order of the patron. However, the well-developed theme of the poem as well as the quality of its meter (dodecasyllable) give the impression of an elaborate work.

There is no indication that the poem was meant to be an inscriptional epigram on the relief; rather, it has the characteristics of a metrical *ekphrasis*, which describes an artefact and at the same time gives voice to its carved figures. Besides, according to Aphthonius, vividness (*enargeia*) was one of the main characteristics of *ekphrasis*. In other words, the function of the poem was double: it served as a literary *epideixis* for entering the service of a patron and as an *ekphrasis* of a remarkable stone relief.

This *epideixis* could have taken place in the context of the so-called *theatra*, the “literary circles” of the Komnenian period.⁶ Important poets of the same period, such as Theodore Prodromos and John Tzetzes, demonstrated their literary skills in the *theatra* and composed poems commissioned by important members of the imperial family. It is remarkable that Leo does not praise his commissioner as one might have expected. This could indicate that George Palaiologos was interested in Greek mythology and curious to know what the relief represented. Interestingly, George Palaiologos was probably also the commissioner of Constantine Manasses’ *Description of the Cyclops*.⁷ This prose *ekphrasis* describes carved images in marble depicting the Cyclops killing Odysseus’ companions and Odysseus offering him wine.⁸ If Palaiologos was indeed the commissioner of Manasses’ *ekphrasis*, one could suppose that the relief of the Muse Kalliope described in Leo’s poem was part of a bigger marble relief, which depicted mythological scenes and was located at Palaiologos’ house.⁹

The theme of the poem is also characteristic of the cultural context of the twelfth century, since according to Magdalino, the literature of the Komnenian period is “humanistic” in the sense that it draws on themes from classical literature and displays an interest in both emotions and the human body.¹⁰ What strikes the reader in this poem is that Kalliope is portrayed as being naked. In the literary dialog of the poem, Kalliope defends her innocence to her sisters by saying that Eros besieged her with his arrows and forced her to take part in “lewd unions” (μίξεις ἀσελγείς, v. 20). Taking into account that

6 On *theatron* in the Komnenian era see indicatively Mullet 2007: 410–16; Bourbouhakis 2010: 175–87; Marciniak 2004: 33–36.

7 On the identification of the *ekphrasis*’ commissioner with George Palaiologos see Magdalino 1997: 162; cf. Nilsson 2011: 128.

8 Ed. Sternbach 1902: 83–85. The story of the relief derives either from *Od.* 9. 287–351 or from Euripides’ *Cyclops* 396–415; cf. the discussion about the Pseudo-Euripidean *Rhesus*.

9 Cf. Magdalino 1997: 164, where the scholar argues that the Cyclops’ relief was located at Palaiologos’ house.

10 Magdalino, *Manuel*, 398.

“imitation” is one of the main characteristics of Byzantine literature,¹¹ the question arises regarding Leo’s source of inspiration. To my knowledge, there is only one example of a Muse’s sexual violation found in ancient tragedy. In the *Rhesus*, attributed to Euripides, the Muse laments her dead son Rhesus while mourning the loss of her virginity by his father, the river Strymon (*Rhesus*, 925–27). A strong indication that Leo’s poem may allude to the *Rhesus* is that the Muse states that she felt shame before her sisters (*Rhesus*, 926). The Muse, who is unnamed in the play, is identified by one of *Rhesus*’ commentators as Kalliope.¹² Apollodorus also mentions Kalliope in his *Library* as possibly being the mother of Rhesus.¹³

The idea that the tragedy *Rhesus* is recalled in the poem is also strengthened by the poet’s references to “drama,” (vv. 3, 27) implying ancient Greek drama. It seems that Leo was aware that the myth he used was not well known to the Byzantines, and at the end of his poem he even asks his audience to find out which is the drama the poem echoes.¹⁴ In addition, the phrase “maternal bitterness” (μητρῴου χόλου, v. 9) may allude to the Muse’s sorrow for the death of her son, Rhesus. Nonetheless, we cannot exclude the possibility that the poem might evoke a lost literary text, in which Orpheus was identified as the son of Kalliope (e.g. Aeschylus’ *Bassaridai*).¹⁵ In any case it is worth noticing that Leo’s intention was not to portray Kalliope’s sculpture as morally dangerous or as bearer of pagan culture, but to represent the story behind the relief, to give an explanation to beholders for Kalliope’s nudity, and also to demonstrate to his potential patron his knowledge of ancient drama.¹⁶

11 See Hunger 1969–70: 15–38.

12 See Diggle 1981: 429.

13 Apollodorus, *Library*, 1. 18.

14 The tragedy *Rhesus* was not included in the so-called *Triads*, which were part of Byzantine education: see Marciniak 2004: 47.

15 Cf. Leo’s prose epitaph on George Palaiologos, where Kalliope is presented as mother of Orpheus and is compared to Thetis: Lampsidies 1997: 108 and Lampisdīs 1999: 128. Thetis was often associated with the Muse, Rhesus’ mother: see Liapis 2009: 282–84; Larson 2001: 173–74. On the confusion of Rhesus with Orpheus see Larson 2001: 174.

16 For Byzantine attitudes to sculptures see James 1996: 12–20; Mango 1963: 53–75.

Text

Στίχοι τοῦ αὐτοῦ Λέοντος γεγονότες αὐθωροὶ κατὰ πρόσταξιν τοῦ πανσεβάστου ἐκείνου λόγῳ δοκιμῆς, ὅτε προσεκύνησεν ἐκεῖνον ἐπὶ τῷ δουλεύειν, ἐν λίθῳ φερούση τὴν τῶν μουσῶν στήλῳσιν λαξευτικῶς καὶ τὴν τῆς Καλλιόπης γύμνωσιν, θαυμαστὴν οὔσαν τῆ τοῦ τεχνίτου λαξεύσει.†

Ὅρων, θεατά, τὴν λίθον σύννουσ γίνῃ
 καὶ τοῦργον οἶον ἐκμαθεῖν θέλεις ἔργοις
 τὸ δρᾶμα διδάσκει σε τῆσδε τῆς λίθου,
 λιθοξοοῦσης χειρὸς ἔργον ὃ βλέπεις
 5 καὶ ζωγραφούσης οὐ βαφῆ μορφῆς τύπους
 λαξεύματι δὲ τεχνικῆ αὐτουργία,
 ὃ καὶ βλέπεις στήλωμα τῆς λίθου μέσον.
 μουσῶν χορὸν γίνωσκε πλήν τῶν ἐννέα
 ὦν τὴν μίαν μήνιδα μητρῶου χόλου.
 10 ἔρωσ καταπτᾶς, ὡς καὶ περωτὸς ταχύπους,
 καὶ πῦρ ἀνάψας καὶ βέλος πέμψας πόθου
 καὶ καταφλέξας τῷ πυρὶ καὶ τῷ βέλει,
 τρώσας κἄν οὐκ ἦν εἰς θέαν βάλλων κρύφα,
 γάμου συνελθεῖν ἐκβιάζει τοῖς νόμοις
 15 καὶ σωφροσύνης ἐκλαθέσθαι τῆς φίλης·
 κἄντεῦθεν εἶναι καὶ γυμνὴν τὸ σαρκίον.
 πρὸς ἦν ὁ λοιπὸς μουσικὸς χορὸς βλέπων
 ζητεῖ τὸ πραχθὲν ἐκμαθεῖν λέγων “τίνι,
 τῆς πρὶν πεσοῦσα σωφροσύνης, πρὸς γάμου
 20 μίξεις ἀσελγεῖς ἐρρίφεις, δίδασκέ με.”
 ἢ δ’ αὖ τὸ πῦρ δείκνυσι τῆς κάρης ἄνω
 καὶ τῶν βελέμων τὴν χύσιν τὴν πυρφόρον
 λέγουσα τούτοις συνεχῶς ὠθουμένη
 πῶς πρὶν ρίφθηναι σωφροσύνης ἐκτόπως
 25 “γάμῳ συνῆλθον καὶ καθῶς βλέπετε ἔχω.”
 ἔγνωκας [...]
 τίνος τὸ δρᾶμα, τίνος τὴν τύπωσιν φέρει;
 θαύμαζε λοιπὸν [τοῦ τεχνίτου τὴν στήλην].

Translation

Verses composed on the spot by Leo after the order for a trial piece by the *pansebastos* himself, when he honored him to work [in his service]¹ and <concerns> a stone relief, which bears the sculpted depiction of the Muses and Kalliope's nudity,² and it is admirable because of the carver's skill.

When, oh beholder, you look at the stone,³ you may become pensive
 and you may wish to learn with deeds what kind this work is,⁴
 the story of this stone⁵ will teach you⁶
 <which is> as you see the work of a stone-carving hand,
 5 that does not depict impressions of the forms⁷ in colors
 but carves them with the dexterity of the technician,⁸
 this pillar that you see in the middle of the stone,
 know that it is the Muses' choir, besides the nine,⁹
 one of whom is wrathful because of her maternal bitterness.
 10 Eros having flown down [to her], being also feathered and swift-footed,¹⁰
 and having ignited fire and thrown the arrow of desire,
 and burnt [her] entirely with the fire and the arrow,
 after he wounded [her] in secret, even if he was not in view,
 the union forced¹¹ [upon her] by the marriage laws
 15 and she escapes the attention of dear Sophrosyne;¹²
 this is the reason why she is [shown] with naked flesh.¹³
 The rest of the *chorus* of the Muses looking at her,
 seeks to learn what has happened, saying:¹⁴ "for whom,¹⁵
 having previously abandoned Sophrosyne, did you from
 20 a wedding succumb to lewd coupling? Tell me." And she replies showing the
 fire over her head
 and the fiery shower of arrows
 saying that being continuously besieged by them
 and before the abduction of Sophrosyne:
 25 "I am united in marriage and as you see it is completed." You learned ...
 Whose *drama* is this? Whose likeness does it bear?
 Admire thereby [the artist's pillar].¹⁶

Commentary

1. The title of the poem indicates that the poets during the Komnenian period had to demonstrate their poetical abilities in front of the patrons in order to enter their service.
2. Kalliope, the most prominent of the Muses and protector of epic poetry and eloquence, was associated in Byzantium with rhetoric and poetry in general.¹⁷ Here she is represented as a tragic figure, who indirectly inspires the poet through her relief.
3. The expression Ὁρῶν θεατᾶ (v. 1) is *locus communis* in ekphrastic and book epigrams.¹⁸
4. The rhetorical figure of schema etymologikon is employed in the second verse, since there is a repetition of the same verbal root (τοῦργον- ἔργοις).
5. The word “stone” (λίθος, v. 3) often carries the meaning of the “marble” (LSJ s.v.).
6. The phrase δρᾶμα διδάσκει (v. 3) alludes to ancient Greek drama (LSJ s.v. διδάσκω and δρᾶμα). However, the drama also refers to the representation of the relief, since in Byzantine times this word acquired the meanings of “act of hands,” “depiction/representation,” “tragic event,” “myth,” and so on.¹⁹
7. The word μορφή (v. 5) comprises the meanings of “form,” “shape,” and “appearance” (LSJ and Lampe s.v.). Here it indicates the form of the figures (and especially that of Kalliope), who were represented in the relief.
8. The phrase τεχνική αὐτουργία (v. 6) refers to the sculptor of the relief, who carved Kalliope, her sisters and Eros. In Byzantine times sculptors and painters were not considered artists, but craftsmen or artisans. However, Leo indirectly praises the sculptor’s skill and his ability to produce a vivid representation of the figures without using colors, but with his own labor.
9. The word πλὴν in v. 8 possibly means that the stone relief depicted more Muses than the usual nine ones.²⁰ The number and the names of Muses were established in ancient Greek literature by Hesiod’s account (*Theogony*, 76–9). However, in many ancient literary texts and artefacts the number of the Muses varies.²¹ Since the choir of Muses is mentioned both in the title and in the poem speaking viva voce to Kalliope,²² one could assume that this relief represented not only Kalliope, but other Muses too.
10. The epithet ταχύπους does not occur in Homer, only three times in Euripides (*Trojan Women* 232, *Bacchae* 167–169, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, 1270). It has the same meaning with the Homeric adjective ὠκύπους. Eros is depicted in the poem as a winged, swift-footed archer, who throws the flaming arrows of love to Kalliope and forced her

17 For instance, Michael Italikos (1118–43) presents poetry and rhetoric as “mystic rites practiced” by Kalliope: *Oration* 43, 7, ed. Gautier 1972: 245.

18 See Vassis 2005: 543, 548; Vassis 2011: 245.

19 On the several meanings of the word “drama” in Byzantium see Vakonakis 2011: 41–42; cf. the meaning of “drama” as a “constructed story of a mimetic nature” in Agapitos 1998: 129.

20 On the meaning of πλὴν as “besides” or “in addition to” see LSJ s.v. 2.

21 Mojsik 2011: 74–97.

22 See vv. 7–8, 17–20.

- to succumb. As the poet Archias states in one of his epigrams, it is impossible for one on foot to escape from the arrows of a bird like Eros!²³
11. The word *συνεθεῖν* (v. 14) implies that the Muse had sexual intercourse.²⁴ In v. 25 Kalliope defends her innocence by assuring her sisters that she lost her virginity within marriage. It is worth also mentioning that according to Mullett, in Komnenian literature Muses were associated with learning and marriage.²⁵
 12. Sophrosyne (vv. 15–24) is personified and functions as a symbol of continence, prudence and self-control over sensual desires.²⁶ Sophrosyne is also personified and functions in the same way in *Hysmine et Hysminias* 4, 23.
 13. The nudity of the Muse (vv. 15–20) is associated with sexuality and is considered shameful.²⁷
 14. The Muses' chorus acquires theatrical voice and resembles the chorus of ancient Greek tragedy. They address in a collective voice to Kalliope, who is at the same time the chorus leader and the protagonist of the drama.
 15. There is a strong enjambment between vv. 18–19, something uncommon for Byzantine poetry.
 16. As in v. 1, Leo again addresses the beholder and the poem comes into a full circle. The last words of the poem are not readable in the manuscript and Lampsidis adopted in his edition the reading [τοῦ τεχνίτου τὴν στήλην]²⁸ suggested by Hardt. However, he also made two different suggestions for the reconstruction of the text, which are mentioned in his apparatus criticus: [τοῦ τεχνίτου τὴν ζέσιον] and [τοῦ τεχνίτου τὴν σμίλην].²⁹

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²³ *Anth. Pal.* V 59.

²⁴ Cf. in v. 20 the expression "lewd unions" (μίξεις ἀσελγείς) and *LSJ* s.v.

²⁵ Mullett 2012: 212.

²⁶ See s.v. *LSJ* and *DNP*.

²⁷ According to Maguire, nudity in Byzantine art was linked to paganism and sin, "unless it served a clearly Christian purpose, such as portraying the human nature of Christ at his Baptism and Crucifixion": see Maguire 1999: 200–01; cf. Maguire and Maguire, *Other Icons*, 106–09; Zeitler 1999: 192–93.

²⁸ See Lampsidis 1999: 110; Hardt 1812: 313.

²⁹ Lampsidis 1999: 110.

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II.2.5 Manuel Philes (c.1270 or slightly later–after 1332/34 or mid 1340)

Manuel Philes' *Metaphrasis* of a Certain Work of Lucian on the Painting Depicting the Wedding of Alexander

PRZEMYSŁAW MARCINIAK

The following translation was first published in P. Marciniak, "Reinventing Lucian in Byzantium," *DOP* 70 (2016), 224.

Ed.: Manuel Philes, *Poems*, ed. Miller, II, 336–37, App. 3; previous edition: Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca*, I 44–45 (ed. only from the Munich manuscript); I. L. Ideler, *Physici et medici graeci minores* (Berlin, 1841), 284–85

MSS.:¹ Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Graecus 281 (s. XVI), f. 49r
Paris, BnF, Graecus 941 (a. 1535), ff. 190v–191v

Other Translations: None, partly translated in Robinson 1979: 69

Significance

This text is an *ekphrasis*, a description, one of the *progymnasmata* and a popular genre in Byzantine literature. Lucian was a renowned Atticist author and his writings came to be important manuals of the Attic dialect. The ultimate aim of Philes' *metaphrasis* is difficult to explain. Yet, the ability to write *ekphraseis* was part of a learned Byzantine education. Perhaps these verses should be seen as an exercise in writing such a text following the example of a well-known authority.

The Author

See A. Rhoby, with additions by M. Bazzani, I.4.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

This poem is a re-working, in Byzantine dodecasyllables, of a fragment of Lucian's dialog *Herodotus or Aetion* (chapter no. 5). This fragment is an *ekphrasis* of the painting by Aetion depicting the wedding of Alexander and Roxane. Aetion was supposed to be a Greek painter of the Late Classical period and this painting was his most famous achievement. It should be also noted that Philes penned another poem about Alexander the Great.²

1 I have consulted digital reproductions of both manuscripts. This paper is part of research funded by National Research Center grant no. DEC- 2011/03/B/HS2/03618.

2 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Miller, II, 334–35, App. 2.

Lucian was a popular writer in Later Byzantium, proven by the number of existing manuscripts from this period,³ the lexicographic interest in his works⁴ and, finally, the debates on both the usefulness and danger of his writings.⁵ Notably, Alexios Makrembolites (fourteenth century) authored an allegorical interpretation of “Lucius or the ass,” according to which this was a text with a hidden Christian message.⁶

Manuel Philes refers to Lucian in two of his poems – in the versified *metaphrasis* of a fragment of Lucian’s *Herodotus or Aetion*, which is translated here and in the work on Lucian the Martyr (who also has an entry in the *Souda* and came from Samosata).⁷ In the last part of the poem, Philes compares the saint to Lucian the satirist:

25 Ἐλληνες οὐκοῦν αἰσχυνέσθωσαν πάλιν,
εἰ Λουκιανὸς ἄλλος ἡμῖν εὐρέθη
τοῦ Λουκιανοῦ τοῦ παρ’ αὐτοῖς βελτίων·
ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἀφείς τὸν γελῶμενον βίον,
θυμηδίαν ἄρρευστον ἀντιλαμβάνει,
καὶ ζῆ παρεστῶς τῷ Θεῷ σὺν ἀγγέλοις.
Ὁ δὲ πλατὺς ἀντικρυς εὐρέθη γέλως
καὶ παρασυρεῖς ταῖς τρυφαῖς καὶ τοῖς πότοις
κεῖται λυθεὶς ἄκλαυστος εἰς πόνου τόπον.

25 May the Hellenes feel again ashamed
if another Lucian is considered by us
a better one than their Lucian.
This one having given up a life full of laughter
received in exchange imperishable joy.
And he lives standing beside God and angels.
The other one, on the contrary, is a big joke
carried away by luxury and drinks,
he lies unburied dead and unwept in the place of pain.

It would be unwise, however, to see this passage as an unusual criticism of Lucian. Philes refers to the well-established opposition between earthly laughter, which can always lead to sin, and a heavenly joy. He appears to allude to the story recorded in the *Suda* according to which Lucian, torn apart by dogs, ended up in Hell. However, unlike in the *Suda*, Lucian is not condemned because of his anti-Christian attitude but because of laughter. Philes’ attitude toward Lucian’s writings is also not unheard of – to use the words of Baldwin, Lucian was praised because of his style, but deplored because of the content of his

3 Wittek 1952: 309–23.

4 Magistros, *Selection of Attic Words*, 43–44.

5 See, for instance, Metochites’ description of Lucian’s style in Hult 2002, 162–63; on criticism of Lucian and his writings in the letters of Michael Gabras see Christidis 2015: 542–49.

6 Papadopoulou-Kerameus 1899: 19–23.

7 *Suidae Lexicon* 283 λ 685.

works and what he represented.⁸ On the one hand, his writings possess qualities making them suitable for school purposes, but on the other hand Lucian himself is equated with mockery and became the embodiment of (dangerous) laughter.

Philes' *metaphrasis* for the most part renders faithfully Lucian's original. It describes a painting depicting the wedding of Alexander and Roxane. This painting portrays also Eroses (the ancient Greek winged gods of love) playing with Alexander's armor. It seems, however, that Philes changes the original, that is Lucianic, interpretation of the poem. In the dialog (chapter no. 6) the meaning of the picture is explained in the following way: "All this is not needless triviality and a waste of labour. Aëtion is calling attention to Alexander's other love – War – implying that in his love of Roxane he did not forget his armor."⁹ Philes, on the contrary, says that even Alexander forgot about war during his wedding.

8 Baldwin 1989: 350.

9 "Οὐ παιδιὰ δὲ ἄλλως ταῦτά ἐστιν οὐδὲ περιεῖργασται ἐν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἀετίων, ἀλλὰ δηλοῖ τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ τὸν ἐς τὰ πολεμικὰ ἔρωτα, καὶ ὅτι ἅμα καὶ Ῥωξάνης ἦρα καὶ τῶν ὀπλων οὐκ ἐπελέληστο": Lucian, *Herodotus or Aetion*, 6, transl. Kilburn.

Text

Τοῦ αὐτοῦ μεταφραστικοὶ ἀπὸ τινος τῶν τοῦ Λουκιανοῦ λόγων εἰς εἰκόνα ἔχουσαν ἔζωγραφημένον τὸν τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου γάμον

Θάλαμος ἰδοῦ νυμφικὴν φέρων κλίνην,
 ἐφ' ἧς ἀτεχνῶς εὐπρεπῆς ἡ Ῥωξάνη·
 σκοπεῖ δὲ τὴν γῆν ὡς ὑπ' αἰδοῦς ἡ κόρη,
 μὴ πρὸς τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἐστῶτα βλέπει.
 5 ἔρωσ δέ τις πάρεστιν ἐξ ὀπισθίου,
 καὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς τὴν καλύπτραν ἔλκυσας,
 τῷ νυμφίῳ δείκνυσι τὴν ποθουμένην.
 ἄλλος δ' ἀφαιρεῖ τοῦ ποδὸς τὴν ἀρβύλην,
 δουλοπρεπεῖ σχήματι καμφεῖς εἰς γόνυ·
 10 ταύτην γὰρ ἂν βούλοιτο καὶ κατακλίνειν.
 ἄλλος δὲ τῆς χλανίδος αὐτὸν ἀρπάσας,
 ἔλκει πρὸς αὐτὴν ἐμβριθῶς τὴν Ῥωξάνην.
 Ὁ γοῦν βασιλεὺς γειτνιῶν τῇ παρθένῳ
 πρὸ τοῦ γάμου στέφανον εὐθύς εἰσφέρει·
 15 καὶ νυμφαγωγῶν συμπαρῆν Ἑφαιστίων·
 οὓς ἀπερεισθεῖς εἰς τὸ μειρακύλλιον,
 τὸ φαιδρὸν, ὧ βέλτιστε, καὶ βρῦον τόδε
 (πρὸς γὰρ τὸν Ὑμέναιον ἡ τέχνη βλέπει),
 γαμηλίου δείκνυσι πυρσοὺς λαμπάδος.
 20 ἄλλοι δ' ἔρωτες αὔθις ἠδεῖς ἐκτόπως
 ἐν τοῖς ὄπλοις παίζουσι τοῖς τοῦ νυμφίου·
 Οἱ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν, ὡς ὄραν ἔχεις, δύο
 καταωμαδὸν φέρουσιν αὐτοῦ τὸ ξίφος·
 Ἄλλοι δὲ δύο τῶν βασιλέων ἕνα
 25 ἠττημένον σύρουσιν ἐκ τῆς ἀσπίδος,
 λάβοντες αὐτῆς τὰς ἀπὸ σκύτους πέδας.
 εἷς δ' ἄλλος εἰσδύς ὕπτιον τὸν θώρακα
 τάχα τὸν ἔσμον ἐκταράξει τῶν φίλων,
 ὅταν ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἡ ῥοπή τούτους φέρη.
 30 πλὴν οὐ γραφὴ καὶ μῦθος ἀπλῶς ἅ βλέπεις·
 ἀλλ' ἔστιν εὐρεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν ὀρωμένων
 ὡς αὐτὸς Ἀλέξανδρος ἐλθὼν εἰς γάμους
 τῶν ἀρεϊκῶν εἶχετο σπουδασμάτων.

Translation

Manuel Philes' *metaphrasis* of a certain work of Lucian on the painting depicting the wedding of Alexander¹⁰

Behold, a chamber in which there is a bridal couch
 on which beautiful Roxane [sits] modestly,¹
 the girl has her eyes cast down as if ashamed
 not to look at Alexander who stands there.

5 There is an Eros behind [her]
 removing the veil from her head,
 he shows the beloved one to the bridegroom.
 Another one takes the shoe off her foot,
 bent on his knees as if he were a servant.

10 He would like to prepare her for bed.
 Yet another one having grabbed his [Alexander's] coat
 pulls him vehemently to Roxane.
 So the king is next to her, giving the virgin
 a bridal crown before the wedding.

15 And Hephaestion² was present, leading the bride to the bridegroom's house
 who [Hephaestion], having leaned completely on some young boy
 so shining, my dear, and bursting with strength
 (the art seems to suggest this is Hymenaios³),
 shows a blaze of a bridal lamp.

20 On the other hand, other pleasant Erotes extraordinarily
 play amongst the armors of the bridegroom.
 There are two of them, as you can see,
 who have his sword on their shoulders.
 Two others drag the royal one,
 25 who is weaker, on the shield
 seizing it by the leather handgrips.
 Some other has gone inside the corselet.
 Soon he will terrify the swarm of his friends,
 when the corselet falls all its weight on them.

30 However, it is not just the picture and story that you see
 but one can learn from the things one sees
 That even Alexander himself as he went to get married
 Was kept away from the works of Ares.⁴

¹⁰ See also Marciniak 2016.

Commentary

1. Roxane was a daughter of a Bactrian nobleman Oxyartes. In fact, as it was noted, Alexander's marriage to Roxane was politically important only because she was pregnant with the child who ultimately turned out to be the only legal heir of the king.¹¹
2. Hephaestion of Pella, commander under Alexander, was his friend and probably a lover (which makes the depicted scene even more complex).
3. Hymenaios is Greek god of wedding ceremonies.
4. Robinson translates differently: "that even Alexander at his wedding / could not put off his love for warlike things."¹²

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¹¹ Carney 2002: 246.

¹² Robinson 1979: 69.

II.2.6 Philagathos of Cerami (c.1080–after 1155)

The Decollation of St. John the Baptist

MIRCEA DULUŞ

Ed.: G. Rossi-Taibbi, *Filagato da Cerami, Omelie per i vangeli domenicali e le feste di tutto l'anno: Omelie per le feste fisse* (Palermo, 1969), *Homily* 35, 240–42

MS.: Madrid, Biblioteca nacional de España, Graecus 4554 (s. XII), f. 127vb–130ra¹

Other Translations: None

Significance

The text reveals the central role that *ekphrasis* can play in a homily, while offering an example of the appropriation of “profane” and religious literary models for laying out vivid accounts of Salome’s dance, of St. John the Baptist’s appearance, and of Herod and Herodias’ conflicting emotions.

The Author

See Mircea Duluş, I.3.7 in this volume.

Text and Context

Philagathos’ sermon on *The Beheading of St. John the Baptist* (Mk. 6:14–29; Mt. 14:1–12; Lk. 9:9) includes an *ekphrasis* of the prophet and an arresting description of Herodias’ daughter’s licentious dancing. The sermon was delivered during the liturgical commemoration of the Decollation of the Forerunner on August 29 in the Church of St. John of the Hermits (San Giovanni degli Eremiti) in Palermo during one of Philagathos’ sojourns in the capital. The church was situated in the vicinity of the Palazzo dei Normanni and was built by Roger II between 1142 and 1148, when it was handed over to the hermits (eremiti) of Montevergine. This event serves as a *terminus post quem* for the homily.²

What characterizes Philagathos’ sermon is the elaborate *ekphrastic* account of the events leading up to John the Baptist’s death. It contains a picturesque *ekphrasis* of St. John the Baptist, of Herodias’ arts of seduction, of Salome’s appealing appearance, as well as a vivid portrayal of the emotions that divided Herod’s soul when the prophet chastized him. A detailed analysis of the sources reveals a meticulous composition that merges

¹ Not consulted. For a description of these manuscripts see Rossi-Taibbi 1965: 51–57.

² Di Liberto 2013: 167–68; Torregrossa 1993: 15–49.

evocative vignettes borrowed from Basil of Caesarea's *Homily on the Martyr Gordius*, Gregory of Nyssa's *Eulogy for his Brother Basil*, Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, Achilles Tatius' *Leukippe and Kleitophon*, Lucian of Samosata's *Toxaris*, Alciphron's *Letters* and the Homeric poems (*Il.* XVI. 235 and *Od.* IX. 191).

However, the most arresting aspect of Philagathos' sermon is the *ekphrasis* of Herodias' daughter's lascivious dance, which to the best of my knowledge is the most detailed account of her performance in Byzantine homiletic literature. In the Gospels, Salome is merely reported as having "pleased" Herod.³ Yet, borrowing from Alciphron's *Letters* (1.12.1) and Heliodorus' novel (*Aethiopica*, 6.6.1–2) Philagathos gave an amplified description of Salome's performance which, the homilist explained, stupified the spectators' mind and provoked Herod's ominous oath.

The style of the text is refined. The rhetorical use of *homoioleuton* is particularly conspicuous. In the opening passage that presents Herod's foul deeds, we note the accumulation of perfect particles and adverbs ending in "-ως:" λελυττηκώς, μεμοιχευκώς, ἀφηρηκώς, πεφονευκώς, ἀπρεπῶς, νομίμως, and ἐξωθηκώς (the perfect participle of ἐξωθέω – i.e. to thrust out, to banish – is only attested in Philagathos). In the last section, a similar word-play occurs on Herod's name (ὁ κτηνώδης Ἡρώδης – the beastlike/monstrous Herod). Finally, the lexical choices, with an emphasis on theatrical language (i.e. κορυβαντιάω – to celebrate the rites of the Corybantes, to be filled with Corybantic frenzy; ἐκβακχεύω – excite to Bacchic frenzy), rare words (i.e. ἡ κασσωρίς, -ίδος – "harlot" is attested in the *TLG* corpus just 12 times) or even a *hapax* (i.e. μαιναδογενής, -οῦς/"maenad-bred," or "maenad-descended") again reflect the refinement of the composition.

³ Mt. 14:6; Mk. 6:22.

Text

[4.] Ὁ γὰρ Ἡρώδης οὗτος, τῆ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ Φιλίππου κοίτη λελυττηκῶς καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα τούτου μεμοιχευκῶς καὶ ταύτην τοῦ Φιλίππου ἀφρηκῶς, καὶ αὐτὸν δόλω πεφονευκῶς, τῆ μοιχαλίδι συνῆν ἀπρεπῶς, τὴν νομίμως αὐτῷ συναφθεῖσαν ἐξωθηκῶς, θυγατέρα τοῦ βασιλέως Ἀράβων Ἀρέτα τυγχάνουσαν. ἦν δὲ τῷ τότε Ἰωάννης ὁ Βαπτιστῆς ἀπολιπὼν τὰς ἐν ἐρήμοις διατριβάς καὶ κατελθὼν εἰς τὰς Ἰορδάνου ῥοάς, καὶ τοῖς λαοῖς ἐμφαίνων τοῦ κηρύγματος τὰς αὐγὰς. δασύς μὲν καὶ ἀπηγρωμένος τὴν ὄψιν διὰ τὴν ἐκ παιδιόθεν ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις ἀνατροφὴν, αὐχμηρὰν ἔχων τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ ῥυπῶσαν καὶ καταβόστρυχον, καὶ τῷ πλήθει τῶν ἰδίων τριχῶν σκιαζόμενος· βαθύς τὴν ὑπὲρ τὴν κατεσκληρικῶς, ἐσθῆτι τραχεῖα συνεσταλμένος καὶ ζῶντῃ σκληρᾷ ἐκεῖνα μόνα καλύπτων τοῦ σώματος, ὅσα εὐσημονέστερα δοκεῖ καλυπτόμενα, τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς διακαρτερῶν πρὸς τὰς τοῦ θάλλους καὶ κρύους ἐναντιότητος, ἀνιπτόπους καὶ χαμαιεύνης, ἴν' εἶπω τι καὶ τῶν ἐξωθεν, «οὐδὲ ἐώκει ἀνδρὶ σιτοφάγῳ», ἀλλ' ἄγγελος ἦν ἀτεχνῶς τοιοῦτο σώματι χρώμενος. [5.] οὗτος δὴ μετὰ τὸ χειραπτῆσαι τὸν Κύριον, καὶ τῆς Ἡρώδου ἀκολασίας ἔλεγχος γίνεται· «οὐκ ἔξεστί σοι, λέγων, ἀδελφοῦ κοίτη συγχαίρεισθαι. τί σαυτὸν αἰσχύνεις, λέχος ἐνυβρίζων ὁμόγνιον καὶ ἐπιδέμνια βαίνων παράνομα; οὐκ ἔξεστί σοι ἔχειν τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου Φιλίππου». ἀλλὰ ταῦτα λέγων, ἄδειν πρὸς ὄνον ἐώκει καὶ κωφῶ διαλέγεσθαι. ὁρῶν γὰρ Ἡρώδης ῥαγδαίως τὸν προφήτην τοῖς ἐλέγχοις τοῦτον μαστίζοντα, ἀνυποστόλῳ τε θάρσει τὸ δυσῶδες τῆς φαύλης πράξεως ἐκπομπεύοντα, πολλοῖς ἐμερίζετο τὴν ψυχὴν, αἰσχύνῃ, ἔρωτι καὶ θυμῷ· ἤσχύετο τοῦ κήρυκος τὸ ἀξίωμα, ὠργίζετο ἐλεγχόμενος, ὁ ἔρωτος τὴν ὀργὴν ἐπὶ πλέον ἀνέφλεγε, καὶ τέλος ἡ φιληδονία νικᾷ τὸ ἀνδράποδον. ἀμελέτητος γὰρ ὦν καὶ λίαν ἀπαιδαγωγῆτος, οὐκ εἶχεν ἀναπαλαῖσαι λογισμῷ γενναίῳ τὴν ἔφεσιν.

[6.] Ἡ δὲ μοιχαλὶς, ὡς ἦσθετο τὸν Ἡρώδη ὑποτρέσαντα τοῦ προφήτου τὸν ἔλεγχον (ἐφοβεῖτο γὰρ, φησὶν, ὁ Ἡρώδης τὸν Ἰωάννην, καὶ ἠδέως αὐτοῦ ἤκουε), ταῦτα βλέπουσα ἡ μαινὰς καὶ φοβηθεῖσα μὴ ὁ ἔλεγχος ὀφθῆ κρείττων τοῦ ἔρωτος, ἑαυτὴν σχηματίσασα πρὸς τὸ σκυθρωπότερον καὶ λιβάδα δακρύων ἐνστάξασα, πρὸς τὸν θηλυμανῆ ἐσχετλίαζε· «τί τούτου γένοιτ' ἂν δεινότερον, λέγουσα, τὸν ἐπὶ θώκου βασιλικῷ ἐφεζόμενον καὶ λαμπρυνόμενον ἀλουργίδι καὶ διαδήματι ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίου σακκοφοροῦντος αὐχμοῦντος ὑβρίζεσθαι καὶ ἀπείργεσθαι πληροῦν τὰ θυμῆρη καὶ φίλα, ἐξὸν βασιλικῆ ἐξουσίᾳ τεμεῖν τὴν γλῶτταν τὴν ἀναιδῆ καὶ ὑβρίστριαν, ἢ θηρίους τὸν τολμητῆ ποιῆσαι βοράν, ἤκιστα δὲ ὑποπίπτειν καὶ μαλθακίζεσθαι;». [7.] ὑποχαυνωθεὶς οὖν τοῖς λόγοις τῆς κασσωρίδος ὁ δεῖλαιος (πιθανοὶ γὰρ λόγοι μαχλάδος πρὸς ἐραστὴν βλάνα, δάκρυσι κεραννύμενοι), θανάτῳ μὲν σβέσαι τὸν λύχον οὐκ ἐδοκίμαζε, τὴν ἀρετὴν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς σεβαζόμενος, καλύπτει γε μὴν τοῦτον ὑπὸ τὸν μόδιον, ἐγκλείσας εἰρκτῆ καὶ ποδοκάκκη ἐνθεῖς. ἀλλ' οὔτε τοῦ προφήτου τὸ στόμα σεσίγηκεν, οὔτε ὁ θυμὸς τῆς μαχλάδος ἐλώφησεν. ἔρις δὲ συνειστίθει ἀμφοῖν, τοῦ μὲν προφήτου, ὅπως τοῦ μύσου ἀπαλλάξῃ τὸν βασιλέα, τῆς δὲ μαχλάδος, ὅπως τὸν κωλυτὴν τοῦ πόθου

Translation

[4.] For this Herod, [who] madly lusted for the bed of his brother Philip, debauched with his wife, and tore her away from Philip, and killed him by guile,¹ fornicated in an unseemly manner with the adulteress and banished his lawful wife, the daughter of Areta, the king of the Arabs.² In those days, John the Baptist gave up his wasting away in the wilderness, and came to the river Jordan, and made manifest to the multitude the dawn of the proclamation [of the Gospel]. *He had a shaggy and savage-looking appearance because of his having been raised in the wilderness from childhood; his hair was squalid, filthy, with flowing locks and overshadowed by the mass of his own hair.* His beard was thick and his body dried-up from his debilitating manner of living; wrapped up *in rugged clothes* and tightened by a hard belt, he covered only those parts of his body, *which seemed more becoming to be concealed; for the rest, he endured patiently the adversities of heat and cold,*³ with *“unwashed feet and sleeping upon the ground,”*⁴ and so that I may say something from the external wisdom, [he] *“was not like a man that lives by bread,”*⁵ but he was an angel improperly subjected to such a body. [5.] After he baptized the Lord, he became the chastizer of Herod’s lascivious passion, “It is not lawful,” [he was] saying, “for you to have dealings with your brother’s wife. Why do you disgrace yourself by mocking thy brotherly bridal-bed and mounting lawless couches? *It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.*”⁶ But saying these things, was like singing to an ass and talking to the deaf. For assuredly Herod seeing the prophet violently flogging him with rebukes and parading the filthiness of his foul deeds openly and fearlessly, *had his soul split up by many conflicting emotions – shame, love, and anger; he was ashamed before the herald’s standing, enraged when chastized; for love greatly inflamed the anger and the lust for pleasure prevails at last over the one who has been taken captive.*⁷ For he was untrained and completely uneducated [and] could not tame his desire by some illustrious reasoning.

[6.] When the adulteress perceived that Herod shrank back at the prophet’s reprimand (“*for Herod feared John,*” [the Gospel] says “*and heard him gladly*”)⁸ – she became a raving maenad beholding these things and fearing that the reproof may prove stronger than his desire, she molded herself according to a more sullen countenance and having shed forth streams of tears, uttered indignant complaints to the lecherous [one]. “What could be more intolerable,” she said, “than having the one sitting on the royal throne and dignified by purple robe and crown be insulted by a squalid and sackcloth-clad Jew, and be debarred from doing what was pleasing and delightful, for it is permitted for you to cut off by kingly power the shameless and disdainful tongue or to make the reckless man food for beasts, [and] least of all to yield [to him] and to be a coward.” [7.] Then, though inflamed with conceit by the words of the courtesan (*well, the words of a harlot are indeed persuasive for a sluggish lover when blended with tears*),⁹ the wretched one did not try to quench the lamp by death, for he revered the virtue of the man, yet verily he concealed him under a basket,¹⁰ and so he shut him up in prison and threw him in a dungeon. But neither did the mouth of the prophet remain silent, nor did the wrath of the harlot lessen. For the struggle banded them together; on the one side the prophet’s [struggle], which wished to deliver the king from uncleanness, and on the other side the harlot’s, who

ἀποσκευάσεται, καὶ εὐκαιρίαν ἐζήτει τὸν ἀκόλαστον ἐμπλήσαι θυμόν· καὶ μέντοι τετύχηκε τοῦ βουλήματος· αἰεὶ γὰρ τὰ χεῖρονα νικᾷ.

[8.] Γενομένης γὰρ ἡμέρας εὐκαίρου καὶ τῶν γενεθλίων ἐνστάτων, καθ' ἣν ἡμέραν ὁ προφητοκτόνος οὗτος (ὡς οὐκ ὄφελε) τῆς μητρικῆς νηδύος ὠλισθήκε, πολυτελὴς μὲν εὐωχία τοῦτῳ ἤτοιμάστω, καὶ δαιτυμόνες πολλοὶ μεγιστᾶνες ἐκέκληντο καὶ χιλιάρχοι καὶ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ὅσοι τὴν τύχην ἐπίδοξοι. ἤδη δὲ τοῦ πότου ἀκμάζοντος, ὁ δειπνοκλήτωρ γενόμενος πάροιος ἄλλην παρασκευάζει τοῦ δειπνοῦ τρυφήν. θυγάτριον ἦν τῇ Ἡρωδιάδι ἐκ τῶν τοῦ Φιλίππου νομίμων κηδευμάτων τεχθέν, *ἀστειὸν μὲν καὶ τὴν ὄψιν οὐκ ἄωρον, ἄλλως δὲ ἴταμόν* καὶ προπετὲς καὶ ἀναίσχυντον, καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς τῆς ἀσπίδος μητρὸς ἀπεικόνισμα. ταύτην *νοσηήσασα ἢ μοιχαλὶς μήτηρ ἀβρότερον* καὶ νυμφικῶς περιστείλασα, πρὸς τοὺς εὐωχομένους ὀρχησομένην ἐξέπεμψεν. ἡ δὲ, ὡς ἐν μέσῳ γένοιτο τῶν δαιτυμόνων, *πρὸς τῶ μὴ αἰσχυνθῆναι κορινῶς ἀποξύσασα τῶν προσώπων πᾶσαν αἰδῶ*, ὥσπερ κορυβαντιῶσα ἐβάκχευε, σοβοῦσα τὴν κόμην, ἀσέμνως λυγίζομένη, ἀνατείνουσα τὴν ὠλένην, παραγυμνοῦσα τὰ στέρνα, θάτερον τοῖν ποδοῖν ἀναστέλλουσα, τῇ ταχείᾳ τοῦ σώματος συστροφῇ παραγυμνουμένη, καὶ τάχα τι καὶ τῶν ἀπορρήτων ὑποδεικνύουσα, ἀναιδεῖ τε προσώπων τοὺς τῶν ὀρώντων ὀφθαλμοὺς εἰς ἑαυτὴν ἐπιστρέφουσα, καὶ σχήμασι παντοδαποῖς ἐμπληκτικὰ ποιοῦσα τῶν θεατῶν τὰ φρονήματα. [9.] ἦν δὲ ἄρα τότε ὁ κτηνώδης Ἡρώδης σωφρονοῦσιν ἀνθρώποις, ὡς εἰκός, καταγέλαστος, μείρακα παρθένον τό γε δοκεῖν ἐν ὄψεσιν ἀρρένων οὕτω παρασκευάσας ἀναισχυντεῖν. πρόσθεσις δὲ τοῦ κακοῦ, ὅτι καὶ ἤρρεσεν αὐτῷ τῆς μαιναδογενοῦς ποδοστρόφου ἢ ὀρχησις. τῷ δὲ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτῆς ἔρωτι καὶ τῇ μέθῃ κάτοχος ὢν, καίτοι μηδὲν αἰτησάσης τῆς νεήλυδος, ἄχρι τοῦ τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτῇ διελεῖν ἐπηγγείλατο ἀντὶ πορνικῶν λυγισμάτων καὶ ποδῶν ἀτάκτου στροφῆς, καὶ ὄρκον τῇ ἐπαγγελίᾳ ἐπέθηκε τὸ τῆς ἀκολασίας ἀνδράποδον.

wished to get rid of her desire's constraint, and sought only for an opportunity to satiate her unbounded rage; and the matter proceeded according to her intention, as evil always wins.

[8.] For an opportune day occurred when Herod's birthday feast arrived (for indeed, it was on this day that this slayer of the prophet – how I wish it had not happened – has slipped out from the maternal womb) [and] a lavish feast was prepared by him, [and] many nobles have been invited as guests, as well as the high officers and all those of Galilee who were esteemed for their status.¹¹ Then, when the drinking was in full swing, the inebriated host procures another delicacy for the feast. Herodias had a little daughter born from her legitimate marriage with Philip, *charming and not unappealing looking, but of uncommon impudence*,¹² reckless and shameless, truly the representation of her viperish mother. The adulterous mother, *embellishing her daughter more gracefully* and dressing her up in wedding dress, sent her out dancing in front of those *sumptuously feasting*.¹³ And she stepped out among the guests, *instead of being ashamed as a girl should be and wiping off all modesty from her countenance*,¹⁴ [she] danced as if filled with Corybantic frenzy, wildly moving her hair, twisting herself indecently, lifting up her elbows, disclosing her breast, raising up one of her two feet, laying herself bare by the swift bending of her body, and perhaps revealing something of those parts, which are unfit to be spoken; with unabashed expression she turned the eyes of the beholders toward herself, and by gestures of every kind she stupefied the spectators' mind.¹⁵ [9.] At that moment, Herod truly seemed more beast-like than human, probably [becoming] an object of derision, since he provided a young girl, a virgin, as it seems, to behave so shamelessly in the sight of men. Then, there was a further increase of evil, for the dance of the *Maenad-born dancer pleased him. Being possessed by an ardent passion for her mother and overcome by drunkenness*, and although it was *nothing* that the newcomer had requested, [Herod] promised her that he would even divide the kingdom for the sake of her obscene twistings and the wild twirling of her feet, and he added to the promise a vow, the enslavement of licentiousness.

Commentary

1. The ancient sources do not support Philagathos' statement that Herod Antipas (born before 20 BCE–39 CE), the son of Herod the Great and tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (4 BCE–34 CE) had slain his half-brother Philip (19 BCE–34 CE); in the *Antiquities of the Jews* (18.4.6) Josephus solely records that Philip, tetrarch of Batanea, Trachonitis, and Auranitis (4 BCE–34 CE) died “in the twentieth year of the reign of Tiberius” and that he was buried with great pomp in the city of Bethsaida, which he had renamed to Julias, in honour of Caesar's daughter.⁴
2. Areta was the king of the Nabataeans (9 BCE–40 CE), the Arabian kingdom situated between the Sinai and the Arabian Peninsula with the city of Petra in Jordan as its capital; Josephus reports (*Antiquities of the Jews* 18.5.1) that his daughter Phasaelis married Herod Antipas but fled later to her father when she discovered that Herod intended to divorce her upon falling in love with his brother's wife, Herodias. In fact, Herod's marriage with Herodias was the alleged reason for Aretas' attack on Herod around the time emperor Tiberius died (37 CE). King Areta is also mentioned in the New Testament (2 Cor. 11: 32).⁵
3. For the portrayal of St. John, Philagathos resorted to Basil of Caesarea's *Homily on the Martyr Gordius*;⁶ thus, the image of Gordius as “a savage-looking man with squalid hair” descending from the mountains to the theatre for proclaiming the Gospel in the arena which prompted his execution was well adapted to recall the image of John the Baptist in the sermon; at the same time, Philagathos intertwined this image with Gregory of Nyssa's picturesque description of Elijah's neglect of the body and careless attire with the “face unwashed and overshadowed by the mass of his own hair” as Nyssen writes in his *encomium* to Basil;⁷ furthermore, to this colorful description Philagathos adds a tinge from Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*; for the epithet “with flowing locks” (καταβόστρυχος, -ον) is a particularly refined touch as the word is a very rare occurrence being attested in the *TLG* corpus only twelve times; the reference in the sermon can be pinned down to Heliodorus' description of Theagenes in the *Aethiopica*,⁸ which also inspired Philagathos' subsequent description of Herodias' daughter (see n. 12, below).
4. In all likelihood, the expression is an unacknowledged Homeric allusion to *Il.* 16, 235: “But around dwell thy priests, the Selli, with unwashed feet, and sleeping upon the ground” (trans. Buckley, 293); the verse was often cited in the Christian tradition and expressly attributed to Homer, as for instance in Gregory of Nazianzos;⁹ Philagathos' Homeric appropriation was remarkably apt for depicting John the Baptist, the prophet of the Lord on account of the “typological” connection established between the two

4 For the sources dealing with the reign of Herod Antipas, see Jensen 2006: 53–125.

5 On Herod Antipas and his Nabataean wife see Kokkinos 1998: 229–33.

6 PG 31: 497.

7 Gregory of Nyssa, *Eulogy for his Brother Basil*, 5 (ed. Lendle).

8 *Aethiopica*, 7, 10, 4 (ed. Colonna, 384–386).

9 *Contra Julianum imperatorem* 1 (*orat.* 4), PG 35: 593.

contexts for the verse in the *Iliad* refers to the prophets of Zeus attending the oracle of Dodona.

5. *Od.*, IX. 191; the verse is taken for the poet's description of the land of the Cyclops picturing their isolated manner of living and appearance; cf. *Od.*, 9, 190–92: “For he was fashioned a wondrous monster, and was not like a man that lives by bread, but like a wooded peak of lofty mountains, which stands out to view alone, apart from the rest.”¹⁰
6. Mk. 6:18.
7. The description of Herod's intense emotions is fashioned after Achilles Tatius' account of Melitte's astonishment when she discovered that both her husband and Leukippe did not perish but survived their trials; she previously considered her husband, Thersander, dead at sea and thereupon married Klitophon, who also believed that his beloved, Leukippe, perished; the novelistic episode serves as layout for Philagathos' rendition of the story; see in this respect, *Leukippe and Klitophon*, 5.24.3: ὡς δὲ προϊοῦσα καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς τῶν γεγραμμένων ἐνέτυχε, πᾶσαν μαθοῦσα τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐμεμέριστο πολλοῖς ἅμα τὴν ψυχὴν, αἰδοῖ καὶ ὀργῇ καὶ ἔρωτι καὶ ζηλοτυπία. ἤσχυνετο τὸν ἄνδρα, ὠργίζετο τοῖς γράμμασιν, ὁ ἔρωσ ἐμάραινε τὴν ὀργήν, ἐξῆπτε τὸν ἔρωτα ἢ ζηλοτυπία, καὶ τέλος ἐκράτησεν ὁ ἔρωσ. “When she went on and finished the rest of what was written, and so learned the whole truth, her heart was the scene of conflicting emotions – shame, and anger, and love, and jealousy. She felt shame as regards her husband, and anger at the letter: love made her anger inclined to cool, while jealousy fired her love, though love was in the end victorious.”¹¹
8. Cf. Mk. 6:20.
9. The depiction of Herodias which encloses an *ethopoietic* passage with her address to Herod is sprinkled with references to Lucian's dialog, *Toxaris, or Friendship*, which features Charikleia, the wife of Demonax, seducing the enormously rich Deinias;¹² the very imagery of the “sluggish lover” (βλᾶκα ἐραστήν) inflamed by conceit and by weeping is borrowed from Lucian's description of Charikleia's arts of seduction. The combination of “βλᾶκα” and “ἐραστήν” occurs in the *TLG* corpus only in Philagathos and Lucian, which buttresses the Philagathean appropriation.
10. The reference to St. John as concealed “under a basket” (μόδιον) identifies the prophet as the light while pointing to Mt. 5:15: “Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket (μόδιον), but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.”
11. Mk. 14:21–22.
12. Philagathos' portrayal of Herodias' daughter is again accomplished through a mosaic of vignettes appropriated from Lucian's account of Charikleia¹³ and Heliodorus' depiction of the slave girl Thisbe.¹⁴ In the dialog, Charikleia, is an icon of seduction

10 Transl. Murray, Loeb, 317.

11 Transl. Gaselee, Loeb, 45, 291–93.

12 Lucian, *Toxaris or Friendship*, 15 (*Lucian*, vol. V, Loeb, 128–9).

13 Lucian, *Toxaris or Friendship*, 13 (*Lucian*, vol. V, Loeb, 125–27).

14 Heliodorus, *Aethiopica* 1, 11, 3 (ed. Colonna, 74).

characterized as “a dainty piece of femininity, but outrageously meretricious,” whereas in the novel Thisbe embodies the negative image of *eros*, the Pandemic love of lust and seduction;¹⁵ then, the characterization of Herodias’ daughter as “of uncommon impudence (ἄλλως δὲ ἱταμόν)” is reminiscent of another ekphrastic passage from the novel, namely Arsake’s portrayal of Theagenes and Charikleia, the latter termed “an outlandish wench, not unappealing looking but of uncommon impudence (ἄλλως δὲ ἱταμόν).”¹⁶

13. In all likelihood, Philagathos’ description of the sumptuous banquet bespeaks the imprint of Heliodorus’ novel; the context is remarkably apt for Philagathos’ appropriation, for the novel features Nausikles preparing “a more brilliant banquet than usually” while commanding his daughter to embellish herself more gracefully (ἄβροτέρων) and to dress herself more lavishly willing to solace his friends after their fatigues.¹⁷
14. The impudence of Salome is expressed through the words of Alciphron;¹⁸ Philagathos borrows from *Charope’s reply to her daughter Glaucippe, who just threatened to hurl herself off the cliffs if forced to marry with the one her father promised to betroth her to.*
15. This minute description is somehow surprising when considering the anxieties conjured by the image of the dancer in patristic literature and the rhetorical conception of language as a force, which may affect the conscience through the power of words; for evocative descriptions were thought of as having the same efficacy in stirring the imagination of the audience as the sight itself; this is, for instance, a recurrent theme in St. John Chrysostom;¹⁹ the closest analogy to Philagathos’ *ekphrasis* of Herodias’ daughter’s dance in terms of vividness is Basil of Seleucia’s sermon *In Herodiadem*²⁰ excellently analyzed by Ruth Webb.²¹ In Basil’s sermon Salome’s performance is pictured as “a true image of her mother’s wantonness with her shameless glance, her twisting body, pouring out her emotions, raising her hands in the air, lifting up her feet she celebrated her own unseemliness with her semi-naked gestures.”²²

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15 See Morgan 1989: 99–113; Dowden 1996: 267–85

16 Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, 7, 10, 4 (ed. Colonna, 384–86).

17 Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, 6, 6, 1–2 (ed. Colonna, 338).

18 Alciphron, *Epistulae*, 1, 12, 1 (trans. Benner and Forbes, *Alciphron, Letters 1: Letters to Fishermen*, Loeb, vol. 383, 64–65).

19 See Webb 1997: 131–34.

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II.3 Speaking: *Ethopoiia*

Introduction

ELIZABETH JEFFREYS

Ethopoiia, or the depiction of character, is one of the fourteen elements that came to be classed in the rhetorical handbooks of Late Antiquity amongst the *progymnasmata*, or preliminary exercises.¹ The communication strategies that come under the heading of “rhetoric” had, of course, initially developed in Antiquity for use in public political and forensic debate of a sort that had lost most of its relevance in Middle and Late Byzantine society.² However, rhetoric’s literary techniques remained vital tools in the construction of persuasive written documents, and inculcation of their use formed the core of Byzantine literary education.³ In addition to *ethopoiia*, the *progymnasmata* include description (*ekphrasis*), narrative (*diegema*, *mythos*), praise (*enkomion*), and comparison (*synkrisis*); these formed the building blocks of advanced composition, and were practiced by the Byzantine teenagers who went beyond the basic literacy of primary schooling. Many of their teachers left collections of *progymnasmata*, partly as entertaining compositions in their own right and partly as models for their pupils.

An *ethopoiia* can function as an independent text or as an element in a longer work, where it easily blurs into other genres, such as laments, speeches, or letters. It is essentially a speech which reveals the speaker’s character in a given set of circumstances, usually introduced by the formulaic heading “What so-and-so would have said when such-and-such happened.” The theorists, as shown in the quotation from Aphthonius below, recognized several subdivisions in the genre, though these were rarely adduced in practice.

The most influential handbooks of rhetoric used in Byzantium in which *progymnasmata* are discussed were, in order of popularity, those of Hermogenes of Tarsus (late second century CE), Aphthonius of Antioch (late fourth century CE), and Aelius Theon (late first century CE). On *ethopoiia* Hermogenes and Aphthonius are succinct (and overlap in phrasing), while Theon is more expansive and stresses the need to make the vocabulary used appropriate to the ages and circumstances of the speakers. All are in agreement over the nature of the exercise. To quote Aphthonius:

Ethopoiia is imitation of the character of a proposed speaker. There are three different forms ... *Ethopoiia* [characterization] has a known person as speaker and only invents the characterization ... In the case of *eidolopoiia* [apparition-making], the speaker is a known person, but dead and no longer able to

1 For an overview on *ethopoiia* see Hunger, *Literatur*, 108–16.

2 Hunger, *Literatur*, 65–196 provides a comprehensive listing; see E. Jeffreys 2007: 166–84.

3 See, e.g., Markopoulos 2015: 3–16; Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 209–42.



Fig. II.3 Bowl with cheetah, 9.8 x 25.5 cm, eleventh–thirteenth century.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 1971.147.1

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speak ... In the case of *prosopopoia* [personification], everything is invented, both character and speaker ... Some characterizations are pathetic, some ethical, some mixed. *Pathetic* are those showing emotion in everything; for example, what words Hecuba might say when Troy was destroyed. *Ethical* are those that only introduce character; for example, what words a man from inland might say on first seeing the sea. *Mixed* are those having both character and pathos; for example, what words Achilles might say over the body of Patroclus.⁴

This exercise thus offers considerable scope for inventiveness over situations, personalities, and related objects.

Notable examples of collections of *ethopoia*e from before the sixth century survive from Libanius (from Antioch), Severus of Alexandria, and Procopius of Gaza. These deal, for the most part, with characters (and often improbable situations) drawn from Greek mythology: e.g. “What Hector would have said when he heard in Hades that Priam had dined with Achilles” (Severus, no. 4); “What a shepherd would have said when

4 *Ἠθοποιία* ἐστὶ μίμησις ἦθος ὑποκειμένου προσώπου. Διαφοραὶ δὲ αὐτῆς εἰσι τρεῖς, ... *ἠθοποιία* μὲν ἢ γνώριμον ἔχουσα πρόσωπον, πλαττομένη δὲ μόνον τὸ ἦθος; ... *εἰδωλοποιία* δὲ ἢ πρόσωπον μὲν ἔχουσα γνώριμον, τεθνεὸς δὲ καὶ τοῦ λέγειν παυσάμενον... *προσωποποιία* δὲ, ὅταν ἅπαντα πλάττηται, καὶ ἦθος καὶ πρόσωπον ... τῶν δὲ ἠθοποιῶν αἱ μὲν εἰσι παθητικαί, αἱ δὲ ἠθικαί, αἱ δὲ μικταί. καὶ *παθητικαί* μὲν αἱ κατὰ πάντα πάθος σημαίνουσαι, οἷον τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους Ἐκάβῃ κειμένης τῆς Τροίας. *ἠθικαί* δὲ αἱ μόνον ἦθος εἰσφέρουσαι, οἷον τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους ἠπειρώτης ἀνὴρ πρῶτον θεασάμενος θάλασσαν. *μικταί* δὲ αἱ τὸ συναμφοτέρον ἔχουσαι, καὶ ἦθος καὶ πάθος, οἷον τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους Ἀχιλλεύς ἐπὶ Πατρόκλῳ κειμένῳ ... , ed., Rabe: 34–35; transl. Kennedy 2003: 115–16 (adapted).

spring came after a harsh winter” (Procopius, no. 4); “What Achilles would have said on confronting Penthesileia’s corpse” (Libanius, no. 11.12); “What a painter would have said when attempting unsuccessfully to paint the nymph Daphne (= laurel) on a laurel board” (Libanius, no. 11.11, also referred to on p. 1256–57 in connection with Kinnamos). Over the following centuries the extant examples, fewer in number than those from Late Antiquity, demonstrate a tendency to include historical and biblical material. Thus, there is a brief free-standing *ethopoia* in verse in the persona of the deceased emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (r.963–969) attributed to John Geometres,⁵ while Psellos arguably embedded, a century later, in his *Chronographia*, an *ethopoia* by the empress Zoe lamenting her fate.⁶

The most striking developments came in the twelfth century, perhaps the golden age of the *ethopoia* as it was also for other literary developments. A notable exponent was Nikephoros Basilakes, sometime *didaskalos* of the Apostle in Hagia Sophia, whose career came to an unhappy end amid religious controversy. Among his literary works, which he collected up at some point around 1160, are his *progymnasmata*,⁷ which include twenty-seven examples of an *ethopoia*. The topics range from the biblical: “What Samson would have said when his hair was shorn” (no. 32), “What Mary would have said when the water was turned into wine at the wedding” (no. 37); through the mythological: “What Zeus would have said when Io was turned into a heifer” (no. 47); to the erotic: “What Pasiphae would have said when she fell in love with a bull” (no. 54), “What the girl from Edessa would have said when she was deserted by the Goth” (no. 56). It has been suggested that exercises like these, which would have been used in the classroom to teach the construction of more complex narratives, could have been a factor in the fashion for extended fictional accounts of erotic relationships that can be observed in Constantinople between c.1125 and 1155.⁸ Certainly the four novels written in that period are highly rhetorical, with signs that their authors were aware of the work of each other and that of Basilakes.⁹

Many passages in the twelfth-century novels can be classified as “embedded progymnasmata.” Prominent among these are examples of an *ethopoia* which, in terms of Aphthonius’ definition quoted above, would all be classed as *prosopoia* (where the character is invented).¹⁰ So, taking cases at random, in Theodore Prodromos’ *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* at 1.88–131 there is a speech which could be headed “What a young man might say on being captured by pirates,” and at 8.17–90 “What one should say if threatened with being sacrificed to the gods;” in Eumathios Makrembolites’ *Hysmine and Hysminias* at 5.3 “What a mother would say when she found her daughter being assaulted,” at 6.6

5 Ed. I no. 80.

6 *Chronographia* 5.22, ed. Reinsch, p. 91.10–92.2; trans. Sewter, 135–36.

7 Ed. Pignani.

8 Beaton 1996, 23–28; see also Roueché 2003, arguing that the pragmatic writings of Kekaumenos demonstrate the use of several forms of *progymnasmata*.

9 The four Komnenian novels are conveniently available in ed. Conca, with Italian transl.; English transl. in Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, with discussions on interrelationships, 13–17, 161–65.

10 The nature of the Byzantine understanding of fictionality is currently debated: see Agapitos, Kaldellis, and Roilos in Roilos 2014.

“What a young man would say when his beloved is to be married to another”; in Niketas Eugenianos’ *Drosilla and Charikles* at 6.332–58 “What a young man might say when wooing a reluctant girl.” Particularly in the last case there is ironic authorial interplay between the character of the speaker (a country bumpkin) and the obscure literary analogues he cites to win the girl over. In the hands of a practiced writer the *ethopoia* offers many opportunities for subversive undercurrents, to which a modern reader should be alert.¹¹

The examples quoted above in connection with Basilakes and the Komnenian novels indicate that the label *ethopoia* can cover many scenarios. Indeed, as Roilos points out, almost any speech in the novels could be classed as an *ethopoia*, even when another generic classification might be appropriate, such as lament, letter, or epideictic speech; with Aphthonius, Roilos identifies in the novels as *ethopoia* only those speeches which deal with the past, present, or future of the speaking subject.¹²

However, there were other strands in the presentation of *ethopoia* at this time, as a variety of examples demonstrate, several of which are included in this volume: the topics range from the mythological to the everyday and take in a religious dimension as well; these texts can often be read on several levels. Thus, Kinnamos, secretary to the emperor Manuel, reworked Libanius’ *ethopoia* on the painter struggling to paint the nymph Daphne, referred to above; the *ethopoia* is as much about the painter’s emotions as he struggles with his recalcitrant material as the painting itself and operates within a secular framework.¹³ Both Theodore Prodromos¹⁴ and Manganeios Prodromos¹⁵ are more overtly moralizing and used an image of a personification of Life as a vehicle for their pessimism over life’s vicissitudes; in Theodore’s case the speaker is Vios who incidentally describes his depicted appearance, while in Manganeios’ the speaker is an un-named woman and the “images” referred to may be metaphorical. Michael Italikos had the protomartyr Stephen lament the sale of a portion of his body, perhaps his tongue, to Venice but sees this as merely the start of triumphal proselytizing whilst incidentally complaining about the sale of religious works of art;¹⁶ a similarly sardonic tone about current ecclesiastics emerges in Eustathios of Thessaloniki’s vivid picture of the miseries of the unfortunate bishop of Homokessos (= Mokisos) who had his clothes and his towel stolen while bathing.¹⁷ Kallikles’ *ethopoia* uses a dialog between a passing stranger and the personified tomb to depict, in a rhetorical extension of funerary conventions, a deceased aristocrat’s character and physique,¹⁸ while Manganeios Prodromos presents two armed military saints in conversation as they agree to defend a suppliant who has been assailed by misfortunes.¹⁹ The scope afforded by the *ethopoia* was thus broad as well as flexible.

11 As argued by Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 62–79.

12 Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 64; cf. Aphthonius, ed. Rabe, 35.

13 Ed. G. Bánhegyi; see also K. Warcaba, II.3.1 in this volume.

14 See N. Zagklas, II.3.4.

15 See E. and M. Jeffreys, II.3.2 in this volume.

16 Ed. P. Gautier; see also E. Bourbouhakis, I.4.6 in this volume.

17 Ed. T. Tafel, 328–32; on Eustathios of Thessaloniki see B. van den Berg and E. Cullhed, II.2.1 in this volume.

18 Ed. Romano.

19 Ed. Jeffreys and Jeffreys; see also E. and M. Jeffreys, II.3.2 in this volume.

The practice for teachers to collect their *progymnasmata*, including *ethopoiiæ*, as “fair copies” for the benefit of students continued into the next centuries, as witnessed, for example, by George Pachymeres (1242–1310).²⁰ One of the last surviving *ethopoia* that is known comes in 1402 from the pen of the emperor Manuel II Palaiologos and has as its theme “What Timur would have said to Bayazid after the battle of Ancyra”: in Aphthonius’ classification, this brief piece would have been a genuine *ethopoia*, with a known person as the speaker and only the characterization invented.²¹

But by this stage the social climate that had encouraged the literary elite of the twelfth century to use their rhetorical training to engage with aesthetic aspects of their environment – the emotions that might be aroused in tense situations, whether real or imagined, the verbal responses these might elicit, and the exploration of consequent actions – had changed. The Byzantine literary self-confidence, in which the *ethopoia* had a part to play, barely survived the double blows of, first, the civil strife that followed the death of the emperor Manuel in 1180, and then the arrival of the Fourth Crusade in 1204. When the dust had settled after the re-establishment of Byzantine authority in Constantinople in 1261, training in rhetorical usages was still in place, but emphases were different, and the hey-day of the *ethopoia* had passed: literary experiments now involved exploiting the opportunities offered when using forms of vernacular Greek in complex compositions.

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²¹ PG 156: 579–82.

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II.3.1 John Kinnamos (before 1143–after 1185)

Ethopoia on a Painter Trying to Paint Apollo on an Uncooperative Panel of Laurel Wood

KATARZYNA WARCABA

Ed.: G. Bánhegyi, *Kinnamos: Ethopoiája*, Magyar-Görög Tanulmányok 23 (Budapest, 1943), 6–10

MS.:¹ Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, III. A.A. 6 (s. XIV), ff. 100v–102r

Other Translations: G. Bánhegyi, as above, 7–11 (Hungarian)

Significance

In terms of material art, it is difficult to extract clear aesthetical values from this *Ethopoia*. Although the text seems to describe an artist at work, his work is a failure and the main focus of this description is on the artist's emotions, not his actions. Both the theme of the attempted piece of art and the chosen medium are the matter of rhetorical significance. Therefore, seeking evidence or examples of Byzantine material culture in this text would be futile. Nevertheless, from a literary point of view Kinnamos' *Ethopoia* presents an interesting example of creative re-use of the ancient topic.

The Author

The *Ethopoia* is attributed by the scribe of the *codex unicus* to John Kinnamos, imperial grammaticos at the court of Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–81).² Apart from the title preserved in the manuscript, there is no external evidence in favor or against this attribution, the text analysis presented by Bánhegyi shows a dependence of Kinnamos' *Ethopoia* on the *ethopoiiae* of Nikephoros Basilakes who is supposed to be Kinnamos' teacher.³

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1 No longer true. Consulted in situ (in 2018).

2 The manuscript contains, *inter alia*, *Ethopoiiae* written by Severus (a Greek rhetorician who lived about 470 CE) and other texts that may have been used by a Byzantine teacher, such as Lycophron's *Alexandra* with the commentary by John Tzetzes, letters by Gregory of Nazianzos, and rhetorical works by Nikephoros Basilakes. On John Kinnamos see The Author.

3 Nevertheless, the question remains unanswered since the theory about Kinnamos being a student of Basilakes is based mainly on this intertextual relation between their *ethopoiias*.

After receiving a comprehensive education, John Kinnamos⁴ followed his family tradition in the imperial administration and served as imperial secretary at the court of Manuel I. Given his position, Kinnamos was well placed to write a detailed history covering the years 1118–1176, and it is this work for which he is best known.⁵ The only other literary text attributed to Kinnamos is this *Ethopoia* – a rhetorical exercise, one of the *progymnasmata* which were an important part of a Byzantine education.⁶

Text and Context

The *Ethopoia* presents the story of a painter making excuses for his failure to paint on a piece of laurel wood.⁷ Kinnamos uses the well-known myth of Apollo and Daphne to illustrate his case. According to the general narrative, Apollo passionately desired Daphne, a naiad (that is, a nymph of fresh water) of extreme beauty. Daphne, trying to escape the pursuing Apollo, pleaded for help from her mother, the Earth, who turned her into the homonymous (in Greek) plant, “daphne”/laurel. In Kinnamos’ text, a panel of laurel wood is chosen by the painter to depict a scene with Apollo, but the wood rejects the image of Apollo just as Daphne had in the myth.

Kinnamos based the composition of his *Ethopoia* on a similar work, written by the fourth-century rhetor Libanius.⁸ The dependency of Kinnamos’ *Ethopoia* on that of Libanius is particularly evident in the first paragraph of the text in which Kinnamos basically paraphrases his prototype. However, a number of differences can be found between the two texts, both in their structure and their content. In the text of Libanius’ *Ethopoia* the painter addresses Apollo in the manner of a dialog, which makes it a “compound *ethopoia*” (ἡθοποιία διπλῆ), while Kinnamos wrote a “simple *ethopoia*” (ἡθοποιία ἀπλῆ), where the painter is the narrator of the text and does not have a specific interlocutor. In Libanius’ text the painter recalls how he had successfully painted other gods, while Kinnamos’ painter describes how he had been painting Theias on a panel of myrrh. He alludes to the myth about Myrrha (sometimes called Smyrna) who fell in love with her father and after getting him drunk she had intercourse with him which resulted in her pregnancy. To escape her father’s anger she prayed to the gods and was transformed into a tree. Kinnamos’ argumentation seems to be even more convincing than that of his predecessor, since his painter draws such a close analogy between the two situations: there is a girl, Smyrna/Myrrha, turned into a tree – myrrh (homonymous in Greek: σμύρνα/

4 For a bibliography on John Kinnamos see Karpozelos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί και χρονογράφοι*, 639–41; Treadgold 2013: 407–15.

5 See Kinnamos, *Deeds*.

6 Schissel 1934–35: 1–10.

7 On the *Ethopoia* see Krumbacher 1897: 281, Hunger 2001: 187–88 (the Greek transl. of Hunger’s book by Ioannis V. Anastasiou offers a revised version of the original German text); A. Kazhdan, s.v. “Kinnamos,” *ODB* 2: 1130; Treadgold 2013: 408; Bánhegyi 1943, which is the only substantial study on the text.

8 Libanius, *Τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους ζωγράφος γράφων τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα εἰς δάφνηνον ξύλον τοῦ ξύλου μὴ δεχομένου τὰ χρώματα*; – “What would a painter say while trying to paint Apollo on a laurel wood and the wood does not accept the pigments?,” ed. Foerster 1915: 399–401.

μύρρα) and in both cases passion was the reason for the metamorphosis. This scene leads to the second source of Kinnamos' inspiration – almost a third of his text is based on Nikeforos Basilakes' *Ethopoia*: *What Eros might say upon seeing a wood-cutter attempting to cut Myrrh(a) while she is still pregnant with Adonis*.⁹ The protagonist of this *Ethopoia* is Eros who warns a wood-cutter against committing crimes against the god of love. The Basilakes' *Ethopoia* is the first treatment of Myrrha's incest story in a *progymnasma*,¹⁰ it also alludes to Daphne – "beautiful Daphne, oracular Daphne, Apollo's Daphne, Daphne, Laurel of Eros."¹¹ Kinnamos develops this allusion by making it a theme of his *Ethopoia*. He uses his master's wording (see the Commentary) and also, in vv. 40–60, the structure offered by Basilakes (*Progymnasmata*, 51, 30–50) when speaking about the power of *Eros* and how those who refuse love are unaware of its power. As a result, Kinnamos' text is a rewriting of a theme known from Libanius but presented in the manner of Basilakes. Kinnamos focuses on two particular aspects stressed by his teacher, namely the magnitude of *Eros*' power and Daphne's oracular character. While Libanius' text is a purely rhetorical *progymnasma*, Kinnamos' *Ethopoia* is intended to be a didactic text. The Byzantine author uses the scene to argue that if Daphne, an oracular tree, does not accept Apollo, an oracular god, even in painting, she/the tree should not be trusted by seers who seek the oracle of Apollo through it. This assertion is suggested at the end of the first paragraph and then repeated as a conclusion in the closing sentence (see the Commentary, nn. 3 and 27). From this perspective Kinnamos' text can be seen as a more creative adaptation, rather than a plain paraphrase, of its prototype.

9 Basilakes, *Progymnasma* no. 51, ed. Pagnini 1983: 207–10, transl. and analysis in Papaioannou 2007, esp. 361–63.

10 Papaioannou 2007: 359.

11 Ed. Pagnini 1983: 208; transl. after Papaioannou 2007: 362.

Text

[p. 6] Τοῦ βασιτικοῦ γραμματικοῦ κυροῦ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Κιννάμου ἠθοποιία· ποίους ἄν εἶπε λόγους ζωγράφος ζωγραφῶν τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα ἐν δαφνίνῳ πίνακι, καὶ μὴ συγχωροῦντος τοῦ πίνακος;

Ἦ τέχνη καὶ χεῖρες καὶ χρώματα. οἷον τοῦτο τέρας ὄρω· ἠλίκον κατὰ τῆς γραφῆς ὁ πίναξ ἐκπεπολέμεται. ἀπὸ δάφνης ὁ πίναξ, ἀπὸ κόρης ἡ δάφνη. τῇ δὲ καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἄνθρωπον τὸ μῖσος ἐγκάθηται· καὶ τὴν φύσιν μεταβαλοῦσα τὸν τρόπον οὐ συμμετέβαλε. κατὰ θεοῦ ἀθάνατα μέμνη, καὶ μαντικὸν φυτὸν οὐ δέχεται θεὸν μαντικόν.

Ὡς ἐπὶ παστάδος τοῦ πίνακος καθίζω Ἀπόλλωνα, καὶ γίνομαι νυμφοστόλος θεοῦ ἀπὸ χρωμάτων καὶ κόρης ἀπὸ φυτοῦ, καὶ ὡς ἔδνα τῇ κόρῃ τὰ χρώματα δίδωμι, καὶ ἀπὸ δάφνης πλέκω τὸν ἐπινύμφιον στέφανον. ἀνάπτω τῷ νυμφῶνι τούτῳ καὶ φῶς ἐγγύθεν μεταλαβών· καὶ ὡς ἀπὸ θεοῦ μαντικοῦ τὸ φῶς, ὃ πολλοῖς πυθόμενοις ἀνῆψεν ὁ Πύθιος. ἡ δὲ ἀλλ' ἀπωθεῖται τὸν ἔραστήν. καὶ τῆς βαφῆς οὐκ αἶει καὶ τῶν χρωμάτων οὐκ ἐπιστρέφεται. Λάδωνος ἡ Δάφνη θυγάτηρ τοῦ ποταμοῦ, ὑδάτων ἀπόγονος, παῖς ἀπὸ Γῆς οὕτω στιλβούσης τὸ κάλλος στίλβουσα, καὶ ἀπὸ γλυκέος ρέυματος γλυκεῖαν καὶ τὴν ὥραν καθέλκουσα. ἡ που ἐκέιθεν ἀπὸ πατρὸς ἔγνω τὸ μὴ τὰ χρώματα δέχεσθαι; ἐκέιθεν μανθάνει τὸ πρὸς τὸν γράφοντα ἀνεπίστροπον; ἐγγύθεν ἐκ ποταμοῦ τὰ τῆς διδασκαλίας ἀρύεται;

Ἀκούω τὴν σελήνην, ὅτε τὴν σύνοδον ἔχει μετὰ τοῦ ἀστεράρχου φωσφόρου τοῦ γίγαντος, ἀποκενουμένην τὰ φῶτα καὶ οἷον θνήσκουσαν. ἔχω καὶ τὴν Δάφνην καλὴν ὡς σελήνην, ὅτι καὶ τῇ γῇ πλησιάζει τὸ γένος ἡ Δάφνη, ὡς καὶ ἡ σελήνη τρόπον καινότερον ἕτερον. οὐκοῦν τὴν σύνοδον ἡλίου σοφίζομαι τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος; ὁ δὲ μᾶλλον περὶ τὴν συνέλευσιν ἐκλείπει, καὶ ὅλως ἀποταμειοῦται, καὶ τὴν γραφὴν οὐ θαρρεῖ. [p. 8] τοῦ τῆς Δάφνης <οήματος> εἶπω τοῦτο τὸ τέρας, ἢ τοῦ Πυθίου περὶ τὴν κόρην ἀποστροφῆς; ὁ μὲν γραφόμενος οὐ μορφαίνεται· ἡ δὲ οὐ δέχεται τὰς βαφάς. ὡς ἄρα εἰς τὸν ἐκ τῆς γῆς φόβον ἀναφέρει τὸ ἀχρωμάτιστον, καὶ κατὰ τοῦ ἔρωτος μόνη τῶν ἀπάντων ἀλαζονεύεται.

Ἐγραψά ποτε καὶ ἐν ξύλῳ ἀπὸ μύρρας τὸν Θεῖαντα, ἡ δὲ τὸν πατέρα ἐδέχετο, ὡς κατὰ γαστρὸς πάλαι τὸν Ἄδωνιν. καὶ τὴν γραφικὴν μιμουμένην τὰ τῆς φύσεως ἔβλεπον, καὶ ὡς ἐκεῖ τὸ βρέφος κατὰ μικρόν, κἀνταῦθα τὸ μορφαζόμενον κατ' ὀλίγον ὠρθοῦτο καὶ ἀνεπλάττετο. ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ θεοί, ἡ δὲ Δάφνη μέχρι καὶ χρωμάτων τὴν μανίαν ἐτήρησε καὶ μέχρι ἀψύχου τὴν ὀργὴν ἐθαλάμεισε. καίτοι καὶ Θεῖαντι καὶ Ἀπόλλωνι οὐκ ἀνόμοιοι μέθαι ἐπέθεντο· ὁ μὲν ἐμέθυεν ἔρωτι, ὁ δὲ οἴνω, τῷ ἐπικούρῳ τοῦ σώματος. Δάφνη δὲ περὶ τὴν μίξιν τῶν χρωμάτων οὐκ ἐπινεύει, ὅτι μηδὲ πρῶν τὴν μετ' Ἀπόλλωνος. ἡγνοεῖ, ὡς καὶ ἐν οὐρανῷ Ἔρως τὸ πτερὸν ἐπεκύρτωσε, καὶ πτερὸν αἴφνης τὸν θεῶν ὕπατον ἐσχεδίαζε, καὶ τὰ κύκνων μουσουργεῖν ἐξεπαίδευσε, καὶ τῷ τοῦ ἔρωτος φαρμάκῳ τὴν καρδίαν ἔνδον βαφέντα ἔξωθεν ὡς κύκνον ἐλεύκανεν. ἀνῆψε τὸ πῦρ Ἔρως, καὶ ὡς χρυσὸς ὁ Ζεὺς ἐπυροῦτο, καὶ θερμὸς ἔραστής τὴν ἐρωμένην περιεκέχυτο. ἐδείκνυ τῷ Διὶ καὶ σύμβολον κάλλους εἰς κόρην· καὶ ὁ Ζεὺς ὡς βοῦς ἐμυκήσατο, ἵνα μὴ μόνον ἀπὸ βοῦς μέλι τεχνάζοιτο, ἀλλ' ἀντιστρόφως, ἀπὸ Διὸς καὶ ἀπὸ μέλιτος βοῦς. καὶ τὸν βουπλήγα τῷ πατρὶ τὸ παιδίον ἐπέσειεν, καὶ εἰς τὸν οἰκεῖο πλάσμα τὸν βοῦν, τὸν Δία, διέπαιξε. καὶ ἀπὸ Διὸς ἀροτῆρος θέρος ὥρας οὕτω γλυκὺ ἀνεφύετο. οὐκ ἦδει, ὡς κατὰ θαλάττης

Translation

[p. 6] *Ethopoia* by the imperial *grammatikos* (secretary), kyr¹ John Kinnamos: What would a painter say trying to paint Apollo on an uncooperative panel of laurel wood.²

O Art! O hands! O pigments! What a marvel I see here: a panel has rebelled against the painting! This panel is of the laurel tree and the laurel tree was once a girl, Daphne. And in that wood hatred remains even though it is no longer a girl: although she changed her nature she never changed her attitude. Eternally furious with a god, this oracular tree will not accept the oracular god!³

[As] in the bridal chamber of the panel I seat Apollo and I become the best man⁴ to a god of pigments and a girl of wood. To the girl I give these pigments as a wedding gift,⁵ and I weave a bridal crown of laurel leaves. In this bridal chamber I kindle a light which I take from nearby, as if taking from the oracular god⁶ the light, which Pythios⁷ has sparked in many inquiring minds. But she rejects the lover. She does not respond to the dye and will not turn towards the pigments, Daphne, the daughter of the river Ladon,⁸ offspring of the waters, child of Gaia, the Earth. She glitters in beauty like her mother and draws her sweet charm from the sweet stream. Or did she learn from here, from her father how not to accept the pigments? Did she discover from here how to avoid the painter? From here, from the river that is close at hand did she draw out the rules of this lesson?

I hear that when the moon, Selene, has a meeting with Helios, the ruler of the stars, the light-bringing Giant, she loses her lights as if she were dying. I consider Daphne to be beautiful like the moon, because Daphne also comes near to the earth in her origin, as the moon does, but in a more novel, different way.⁹ Should I not devise this meeting with the Sun as a meeting with Apollo? But rather he deserts the rendezvous, he is completely diminished, he is not emboldened by the painting. [p. 8] Should I say then that the reason for this marvel is Daphne's intention rather than Pythios' avoidance of the girl? He who is being portrayed does not take shape; she will not accept the dye.¹⁰ This uncoloring refers¹¹ directly to fear from the earth,¹² she brags about being the only one to struggle with love.¹³

Once I painted Theias on the wood of myrrh [Myrrha], Myrrha accepted her father as long ago she accepted Adonis in her womb.¹⁴ And I saw that what I had painted imitated nature, and just as the fetus there slowly grew, so what was portrayed gradually rose up and was shaped. O Zeus and other gods! But this Daphne has preserved her madness even against the pigments and kept her anger even against what is inanimate! And indeed Theias and Apollo were not afflicted with the same inebriation. The latter was drunken with love and the former with wine, the body's ally. Daphne does not approve of this mixing with pigments, as earlier she had not approved of intercourse with Apollo.

She did not know how Eros¹⁵ in the heavens had swung his arrow and aiming the arrow carelessly at the highest of the gods, taught him how to sing the songs of swans.¹⁶ Then, after flooding his heart deep with the love potion he made his body white, turning him into a swan. Eros lit the fire and Zeus burnt like gold.¹⁷ The ardent lover flowed over his beloved. Another time he [Eros] showed Zeus a token of beauty in the form of a girl. And Zeus bellowed like a bull,¹⁸ so it be known that not only was honey contrived out

τὸ πῦρ ἀνεσάλευσε, καὶ γλυκὺν ἔρωτα καθ' ὑδάτων ἀλμυρᾶς φύσεως ἀνετάραξε, καὶ καθ' ὑγρῶν σπειρῶν οὐκ ἐπησχύνετο τὸ ἀδύνατον. ἔφθασε καὶ κατὰ γῆς ἐκπέμψας τὸ βέλος, καὶ πάντες αἰχμάλωτοι ἔρωτος, φιλότητος δέσμιοι. καὶ περιπλοκάς ὑγράς ἐπὶ τῆς ξηρᾶς ἐσχεδίασεν. ἐξέθλιψε καὶ κατὰ καρδίας θνητῶν ὡς βότρυν τὸν ἴμερον, καὶ γεύεται τις τούτου καὶ πυρπολεῖται σπλάγχνα, καὶ φλόγα τρέφει καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀνακάεται. καὶ πυρὸς ὄλους κρατῆρας τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς καινουργεῖ, καὶ κατὰ βλεφάρων φλογὸς ἀνεστόμωσε ῥύακας. κατὰ τοῦ γείτονος ἀέρος ἠκόντισε, κἂν κύων τις κόρη ἐγγὺς ἀπλῆ ξυγγένηται, τοῦ πυρὸς καὶ τὴν φλόγα δανεῖζεται, καὶ τόκον οὕτω ταχύν καθυπισχνεῖται τῷ ἔραστῃ.

Ἐπελόξευσε καὶ τῷ Λοξία Ἔρωσ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς, ἐπεῖδε τὸ σύνηθες, καὶ κατὰ κόρης πολλῆς τὸ κάλλος ἐξέμνη. καλὴ μὲν οὖν ἡ [p. 10] κόρη, χρυσοῦ τὴν θέαν, τερπνὴ τὴν ὥραν, ἀπλῆ τὴν ἰδέαν. καλὸς καὶ ὁ Ἀπόλλων. καὶ τοξότης ὢν οὕτως ἕτερον τοξότην ἠδίκει τὸν Ἔρωτα καὶ τοῖς αὐτοῦ ὑπέκυψε βέλεσιν. εἶδε τὴν κόρην ὁ Πύθιος, ἤλγησεν, ἐδίωξεν, ἔσπευσε, τάχα που ὡς ἀπὸ τρίποδος θεσμοφορήσων ὡς ἦδιστα. θεὸς ἐδίωκεν ἄνθρωπον· καὶ θεοῦ ἦν ἐρώμενος ἄνθρωπος. οὐκ ἦδει τὴν ἀποτυχίαν ὁ μάντις θεός. Ἔρωσ γὰρ αὐτῷ ξυνεθώλου τὸ μαντικόν· ἠγνόει τὸν μάταιον δρόμον. ἴμερος γὰρ ἀπὸ τῶν σπλάγχνων ῥυεῖς τὴν μαντικὴν πηγὴν ἀνέστελλε, καὶ τὰς τοῦ βλεπεῖν φλέβας ἀνέφραττεν. ἐπηπεῖλει τῇ φυγῇ καὶ δεσμούς, οὓς πολλοὺς πολλακίς ἀπὸ πυρὸς ἐχάλκευσε ἔρωτος. γένος ἀμφοῖν ἄνισον, καὶ δρόμος ἀνόμοιος. καὶ οἷς ἡ κόρη τῷ γένει ἐλείπετο, τούτῳ τῷ τάχει ἐπρώτευν. ὁ μὲν ἐνίκα τῇ φύσει τὴν κόρην, ἡ δὲ τῷ τάχει τὸν ἔραστὴν. εἶδε τὴν βίαν τῆς κόρης ἡ Γῆ, καὶ ὡς ἐδραπέτευν, ἔφευγεν, ἔτρεχε, καὶ τὸν περὶ παρθενίας ἠπείγετο, καὶ τὰς λαγόνας περιεβόθρευσε, καὶ πλατὺ τὸ στόμα ὑπέχαινε, καὶ πάλαι ἀπὸ γαστρὸς αὐτὴν ἀναπτύξασα παλίνορσος ὑπεδέξατο, ὡς καὶ ἰχθύες πολλακίς ὑδατοβάμονες ἐν θαλάσῃ τὰ ἔγγονα, καὶ τῷ Δηλίῳ τὴν ἐρωμένην ἀπέκρυπτε. καὶ τῇ τῆς κόρης παρθενίᾳ οἷα θησαυρῷ ἀνωρύττετο, κλέπτῃν τοῦ κάλλους μέγαν οὕτως ὑφορωμένη θεόν. οἷα δὲ σιδήρῳ ἀνεμοχλεύετο τῷ τῆς κόρης ἀνενδότῳ πρὸς Ἔρωτα. Γῆ δ' ἀντ' αὐτῆς ὁμώνυμον ἀντεδίδου φυτὸν τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι, καλὸν εἰς ὄψιν, σεμνὸν εἰς ἄνθη, χρυσοῦν εἰς κάλλος, εὐχρουν εἰς θέαν, ἔτι φόβου πνέον καὶ τῇ ἐξ ἀνέμων κινήσει φέγγει ἔτι φαντασιούμενον. τὸ δὲ οὐδ' ἐν χρώμασι τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα δέχεται.

Μηκέτι θαρρεῖτε, μάντις, τὸν δάφνινον στέφανον, μηκέτι τοῖς τῆς δάφνης κλάδοις πιστεύετε· εἰ γραφόμενον ἡ Δάφνη οὐ δέχεται, πάντως οὐδὲ μαντευόμενον τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα.

of the bull, but inversely, the bull out of Zeus and honey.¹⁹ The child swiped at his father with an ox-goad and laughed at his own creation, the bull, Zeus.²⁰ Out of Zeus, the ploughman's beast, thus the sweet fruits of summer grew.²¹ She did not know that fire²² can dance around on the sea and can stir up sweet love in the bitter waters of nature and is not ashamed of the impossible in damp clothing.²³ He can send arrows by land, and all become prisoners of love, captives of affection. And he has contrived watery embraces on dry land. He has squeezed desire in mortals' hearts as if it were a cluster of grapes, and whenever anyone tastes this, his innermost feelings are consumed with fire and nurture flame and ignite his soul. And he turns the eyes completely into bowls of fire and opens up streams of flame from the eyelids.²⁴ He takes aim at the neighboring air, and if he as impregnator keeps company with a pure girl he borrows the fire and the flame, and thus promises a swift offspring for the lover.

Eros also squinted at Loxias,²⁵ as was his habit, so he was turned mad in love with a girl so abundant in beauty. Beautiful was [p. 10] the girl, with golden hair, delightful appearance, thin figure. Beautiful was Apollo. Being an archer he despised the other archer, Eros, he stooped under his arrows. The Pythian saw the girl, suffered, chased, sought eagerly, quickly as if he were to give ordinances from the tripod,²⁶ what is the most pleasant way. The god was chasing the human; but the beloved human was also of some divinity. The prophet-god had not seen the forthcoming failure. For Eros had muddied his prophecy: he did not recognize that his chase had been in vain. The desire that flowed from his heart had hindered the source of prophecy and blocked up the veins of seeing. By her flight she threatened the many bonds which he [Eros] often forged with the fire of love. The origins of these two were unequal, their strides not alike. Of the two, the girl was of a more humble origin, but she overtook him in terms of speed. He was superior to the girl by his nature, [but] she was superior to the lover in her great speed. Gaia, the Earth saw the violence threatening the girl, as she tried to escape, as she fled, as she ran, she [Gaia] was urged on by concern for her virginity. She opened up her interiors around the girl, opened her mouth wide, as she had given her birth from her womb long ago, so she now took her again, like fish dipped in sea do to their offspring, she concealed the beloved girl from the Delian. And she [Earth] broke herself open for the girl's virginity, as if for a treasure, suspecting the great god was a thief of beauty. As if with the girl's unyielding iron she barred her from Eros. In return for her the Earth gave Apollo a plant, a tree with the same name, one of a beautiful appearance, divine in blossom, golden in beauty, resplendent in color, which still trembles with fear and seems to glitter when the winds blow. And this tree still does not accept Apollo even in my pigments.

O seers, no longer trust in a laurel crown, no longer believe the laurel branches; if Daphne does not accept Apollo when he is sketched, nor does she when he utters predictions.²⁷

Commentary

1. A polite form of addressing a person, the abbreviation of Greek “kyrios” – Lord/Master.
2. The phrase *τίνας ἄν εἴποι λόγους* (“What words one would say”) indicates that the text that follows is an *ethopoiia*.
3. In this paragraph, Kinnamos paraphrases Libanius, *Ethopoiia* 399, 7–17. The last sentence, however, summarizes the aim of Kinnamos’ text, as it was indicated above (see Text and Context): assuming that Daphne, the laurel tree, a medium of prophecy, will not accept Apollo, the god who gives prophecy, one should not believe the prophecy received through this medium comes from Apollo.
4. The Greek word *νυμφοστόλος* literally means “the person who escorts the bride.” However, Kinnamos borrows the word from a *progymnasma* by Nikephoros Basilakes, *The Story of Icarus*.¹² In Basilakes’ narrative, Daedalus (Icarus’ father) is a *νυμφοστόλος* (meaning “procurer”) to Pasiphae and the bull. According to Kinnamos’ teacher, Daedalus built a *παστάδα παραλογωτέραν* (“so insane bridal chamber”) by constructing a portable wooden cow, in which Pasiphae entered and satisfied her lust for the bull. Kinnamos in his text toys with both meanings of the word *νυμφοστόλος*.
5. The idea that the positive characteristics of the bride or groom are part of the marriage dowry is a *topos* in Byzantine literature, and as such it was also elaborated on in Nikephoros Basilakes’ *progymnasmata*. Nevertheless, the dual meanings employed in this paragraph concerning bridal dowry, as, for example, the wedding crown weaved with Daphne laurel leaves, was an original invention of Kinnamos.
6. Apollo was also known as god of the sun.
7. Pythios: i.e. Pythian Apollo, from *Πυθώ* the area around Delphi.
8. Ladon is a river found on the Peloponnese peninsula of Greece.
9. Both Daphne and Selene are partly human and so both are earthly in a sense that they were molded from clay. What is more, they are both mythological descendants of the Earth, Gaia. Selene belongs to the second generation of Titans, she was one of the old world, Daphne is a young nymph, that is why she “also comes near to the Earth in her origin . . . in a different, more novel way.”
10. Here the author strengthens his argument by saying that it is possible that Apollo avoids Daphne as much as she does him. The situation seems hopeless.
11. The syntax of this passage is unclear, it is hard to identify the grammatical subject of the sentence. I decided to follow the general structure repeated several times in the text where the first part of the sentence refers to Apollo and the second to Daphne.
12. Kinnamos most probably alludes to Python, a dragon born from the Earth. Python was the eternal enemy of Apollo, until he was killed by the god; Apollo had to expiate for this misdeed. Daphne, a daughter of the Earth may remind Apollo of this fear.
13. See Libanius, *Ethopoiia*, 401, 9: *ποῦ σου τὸ τόξον, Ἄπολλον; ὁ μὴν Δάφνη νενίκηκε/* “where is your bow, O Apollo, which by single Daphne has been overcome?”

¹² Ed. Pagnini 1983: 95–96.

14. Theias, a king of Assyria and father of Myrrha [Smyrna]; cf. Text and Context, above.
15. Cf. Nikephoros Basilakes, *Progymnasma* 51, 30–50;¹³ Kinnamos places Daphne in the position of Theias, showing that she is unaware of the power of Eros as much as Theias, who would not accept his daughter's lust.
16. Allusion to the story of Zeus and Leda: the highest of gods, Zeus, turned himself into a swan to seduce Leda.
17. Allusion to the story of Zeus and Danaë: Danaë was imprisoned by her uncle, Acrisius, in order to prevent her from having a son, who according to an oracle would kill him. However, Zeus managed to reach her in the form of a shower of gold.
18. Allusion to the story of Zeus and Europa: Zeus turned himself into a white bull in order to seduce her.
19. Here the author possibly alludes to two different stories. The first part of the sentence may be connected to a myth about the creation of bees (see Libanius' *Progymnasmata*, *Laudatio* 8, 8, 15).¹⁴ According to this myth the bull must have died to let bees come into existence. A similar image is described in Jud. 14:5–9, where Samson kills a lion and after few days he finds a swarm of bees and honey in the mouth of the lion. Samson makes up a riddle (Jud. 14:14): "Meat came forth of the eater, and sweetness out of the strong," which might be an explanation of the ambiguous sentence which comes next, see n. 21 below.

In the second part of the sentence Kinnamos may be alluding to the myth about the infant Zeus who was fed with honey by Melissa (= bee).

20. Another syntactically unclear sentence. It can also be translated as in Bánhegyi 1943: 9: *The child swiped at his father with an ox-goad and laughing turned the bull, Zeus into his original form.*
21. Here again it is difficult to follow the author's intention but the sentence may be considered as an allusion to the biblical passage quoted in n. 19 above.
22. Fire is one of the most important attributes of Eros as presented in the Basilakes' *progymnasmata*. Allusions to the nature of Eros similar to those mentioned in this paragraph are also set out in Makrembolites' *Hysmine and Hysminias*, for example, 7.17. The question whether or not Kinnamos was familiar with Makrembolites' fiction is beyond the scope of this work, nevertheless, he may have played with some of the images of Eros that were current in the mid twelfth century.¹⁵
23. Bánhegyi recognizes σπειρών as a participle of σπείρω and translates: "Nem tudta, hogy a tengeren felingerelte a tüzet, és az édes szerelmet a sós természetű vizek fölött fölzavarta, és a folyékony vízbe is vetvén, nem szégyelte még a lehetetlent sem."¹⁶ Unfortunately, he does not give any suggestion about the possible meaning of this

13 Ed. Pagnini 1983: 207–10.

14 Βοῦς καὶ ζῶν ἀνθρώποις συνεργὸς καὶ ἀπελθὼν ὤνησεν. ὅστις γὰρ οὐκ ἔχων μελίττας σμήνους ἐπιθυμεῖ μελιτῶν, βούν κτείνει ῥοπάλοις, εὐθύς δὲ τὸ σῶμα τίκτει μελίττας. καὶ ἔστιν ἡ τελευτὴ τοῦ βοός μελίττης γένεσις, ed. Foerster 1915.

15 See Papaioannou 2007: 358.

16 Bánhegyi 1943: 9.

- sentence. I understand σπείρων as genitive plural (since it comes together with “ὑγρῶν”) from a noun σπεῖρον –*piece of cloth*. If this is indeed the case, the sentence implies a connection with the myth of Arethusa, a Nereid, daughter of Nereus. Admired by the river god Alpheus, Arethusa refused to love him. However, Alpheus, in the form of a river, flowed through the sea to reach her and mingle with her waters. The situation of Arethusa is similar to that of Daphne – both are water nymphs and want to protect their virginity by pleading to take different forms. However, while Daphne manages to escape her pursuer, Arethusa was eventually united with her lover.
24. The motif of eyes as conveyors of passion was a popular image in ancient and Byzantine novels, see for example Makrembolites’ *Hysmine and Hysminias* 7, 17.
 25. Another name for Apollo.
 26. The tripod is a well-known attribute of Pythia, the oracle of Apollo in Delphi. The verb used here together with the tripod – θεσμοφορέω – can be translated as: *die Thesmophorien feiern*¹⁷ or *to enact laws* – leges facio/νόμον τίθημι.¹⁸ Neither of these translations makes sense in this context. Also, the noun θεσμός does not mean a law of men, but rather a divine law, which approximates a prophecy. Cf. the expression: “ἀπὸ τρίποδος φημι” (lit: I speak from the tripod) meaning *to give a prophecy*, which is strongly connected with the oracle of Phoebus/Apollo.
 27. The epilogue recalls the case of the prophetess Cassandra, who also rejected Apollo. In revenge the god took away the credibility of her oracles. As the text bursts with allusions to mythological stories, it is possible to assume that here the author implies that Daphne, just as Cassandra, may not be trusted. The passage can also be read as a general conclusion that discredits the ancient art of foretelling the future.

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II.3.2 Manganeios Prodromos (c.1100–after c.1162)

Saints Theodore Teron and Stratelates Speak to Each Other on Behalf of John Machelares

ELIZABETH JEFFREYS AND MICHAEL JEFFREYS

Ed.: Elizabeth Jeffreys and Michael Jeffreys, Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems*, nos. 113 and 114. Other editions: E. Miller, “Poésies inédites de Theodore Prodrome,” *Annuaire de l’association pour l’encouragement des études grecques en France* 17 (1883), 47–48

MS.:¹ Venice, Marcianus graecus XI.22 (s. XIII ex.), ff. 85v–86r

Other Translations: Elizabeth Jeffreys and Michael Jeffreys, forthcoming

Significance

The two martial figures represented in conversation here appear together not infrequently on both panels and walls, e.g. on the tenth-century ivory Harbaville Triptych or in the fourteenth-century Kariye Camii, Istanbul.² Though weapons are mentioned, implying that the depicted figures are armed, the saints’ defense of the supplicant is metaphorical. As a unit these two epigrams present a good example of an *ethopoia* in dialog form accompanying an artwork, perhaps inscribed on the image itself or on its frame.

The Author

On Manganeios Prodromos see E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, I.3.15.

Text and Context

The cult of Theodore the Recruit (or Teron), martyred for his faith, was known from the fourth century; centered at Euchaita, it gained in popularity, with miracles and dragon-slaying added to the brief narratives of Theodore’s achievements. By the ninth century, presumably reflecting the militarization of Byzantine society, the Recruit had acquired a double, the General, with an equivalent career of martyrdom and miracles.³ The saints, distinguished by beards with a single (Recruit) or double (General) point, are usually depicted in military dress, sometimes on horseback, sometimes with a dragon.⁴ In the twelfth century images of the Theodores appeared on the coinage⁵ and in at least one im-

1 Consulted.

2 Harbaville triptych: Walter 2003, pl. 44a; Kariye Camii: Walter 2003, pl. 6.

3 Haldon 2016.

4 Walter 2003: 44–66.

5 Grierson 1982: 232.

perial portrait.⁶ Although it might be assumed that the support of the Theodores would be sought by the military, the family to which the sponsor of this dedication belonged is usually connected with the civil administration.⁷

In this pair of epigrams the younger saint calls on his homonymous senior colleague to support a man who has been shattered by his experiences; though unspecified, references to weapons suggest that these had been on the battlefield. The elder saint's response echoes his colleague's phrasing and both speakers end by accepting the need to support the suppliant. The hopes that the saints attribute to Machetarios would be for his physical safety in the present world and for his spiritual salvation in the world to come.

6 Lambros, "Ο Μαρκιανός κώδιξ 524," 43 no. 81 = *AM* B138.

7 Kazhdan and Ronchey, *L'Aristocrazia bizantina*, 367.

Text

A. Οἱ ἅγιοι Θεόδωροι ὁ Τήρων καὶ ὁ Στρατηλάτης πρὸς ἀλλήλους φασὶ ταῦτα ὑπὲρ τοῦ Μαχητάρη Ἰωάννου

Ἐξ αἱμάτων σε προσγενῆ κεκτημένος,
 ἐκ τῶν ἄθλων σύναθλον ἀθλητὴν ἔχων,
 αἰτῶ σε, ταυτόκλητε, συμπνεῦσαι πάλιν,
 δοῦναί τε συγκρότημα Μαχηταρίω,
 5 καὶ χαριτῶσαι τὴν χαριτωνυμίαν,
 ἣν ἔσχεν οὗτος ἱερῶν ἐξ ἀδύτων.
 λοιπὸν συνεμπνεύσωμεν, ὦ στρατηλάτα,
 καὶ δῶμεν αὐτῷ συμβολῆ χειρῶν στάσιν,
 ὡς μὴ κλονοῖτο τῷ κλύδωνι τοῦ βίου,
 10 ἐξ ἀντιπνοίας πραγματικῶν πνευμάτων.
 ναί, ναί, συναίρου, ταγματάρχα, συγκρότει·
 ἢ τοῦ σκάφους τρόπισ γὰρ ἐξανετράπη,
 ἐλπίς δὲ τούτῳ κατελείφθη καὶ μόνη,
 καὶ δεῖ κραταιᾶς εἰς ἔγερσιν παλάμης,
 15 ὡς ἂν κρατυνῆ καὶ πλέον τὰς ἐλπίδας
 στερρῶς πεπειθῶς καὶ τυχῶν τῆς ἐλπίδος.

B. Οἱ αὐτοὶ

Ναὶ συγκροτήσω, ναὶ συνεμπνεύσω, Τήρων,
 ναὶ συναρῶ σοι, συναμνοῦμαι ξίφει,
 ἂν τι πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀντιτείνοιτο ξίφος·
 κἂν ἢ βίου θάλαττα τὴν τρόπιν τρέπῃ,
 5 ἐξανατρέψω καὶ κρατυνῶ τὸ σκάφος·
 ἕτοιμος εἰμί, συγκατάρχου, συνέπου,
 σοῦ χάριν αὐτὸν συγχαριτώσαιμί σοι,
 καὶ συμπαραστῶ καὶ τὸ σαθρὸν ἐδράσω,
 ἀλλὰ σπάθας αἴρωμεν ἂν τεμεῖν δέον
 10 τὴν ἀγριωπὸν τῆς ἀτυχίας κάραν·
 κἂν λιψὸν φύσων, ἀλλὰ συνασπιστέον,
 ὡς μὴ στροβοῖτο τῷ στροβίλῳ τοῦ βίου·
 κἂν ἐκθορυβῆ δεινὸς ἐρπύζων δράκων,
 ἀλλ' εἰς τὸν ἐρπύζοντα βλητέον δόρυ·
 15 ἀλλ' ἐγκονῶμεν εἰς ἄμυναν ἰκέτου
 ὅλας ἀναρτήσαντος ἡμῖν ἐλπίδας.

Translation

A. Saints Theodore Teron [the Recruit] and Stratelates [the General] speak to each other as follows on behalf of Ioannes Machetares

Having become your kinsman through [the shedding of] blood¹
 and having you as a fellow athlete from the struggle,²
 I beg you, my namesake,³ to collaborate again,
 and give assistance to Machetarios,⁴
 5 and give grace to a man whose name is grace,⁵
 which he received from the holy sanctuary.⁶
 So let us together inspire him, O General,
 and give him support from our clasped hands
 so he may not be shaken by the rough water of life,⁷
 10 from the contrary blasts of the winds of events.
 Yes, yes, rise with me, officer, join in assistance,⁸
 for the keel of the vessel has been shattered,
 and this is the only hope⁹ left to him,
 and a powerful arm must be raised
 15 so that he may preserve his hopes for longer
 with sturdy faith, and achieve his hope.

B. The same

Yes, I will help him! Yes, I will inspire him with you, Teron!¹⁰
 Yes, I will support him¹¹ with you, will join the defense with my sword
 should any sword be aimed at him.
 and if the sea of life should overturn his keel¹²
 5 I shall put this to rights and preserve the vessel;
 I am ready, begin the action, follow me,
 for your sake may I join with you in giving him grace,
 and stand by him and make firm what is decayed;
 but let us raise our blades if it is necessary to cut off
 10 the wild-eyed head of misfortune,¹³
 though the south wind¹⁴ be raging, yet let us collaborate,
 so he may not be spun around in the whirlwind of life;
 though the dread crawling dragon terrifies him
 yet a spear must be thrust into the crawling creature;
 15 let us hasten to the defense of a suppliant
 who has placed all his hopes in us.

Commentary

1. On the intertwined cults and hagiographies of the two saints Theodore see, e.g., Walter 2003, esp. 44–66; Haldon 2016.
2. We have been unable to devise a satisfactory translation which reflects the triple use of the stem ἄθλ- (“athlete,” “contender”).
3. “namesake”: Theodore the General (cf. vv. 7 and 11; the “I” here is Theodore the Recruit). This word is not found in the *TLG*.
4. Most recorded members of the Machetares family were involved with the civil administration in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries (several are known from seals), but not John.⁸
5. “name is grace”: a regular circumlocution for the name John (“grace” in Hebrew).
6. The phrase “from the sanctuary” suggests that John is probably Machetares’ monastic, rather than baptismal, name.
7. The troubled water of life (Text A, vv. 9 and 12; cf. Text B, v. 4) is a metaphor used regularly by Manganeios, in connection with women as well as men, making it unlikely that this image alludes to any naval experience of John’s.
8. Cf. Text B, vv. 1–2.
9. The “only hope” left to the desperate suppliant is the support of the two Theodores.
10. The “I” here is Theodore the General, who replies to the Recruit.
11. Cf. Text A, v. 11.
12. Cf. Text A, vv. 9 and 12.
13. The Lives of both Theodores evolved to include a dragon-slaying episode.
14. In Manganeios’ vocabulary only the west wind was benign.

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⁸ Kazhdan and Ronchey, *Laristocrazia bizantina*, 367.

II.3.3 Nicholas Kallikles (fl. first quarter of the twelfth century)

The Stranger and the Tomb: Funerary Verses for Andronikos Palaiologos Doukas

LUISA ANDRIOLLO

Ed.: R. Romano, *Nicola Callicle, Carmi: Testo critico, introduzione, traduzione, commentario e lessico* (Naples, 1980), 83–85, no. 9; previous editions: L. Sternbach, *Nicolai Calliclis carmina* (Cracow, 1903), 9–10; A. M. Bandini, *Catalogum codicum manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Mediceae Laurentianae* (Florence, 1768), vol. II, col. 192–93; E. Cougny, *Epigrammatum anthologia palatina cum planudeis et appendice nova epigrammatum veterum ex libris et marmoribus* (Paris 1809), vol. III, 222

MS.:¹ Florence, BML, Plutei 32.33 (s. XIV), f. 217v

Other Translations: R. Romano, as above, 136–37 (Italian); B. Pike, in *The Greek Poets: Homer to the Present*, ed. P. Constantine, R. Hadas, E. Keeley, and K. Van Dyck (New York and London, 2010), 328–31 (English)

Significance

From a literary point of view, the text is distinguished by its dramatic character, as it combines *ethopoia* and the dialogical form in a long *stichomythia*. The epitaph was performed rather than inscribed and it alludes to literary models appreciated in Constantinopolitan circles. What is more, the epitaph for Andronikos Palaiologos Doukas voices the literary consecration of the social and political success achieved by the closest associates of the Komnenoi, such as the Doukas family. The Doukai had secured a dominant position in the empire through marriage alliances with the ruling dynasty.

The Author

See L. Andriollo, II.4.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

The epitaph, written in the form of a dialog, is the first of a series of five funerary epigrams, all in dodecasyllables, for Andronikos Palaiologos Doukas.²

¹ Consulted.

² Kallikles, *Poems* nos. 9–13.

Following the blueprint for epitaphs, as codified by Menander Rhetor (late third–early fourth century),³ the author highlights Andronikos’ good birth and provides explicit information on his family. The deceased was the son of Anna Doukaina, a granddaughter of the *kaisar* John Doukas and a sister of the empress Eirene Doukaina,⁴ and of the *sebastos* George Palaiologos, one of the most prominent generals of Alexios I Komnenos and, through his marriage, brother in law of the *basileus*.⁵ As such, Andronikos was the nephew of Alexios I and the cousin of John II. He is probably to be identified with the Andronikos Doukas *pansebastos sebastos* praetor and *doux* of Thessaloniki mentioned by an act of the Docheiariou monastery dating from 1112;⁶ he could also be identical to the *doux* of Thessaloniki whose beauty and nobility are praised in the *Timarion*.⁷ According to Kallikles’ epitaph, Andronikos died at a young age, probably shortly before 1118, preceding his parents and his wife, whose name is not known.⁸ An oration written by Manuel Straboromanos between 1108 and 1118 and addressed to Eirene Doukaina for the death of her brother, Michael Doukas, also refers briefly to a deceased nephew of the empress, who could well be identified with the Andronikos lamented by Kallikles.⁹

The “poetic dossier” composed by Kallikles for this prominent member of the Komnenian clan is transmitted in its entirety by the manuscript Laurentianus Plutei 32.33; two of the five poems (nos. 11 and 13) have also been copied as part of Kallikles’ collection of epigrams preserved in the *Anthologia Marciana*.¹⁰ Poems nos. 11–13 are short dedicatory epigrams referring to icons which, according to the titles transmitted by the manuscript tradition, are meant to be placed on the tomb; epigrams nos. 10 and 9 are both epitaphs.

Such a coherent series of poems, built around the same subject, raises questions about the mutual relations of these texts, the occasion of their composition, and their function. From the literary point of view, the poems on the death of Andronikos Palaiologos Doukas constitute an example of variations on a similar theme. Multiple funerary poems for the same individual can be found also in the works of other authors, such as Christophorer Mytilenaios and Theodore Prodromos.¹¹ This kind of poetic cycles could result from different intentions and serve various purposes: texts could be inscribed – the

3 Menander Rhetor, 172–73.

4 Polemis, *Doukai*, 34–41 (John Doukas), 70–75 (Anna Doukaina).

5 Vannier 1986: 137–41.

6 *Acts of Docheiariou monastery*, 69, l. 10; Vannier 1986: 148.

7 *Timarion*, 27–28, 55–58, transl. Baldwin, 46–48; Vannier 1986: 147. On the description of the *doux* in the *Timarion* see also Alexiou 1982: 36–40.

8 Polemis (*Doukai*, 154–55) and Romano (Kallikles, *Poems*, 169–70) have suggested that Andronikos might have married a daughter of Zoe Doukaina and had a progeny; however, Kallikles’ epitaph is silent about Andronikos’ children.

9 Gautier 1965: 170–71, 195 n. 3; Vannier 1986: 148–49.

10 Kallikles, *Poems*, 45, 86, 88. Epigram no. 10 is also transmitted in MS. Göttingen, Niedersächsische Staats- und UB, Phil. gr. 29 (s. XIII–XIV).

11 Mytilenaios, *Poems*, 51–55 (nos. 57–60: funerary poems for Christopher’s mother), 68–74 (nos. 75–77: funerary poems for his sister Anastaso); Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 435–43 (nos. 48–51 funerary epigrams for Stephanos Kontostephanos). A particular case is represented by multiple imperial epitaphs: see the funerary poems for the emperor John II Komnenos written by Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 335–41 and 344–47 (nos. 25–26 and 28–29). Kallikles, *Poems*, 112–16, no. 31, also composed an epitaph for John II when he was still living.

presence of several inscriptions on the same funerary monument being also attested in the middle and late Byzantine period¹² – or performed, possibly at different moments.¹³ Several versions of a similar text could also be presented to a commissioner, who eventually chose the one (or the ones) that he/she preferred.¹⁴ In all cases, these poetic ensembles provided proof of the author's versatility and literary skills.

Among Kallikles' poems for Andronikos Palaiologos Doukas, epigrams nos. 11–13 could have been actually inscribed, in view of their relative brevity and of their allusion to the burial context. The relation between the two epitaphs is more problematic. Epigram no. 10 is relatively short (15 vv.) and could conform with the size of a funerary inscription, although no conclusive evidence confirms such a destination. It opens with a *climax* inspired by Gregory of Nazianzos,¹⁵ then it gives voice to the parents of Andronikos, who address the deceased with a last farewell in the second person.¹⁶ On the contrary, epigram no. 9 is quite long (38 vv.): it stages a discussion between an imaginary beholder (ὁ ξένος) and Andronikos' tomb – a funerary monument that, as the text suggests, was also to receive the remains of Andronikos' parents.

The text combines the use of the dialog with the literary devices of personification and *ethopoia*: by doing so, Kallikles varies and adds liveliness to traditional rhetorical structures. In fact, epitaphs in the form of a dialog are known in ancient and early Byzantine literature, with a number of similar examples to be found in the *Anthologia Palatina*.¹⁷ In tenth-century Byzantium this structure was adapted by John Geometres in his epitaph for the emperor John Tzimiskes, a text that Kallikles might have had in mind while penning these verses.¹⁸ But, while Geometres' text consisted of a long monolog, addressed by the dead emperor to an imaginary interlocutor, Kallikles' epitaph has a further dramatic character, as it employs the form of *stichomythia*. Hardly any equivalents of this rhetorical technique can be found in middle-Byzantine funerary epigrams¹⁹, whereas it is employed in contemporary novels, such as in Theodore Prodromos' *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*.²⁰ Although the existence of very long inscriptions is attested, a dramatic rhetorical piece like

12 Mango, "Sépultres et épitaphes," 103–07. Epigraphs could be found on the sides and the on the top of the sarcophagus (the existence of long inscriptions occupying several plates being also possible), in the niche where the tomb was located, and on the icons decorating the burial place.

13 On tomb epigrams see also chapter II.7 (esp. p. 1521–35).

13 Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 115–16.

14 This could be the case for cycles of imperial epitaphs.

15 PG 37, col. 789 (no. 21).

16 On epitaphs in the second person, see Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 218–21.

17 Hunger, *Literatur*, II, 107; *Anthologia Palatina* VII: 115, 307, 470, 524, 551.

18 See v. 26 and the Commentary, n. 8.

19 In an epitaph for the *pantebastos* Constantine Kamytzes, Theodore Prodromos also alternates the voices of the grave and of the passer-by, but in a far less pressing way (Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 497–98, no. 64). Closer to the model set by Kallikles is a later epigram by Manuel Holobolos (second half of the thirteenth century), devoted to Constantine Malesianos; in this case, the dialog is between a φίλος and the customary ξένος: Treu [1896]: 550–51. For other examples of dialogic epitaph in Byzantine literature see Hunger, *Literatur*, II, 146.

20 Agapitos 1998: 155; ed. F. Conca, 244–46.

epitaph no. 9 would have been more suited for oral performance – possibly during ritual commemoration for deceased members of the Doukas family.

Through the exchange of questions and answers, the author gradually reveals the identity of the deceased to the reader and sketches a literary portrait of Andronikos, thus giving a pathetic treatment of the monody's traditional *topoi*.²¹ Kallikles praises Andronikos' *eugeneia*, his physical grace, his eloquence, his force, and his courage; finally, he evokes the circumstances of his death. Despite its conventional character, this encomiastic description echoes social interests of its time: the importance attached to family ties and to good birth is most remarkable. Family prestige is further emphasized by a direct reference to the "ancient Doukai," in line with the official genealogy of the Doukas family promoted by court rhetoric.²²

Roberto Romano, the latest editor of Kallikles' poems, has also highlighted the function of this text as a source of inspiration for later Byzantine authors, and particularly for Niketas Eugenianos.²³

21 Menander Rhetor, 172–75.

22 See the Commentary, n. 7.

23 Kallikles, *Poems*, 24–25 and 84–85 (apparatus).

Text

Τοῦ σοφωτάτου διδασκάλου τῶν ἰατρῶν κυροῦ Νικολάου τοῦ Καλικλέως ἐπιτύμβιοι ἴαμβοι. Τὰ πρόσωπα· ξένος καὶ τύμβος

- Ξ. Μέγαν ὀρῶ σε, τύμβε. Τ. μὴ πλανῶ, ξένε·
 τρισσοὶ μένουσιν ἔνδον. Ξ. εἶπέ καὶ τίνες.
 Τ. μήτηρ, πατήρ καὶ τέκνον. Ξ. ἔμπικρος λόγος.
 γένος τὸ μητρὸς οἶον; Τ. ἐκ Δουκῶν, ξένε.
- 5 Ξ. φῆς τὴν σεβαστὴν Ἄννα; Τ. αὐτὴν σοι λέγω.
 Ξ. ναὶ καὶ τὸ πατρὸς φράζει; Τ. Παλαιολόγος.
 Ξ. Γεώργιον, φεῦ, τὸν σεβαστόν μοι λέγεις.
 εἰπεῖν ἔχεις τὸν παῖδα; Τ. γνούς, φεῦ, δακρύσεις.
 Ξ. ἄρ' ἠλιῶσαν εἶχεν ἢ χρυσὴν κόμην;
- 10 Τ. χρυσὴν. Ξ. ἐκυματοῦτο πρὸς τὸν αὐχένα;
 Τ. ναὶ τῷ Ζεφύρῳ παραπνέοντι πολλάκις.
 Ξ. ἔστησας ἡμῖν πᾶσαν ὀρθὴν τὴν τρίχα.
 Τ. ἂν γνῶς τὰ λοιπά. Ξ. φράζε πρὸς τοῦ κειμένου!
 τὸ βλέμμα τούτου ποῖον; Τ. ὡς τόξου δόναξ.
- 15 Ξ. ἔπληττε πρὸς τὰ στέρνα; Τ. ναὶ τὴν κάρδιαν.
 Ξ. μὴ πικρὸν ἦν τὸ τραῦμα; Τ. γλυκάζον, ξένε.
 Ξ. τὸ χρῶμα τούτῳ ποῖον; Τ. ὀφθαλμοῦ δρόσος,
 ὡς γάλα λευκός, ἐξέρυθρος ὡς ῥόδον.
 Ξ. πρόσθες τὸ λεῖπον. Τ. πρόσχες ἐξηγουμένω.
- 20 Ξ. τὰ ρεῖθρα τούτῳ πῶς ἐχεῖτο τοῦ λόγου;
 Τ. ὡς ὄμβρος ἡδύς, ὥσπερ αἰθρία δρόσος.
 Ξ. ποταπὸς ἦν τὰ στέρνα; Τ. σιδηροῦς, ξένε.
 Ξ. ὁποῖος ἦν τὰς χεῖρας; Τ. ἀρχαῖος Δοῦκας,
 ὡς Ἀνδρόνικος ἄλλος ἢ Κωνσταντῖνος.
- 25 Ξ. ἐς ἀνδρὸς οὗτος ἦλθεν ἐντελῆ χρόνον;
 Τ. Ἰουλος οὐπω τὴν γένυν ἐζωγράφει.
 Ξ. πῶς ἦν ἀριστεύς καὶ πρὸ τῆς ἡλικίας;
 Τ. ἐκ τῶν λεόντων τίκτεται βρέφος λέων.
 Ξ. ἦδη νοῶ τὸν παῖδα. Τ. καὶ τίς ἦν; λέγε!
- 30 Ξ. σεβαστὸς Ἀνδρόνικος ἐκ Δουκῶν γένους.
 Τ. αὐτὸν λέγεις ἐκεῖνον. Ξ. ᾧ θνήσκει τρόπῳ;
 Τ. ἐκ συγκοπῆς. Ξ. ἄφυκτα, φεῦ, τὰ τῆς νόσου.
 μὴ καὶ πρὸ πατρὸς οὗτος ἦλθεν ἐς τάφον;
 Τ. ναὶ καὶ πρὸ μητρὸς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς συζύγου.
- 35 Ξ. οἰκτρὸν λέγεις τὸ πρᾶγμα· πλὴν σώζοιτό μοι
 γῆν πραέων ὡς κλῆρον εἰσδεδεγμένοι.
 Τ. καὶ σέ, ξένε, θρηνοῦντα νεκροὺς τοὺς φίλους
 κατιθύναι τὸ Θεῖον εἰς σωτηρίαν.

Translation

Funerary iambs by the most wise *didaskalos ton iatron*,¹ Nicholas Kallikles. Characters: the Stranger (S) and the Tomb (T).

- S. I see (that) you (are) great, Tomb. T. Do not be misled,² Stranger: three (people) are in here. S. Tell me who (they are).
 T. Mother, father and son. S. Bitter words.
 What (is) the lineage of the mother? T. [She descends] from the Doukai, Stranger.
 5 S. Do you mean the *sebaste* Anna? T. She is the one I am telling you about.
 S. And tell me, what is the (family) of his father? T. (He is) a Palaiologos.
 S. Alas, you are talking about George, the *sebastos*.
 Shall you tell me about the son? T. Alas, once you know, you will cry.
 S. Was his hair as bright as the sun or like gold?³
 10 T. (It was) golden. S. Did it flutter in waves on his neck?⁴
 T. Yes, often, when the Zephyr blew beside him.
 S. You made all my hair stand on end.⁵
 T. If you knew the rest! S. Tell me, in the name of the one who lies here!
 How was his gaze? T. [Sharp] like the shaft of an arrow.
 15 S. Did it strike at the chest? T. Yes, [directly] the heart.
 S. Was the wound bitter? T. It was sweet, Stranger.
 S. What was his complexion? T. A dew for the eye, as white as milk, red as a rose.
 S. Tell the rest. T. Pay attention to my words.
 20 S. How were the streams of his eloquence?
 T. Like sweet rain, like clear dew.⁶
 S. How was he in his chest? T. [Made] of iron, Stranger.
 S. And how in his arms? T. An ancient Doukas, another Andronikos or a Constantine.⁷
 25 S. Did he reach full manhood?
 T. The first beard had not colored his cheek, yet.⁸
 S. How brave was he, even before the age?
 T. From lions comes a lion's whelp.
 S. Now I recognize the son. T. And who was he? Speak!
 30 S. The *sebastos* Andronikos, of the Doukas family.
 T. He is the one you are talking about. S. How did he die?
 T. Of a syncope.⁹ S. Alas, no one can escape this illness.
 Did he enter the tomb before his father?
 T. Yes, and before his mother, and his wife, too.
 35 S. What you say is sad; but may they obtain salvation, and receive their share in the land of the meek.¹⁰
 T. May God also lead you to salvation, Stranger, you who lament the deceased dear ones.¹¹

Commentary

1. Nicholas Kallikles is presented as a respected medical doctor in a number of contemporary sources.²⁴ The title *didaskalos ton iatron* implies that he was in charge of the official teaching of medicine; in the 1120s Kallikles had already been replaced, since this position was held by Michael Italikos, who was appointed by the empress Eirene Doukaina.²⁵ The existence of a body of *didaskaloi* depending on the Patriarchal School is well attested throughout the twelfth century. At the top of its hierarchy stood three *didaskaloi* in charge of the theological teaching; a number of subordinate teachers provided education in both religious and secular disciplines, including medicine. Apparently, the theological teaching was imparted in St. Sophia, while instruction in medicine could have been given in the church of the Holy Apostles; a medical school seems to have been located also in the complex of the Pantokrator monastery, which included a hospital.²⁶
2. See Sap. 9:7.
3. In the Greek text the opposition between ἡλιῶσα and χρυσῆ (referring to κόμη) is unclear, since the two terms usually complement each other. Previous translators have rendered ἡλιῶσα (κόμη) as “silver.”²⁷ However, this is not the usual meaning of the participle of ἡλιάω: it denotes something as clear and shiny as the sun, and it is often associated with the term κόμη and with other adjectives indicating colors and hues for describing blond or reddish hair.²⁸ To understand the special meaning of the term in our poem, a reference in the eleventh-century pseudo-Lucianic dialog *Timarion* might be helpful. After pronouncing the noble ancestry of the doux of Thessaloniki, the main character of the dialog praises the physical beauty of the officer. The hair of the doux is said to be neither black nor fair blond, since none of the two is good enough for him; but instead they have a particular color that comprizes both (light brown or golden brown, as it seems).²⁹ The details concerning the color of the hair, a recurring motif in both the pseudo-Lucianic dialog and in Kallikles’ poem, could support the identification of the doux mentioned in *Timarion* with the young deceased lamented in our epitaph, and possibly the attribution of both texts to the same author.³⁰
4. Cf. the description of Charicleia in Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, III, 4. Hellenistic novels were indeed popular in eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantium. The literary merits of Heliodorus in particular were praised by Psellos in a literary essay comparing

²⁴ See p. 1303–04, below.

²⁵ Gautier 1949: 44; Browning, “The Patriarchal School,” p. 195; Michael Italikos, *Letters*, ed. Gautier, 97–98 (no. 5), 209 (no. 33).

²⁶ Kallikles, *Poems*, 14; Gautier 1949: 43ff.; Browning, “The Patriarchal School,” 170–78 *passim*.

²⁷ B. Pike, in *The Greek Poets*, ed. P. Constantine *et al.*, 328; “chioma d’argento,” Kallikles, *Poems*, 136.

²⁸ See *Carmina Anacreontea*, 14, no. 17(16B), vv. 3–5; Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, III, 4.5, ed. Rattenbury and Lumb, 103; Psellos, *Chronography*, VI, 126, Reinsch, 164, transl. Sewter, 165; Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, IV, 6.8, Reinsch, 135, transl. Sewter and Frankopan, 123.

²⁹ “For jet black is rough and unlovable, whilst pure blonde is womanly and effeminate,” *Timarion*, 58, l. 262–63, transl. Baldwin, 48; Alexiou 1982: 42.

³⁰ See p. 1304, below.

the works of the same Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius.³¹ Also, the Komnenian court found in Hellenistic literature further inspiration for the development of Byzantine novels.³²

5. The same description of physical reactions following the sense of fear appears already in Classical Antiquity: see, for instance, the use of the adjective ὀρθόθριξ referred to Phobos, the divine personification of fear, in Aeschylus.³³
6. Cf. the beginning of the song that Moses taught to the people of Israel before he ascended Mount Nebo and saw the Land of Israel, in Deut. 32:2. This biblical allusion implies that Andronikos' eloquence was not limited to ancient rhetoricians, but it also included Christian eloquence.
7. The names Andronikos and Constantine were characteristic of the Doukas family and regularly transmitted from grandfather to grandson. In the eleventh century two prominent members of the family bore these names, the emperor Constantine X Doukas (r.1059–67) and his nephew Andronikos; the latter was the father of the empress Eirene Doukaina and the grandfather of Andronikos Palaiologos Doukas, lamented here. But the “ancient Doukas” to whom Kallikles refers were certainly those of the tenth century, whose endeavors were celebrated by chronicles and poems.³⁴ Andronikos Doukas was *domestikos ton Scholon*³⁵ under Leo VI; as a brilliant military commander, he distinguished himself in the fight against the Arabs in eastern Asia Minor.³⁶ In 906/907, due to the intrigues of the *parakoimomenos*³⁷ Samonas and maybe to Andronikos' own rebellion, he was forced to flee with his whole family into the Caliphate. After Andronikos' death in Baghdad, his son Constantine³⁸ accepted the pardon of Leo VI and, after an adventurous journey, eventually returned to Byzantium (probably around 908). At the time of the death of Leo VI (912) and of his brother Alexander (913), Constantine Doukas held the function of *domestikos ton Scholon*, as his father had before him; in 913 he led an unsuccessful usurpation attempt, the repression of which resulted in the massacre of his entire household.

The exact relation between the eleventh-century Doukai and the glorious military lineage of the early-tenth century remains in fact unclear. The family of the emperor Constantine X could have descended from the famous Doukai through the female line; the Doukai could also have made false claims of an illustrious ancestry to

31 Psellos, *Essays*; see also Agapitos 1998; Cupane 2004: 409–14; Nilsson 2014: 48–57.

32 Cupane 2004: 414–29; Nilsson 2014: 57–86. See K. Stewart, I.8.12 in this volume.

33 Aeschylus, *Choephoroe*, v. 32; see also Aelius Aristides, *Ἱερῶν λόγος β'*, ed. Dindorf (Leipzig, 1829), vol. 1, p. 474, l. 1: in Aristides, the *τριχῆς ὀρθοί* are the effect of a fearsome dream.

34 Polemis, *Doukai*, 12–15; Andriollo 2017: 277–78.

35 This officers was originally the commander of the Scholai, the most important *tagma* (regiment) of the central army, traditionally billeted around Constantinople. In the tenth century the *domestikos ton Scholon* was the commander in chief of the whole Byzantine army (cf. *ODB*, 647–48).

36 *PmbZ* II no. 20405.

37 Guardian of the imperial bedchambers. This function was usually performed by eunuchs, although significant exceptions are known. The holders of this position usually enjoyed enormous influence, as a result of their intimacy with the emperor (*ODB*, 1584).

38 *PmbZ* II no. 23817.

ennobling themselves and supporting their imperial ambitions. The reconstruction of (often faked) genealogies tracing roots to illustrious tenth-century families indeed became a source of legitimacy in late eleventh-century Byzantine political discourse. Thus, Michael Attaleiates connected the emperor Nikephoros Botaneiates (r.1078–81) to the Phokas family, whose origins he traced back to the ancient Roman Republic.³⁹ The Doukai, for their part, drew on the popularity of those who bore the same name in earlier centuries: their glorious lineage was celebrated, among others, by Anna Komnene and by the anonymous author of the preface to Nikephoros Bryennios' *History*.⁴⁰ In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the remembrance of the ancient Doukai was generally amplified in literature. A prominent role was kept for the Doukai in the epic of Digenis Akrites, as they are counted among the close relatives of the greatest Byzantine epic hero.⁴¹ Kallikles' poem explicitly voices the official genealogy promoted in the court milieu and uses it as an encomiastic motif.

8. Cf. the epitaph for John I Tzimiskes (r.969–976) by John Geometres.⁴² The use of the verb ζωγραφέω (“to paint,” v. 26) to describe a beard framing the face, is remarkable. The term ζωγράφος also appears in Kallikles' *corpus* of epigrams, with reference to the actual artist (Kallikles, *Poems*, no. 19, v. 6) or to the poet as a “strange painter,” competing with visual art and using words in the place of colors (no. 30, v. 3).
9. The term “syncope” refers to a cardiac arrest. According to Galen, cardiac syncope could result from complications of fever or from a pathological condition of the stomach, which affected the heart by sympathy.⁴³
10. The use of this circumlocution to indicate Paradise and eternal life is recurrent in Kallikles' poems: compare with Kallikles, *Poems*, nos. 1, v. 16; 10, v. 15; 20, v. 57; 31, v. 126.
11. Such a good wish addressed to the imaginary interlocutor and, more generally, to any potential reader of the epitaph is unusual. It could be appropriated in a text read or performed during family commemorations or inscribed in a private burial site, as it draws together the living and past members of the family, associating them in the prayer for their ultimate salvation.

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³⁹ Michael Attaleiates, *History*, 167ff. transl. Kaldellis and Krallis, 395–97.

⁴⁰ Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, III, 3.3, 94, transl. Sewter and Frankopan, 85; Nikephoros Bryennios, *History*, 66–69. The genealogy of the Doukai is praised in similar terms also in the *Timarion*, see n. 7).

⁴¹ Grégoire 1933: 48–58; Polemis, *Doukai*, 14–15; Magdalino 1993: 1–14; Beaton 1996: 329–38; Odorico 2002: 41–51.

⁴² Ed. Cramer 1841: 267, v. 33–268, v. 1–2; see also the new edition by Tomadaki (2014), 46–49 no. 3.

⁴³ Papavramidou and Tziakas 2010: 242–44.

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II.3.4 Theodore Prodromos (c.1100–1160)

On the Image of *Vios*

NIKOS ZAGKLAS

Ed.: Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 382 no. 16

MSS.:¹ Bern, Burgerbibliothek, 48 B (s. XIV–XV), ff. 141v–144v²

Bucharest, Bibliotheca Academiei Române, gr. 601 (Litzica 407) (s. XV–XVI), ff. 352r–353r³

Budapest, Philippos Tialos 3 (s. XVIII), ff. 190v–191r⁴

Heidelberg, Palat. gr. 43 (s. XIII), f. 90r⁵

Istanbul, Γραφεῖα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας Παναγίας τῶν Εἰσοδίων, 32 (s. XVIII), p. 24⁶

Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, gr. 306 (s. XVI), f. 61⁷

Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, II D 4 (s. XIII), f. 91v⁸

Paris, BnF gr. 3058 (s. XVI), ff. 35r–v⁹

St. Petersburg, RNB, AN RAIK 181, (s. XVIII), ff. 89r–89v¹⁰

Turin, Biblioteca Civica, Roveretinus 28 Rovereto (s. XIII–XIV), f. 119v¹¹

Vatican, BAV, Graecus 207 (s. XIII), f. 1v¹²

Vatican, BAV, Graecus 305 (s. XIII), ff. 109r–109v¹³

Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus Z 436 (coll. 314) (s. XIII), f. 2v¹⁴

Vienna, ÖNB, Suppl. gr. 125 (s. XIII), f. 4v¹⁵

Other Translations: None

Significance

An epigram with ethopoietic qualities meant to be inscribed next to a depiction of *Vios*. It is also an example of a text by a well-known poet that was re-used for a post-Byzantine depiction.

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¹ Consulted.

² For the manuscript see Omont 1886: 420–21

³ For the manuscript see Litzica 1909: 285–89.

⁴ For the manuscript see Lambros, “Ο Μαρκεσιανὸς κῶδιξ 524,” 78–79.

⁵ For the manuscript see Stevenson 1885: 23; Agapitos 2000: 173–74.

⁶ For the manuscript see Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1909: 72.

⁷ For the manuscript see Hardt 1806: II 241–44.

⁸ For the manuscript see Formentin 1995: II 5–10; cf. De Groote 2012: XXXIX.

⁹ For the manuscript see Omont 1888: 101; Agiotis 2013: 3.

¹⁰ For the manuscript see Lebedeva 1973: 156–58.

¹¹ For the manuscript see Mazzucchi 2009: 411–23.

¹² For the manuscript see Mercati and Cavalieri 1923: 249–54.

¹³ For the manuscript see Mercati and Cavalieri 1923: 443–50; Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 137–45.

¹⁴ For the manuscript see Mioni 1985: II 205–07.

¹⁵ For the manuscript see Hunger 1994: 212–14.

The Author

On Theodore Prodromos see E. Jeffreys, I.7.6

Text and Context

The poem was written for an image of *Vios* which in Byzantine times is to be identified with the representation of *Kairos* by Lysippus.¹⁶ This identification is corroborated by a number of Byzantine and post-Byzantine depictions of *Vios* which are still extant.¹⁷ In Prodromos' poem, *Vios* is portrayed with winged and wheeled feet and with scales in his hand. However, in twelfth-century Byzantium there seems to have been a debate about the representation of *Vios* and whether Lysippus' *Kairos* should be identified with *Vios* or *Chronos*.¹⁸

The poem is essentially an *ethopoia*, which can be divided into the following two parts: (a) vv. 1–10 and (b) vv. 11–19. In the first part the potential viewer is advised not to yield to indolence and pleasure because the current situation of his life can rapidly deteriorate. Even if he manages to clutch *Vios*' hair, he should bear in mind that he holds something intangible (a shadow, a blast of wind, a dream, etc.). V. 11 is a duplication of the opening verse and signifies a shift in terms of content. Now *Vios* urges the viewer who did not manage to take hold of his hair not to give up all his hopes, since things can change in his favor.

Quite a few Byzantine poems written for representations of *Vios* survive, especially from Prodromos' time onwards. There is a poem by Manganeios Prodromos entitled "On *Vios* and the world,"¹⁹ a hexametric poem by Euthymios Tornikios,²⁰ and an epigram by Manuel Philes with the title "On a naked lad representing the image of *Vios*."²¹ In addition to these examples, the sixteenth-century manuscript Munich, Monacensis gr. 306 transmits, along with Prodromos' poem on *Vios*, an anonymous poem on the same subject (ff. 62r–v).²²

Despite the fact that the epigram has not been preserved *in situ*, the first ten verses were later used as an inscription in the post-Byzantine period. They are found next to an image in the narthex of the Byzantine church of Panagia Krina on the island of Chios.²³

16 Muñoz 1906: 130–45; on *Kairos*, see also Greco 1940: 147–54; see also. Cupane 1979: 109–20.

17 See Bouras 1966 (1967): 29–30.

18 Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 385–86; Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia*, 154.

19 See E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, I.3.15 in this volume.

20 For the text see Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1913: 201.

21 Manuel Philes, *Poems* I no. LXVII; for this poem see Klementa 2001: 211.

22 For the text see Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 387.

23 Bouras 1966 (1967): 26–34.

Text

Εἰς εἰκονισμένον τὸν βίον

- Ἐμέ τὸν βίον, ἄνθρωπε, δέξαι σου παραινέτην·
 ἔτυχες, εὖρες, ἔλαβες, κατέσχες μου τὰς τρίχας;
 μὴ πρὸς ῥαστώνην ἐκδοθῆς, μὴ πρὸς τρυφήν χωρήσης,
 μὴ δὲ φρονήσης ὑψηλὰ καὶ πέρα τοῦ μετρίου.
- 5 γυμνὸν με βλέπεις· νόησον γυμνὸν μου καὶ τὸ τέλος.
 ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας μου τροχοί· φρίττε μὴ κυλισθῶσι.
 περὶ τὰς κνήμας μου πτερὰ· φεύγω, παρίπταμαί σε,
 ζυγὰ κατέχω τῇ χειρί· φοβοῦ τὰς μετακλίσεις.
 τί με κρατεῖς; σκιὰν κρατεῖς· πνοὴν κρατεῖς ἀνέμου.
- 10 τί με κρατεῖς; καπνὸν κρατεῖς, ὄνειρον, ἴχνος πλοίου.
 ἐμέ τὸν βίον, ἄνθρωπε, δέξαι σου παραινέτην.
 οὐκ ἔτυχες, οὐκ ἔλαβες, οὐκ ἔσχες μου τὰς τρίχας;
 μὴ σκυθρωπάσης τοῦ λοιποῦ, μὴ δὲ δυσελπιστήσης.
 γυμνὸς εἰμί, καὶ τῶν χειρῶν ἐξολισθήσας τούτων,
- 15 ἴσως μεταρρηήσομαι πρὸς σὲ καὶ μεταπέσω·
 ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας μου τροχοί· τάχα σοι κυλισθῶσι.
 περὶ τὰς κνήμας μου πτερὰ· τρέχω, προσίπταμαί σοι.
 ζυγὰ κατέχω· τάχα σοι τὴν πλάστιγγα χαλάσω.
 μὴ τοίνυν ἀποπροσποιοῦ τὰς ἀγαθὰς ἐλπίδας.

TranslationOn the Image of *Vios*

Man, receive me, *Vios*, as your advisor!¹
 Did you hit upon, find, hold, seize my hair?
 Do not give way to idleness, do not yield to pleasure,²
 do not exult beyond measure!³
 5 You see me naked;⁴ bear in mind that my end is naked too.
 Wheels beneath my feet. Shudder if they roll on!
 Wings around my calves. I flee, I fly away from you.
 I hold the balance scales in my hand. Be afraid of [its] volatility!
 Why do you hold on to me? You hold a shadow; you hold a blast of wind.
 10 Why do you hold on to me?⁵ You hold smoke, a dream, a ship's trace.⁶
 Man, receive me, *Vios*, as your advisor!
 Did you fail to hit upon, hold, seize my hairs?
 Do not look sullen for the remains of life, do not lose your hope.
 I am naked, and, having escaped from these hands,
 15 perhaps I will change from one side to the other and tip the balance in favor
 of you.
 Wheels beneath my feet; perhaps they will roll for you.
 Wings around my calves; I run, I fly to you.
 I am holding scales; perhaps I will loosen the scale of balance.
 So, do not discard these good hopes!

Commentary

1. The same phrasing can be found in the sixth verse of a ring epigram written by Manuel Philes.²⁴
2. The addressee/viewer is advised not to give in to *Tryphe*. It is interesting to note that *Vios* is often to be found together with *Tryphe* in surviving representations.²⁵
3. Cf. Rom. 11:20: μή ὑψηλὰ φρόνει, ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ.
4. For the concept of nudity in Byzantium see A. Cutler and A. Kazhdan, in *ODB*, s.v. “nude, the”; Zeitler 1999: 185–91; Maguire and Maguire, *Other Icons*, 97ff. Nudity seems to be closely linked to death in Prodromos’ work. For example, in book six of his novel *Rhodanthe and Dosicles*, Dosicles envisages Rhodanthe naked after her alleged death during a sea storm.²⁶
5. The same idea occurs in Konstantinos Manasses’ novel *Aristandros and Kallithea* 160:²⁷

Ἵς ἄρα βέβαιον οὐδέεν, οὐ στάσιμον ἀνθρώποις,
ἀλλὰ καπνὸς τὰ τῶν θνητῶν, ἀλλὰ σκιά τὰ πάντα.

Nothing is certain, nothing is stable for mankind
But mortals’ affairs are like smoke, all is a shadow

6. ἶχνος πλοίου: Prodromos seems to have borrowed this word combination from the *Sacra Parallela* (PG 95: 1124.43), a work ascribed to John of Damascus.²⁸

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24 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, par. no. 168, v. 6, ed. Miller, II, 192.

25 Klementa 2001: 210.

26 Ed. Marcovich 1991: VI, 494.

27 Ed. Mazal 1967; transl. E. Jeffreys, *Byzantine Novels*, 330 (see also the note: “the variation on the theme that mankind’s life is the shadow of smoke”; cf. Sophocles, *Antigone* 1170, *Philoktetes* 946).

28 Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 384.

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II.4 Instructing and Dedicating: Epigrams on Works of Art

Introduction

FOTEINI SPINGOU

The word “epigram” is included in approximately half of the chapters in this volume. Nonetheless, the term is difficult to define. As scholars have repeatedly pointed out, modern definitions of what an epigram is do not do justice to Byzantine understandings of this textual form. For example, a Byzantine epigram is neither brief (in fact it can extend for hundreds of verses), nor does it have a witty turn at its end (although that can be an option).¹ Furthermore, the Byzantine epigram has little relevance to its famous cousin, the Hellenistic epigram, given that the latter is often written for a fictitious object or occasion. A Byzantine epigram, because of its function, also differs from inscriptions: an epigram was not necessarily composed to be inscribed, but it could well have been performed next to the object. Furthermore, a Byzantine epigram is not an *ekphrasis*. It does not reveal aesthetic reactions through evocative description, but it does instruct the reader how to view or understand a work of art and so it complements the image.²

So, what is a Byzantine epigram? In brief, it can be defined as a metrical text associated with an extant or potentially extant object or an occasion by means of epigraphical activity or performance. If it becomes manifest as an inscription, then its traces are immediately attached to the object. If it is performed, for example, in a rhetorical gathering (a *theatron*), the epigram becomes a focal point, an organic part of the object or the occasion with which it is associated. Epigrams can be divided into five groups:³

- (a) *Epigrams on works of art* (sub-divided into dedicatory and non-dedicatory epigrams on works of art): such texts are discussed in this chapter.
- (b) *Book epigrams*: to be discussed in detail in II.5 in this volume.
- (c) *Tomb epigrams*: these are discussed in II.7 in this volume.
- (d) *Gnomic epigrams*: these are not necessarily related to an object and thus are not discussed in this volume: they are sayings or advice in metrical form that prescribe how someone is supposed to behave.⁴
- (e) *Letter epigrams or Verse letters*: such metrical texts were sent as letters to prompt the recipient’s response. This type of epigram has only started to be explored and much

1 See also Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 20–24.

2 This point is relevant to all the epigrams included in this section; on the complementary role of an epigram see, e.g., the inscription from the south bema tier in the Chapel of Koutsovendis monastery in A. W. Carr, II.4.10 in this volume.

3 Here I expand the classification suggested by Marc Lauxtermann to include also the *Verse letters*.

4 Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 241.

remains to be done. Byzantine letters only rarely contain essential information on the daily doings of a person, as such information was provided by the messenger. Instead, the main property of a verse letter or a letter epigram was to transform the paper or the parchment into a gift of words for the recipient. Their metrical form, usually dodecasyllables, their structure, and their survival exclusively in collections of poetry confirm their affinity with other kinds of epigrammatic poetry.



Fig. II.4 Fragmentary woodcarving with images from Christ's baptism and the Ascension, originally coming from a box-shaped object (a cross base?); a further fragment of the same object is to be found in the Hermitage. 24.1 x 7.6 x 2.7 cm, variously dated to between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries. The Walters Art Museum, inv. no. 61.115

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Epigrams on works of art are the most prevalent group in the epigrammatic corpus. They first attracted the philological attention of Athanasios Kominis in 1966. Nearly ten years later, Wolfgran Hörandner published the “Historical poems” of the most prolific twelfth-century poet, Theodore Prodromos.⁵ The term “historical poems” indicates that Prodromos’ poetry referred to events and/or extant persons and the edition includes a number of previously unknown epigrams. In the decades to come, Hörandner published a number of studies on poetry that advanced the field greatly.⁶ A few years later, Henry Maguire introduced the potential of the study of the Byzantine epigram on works of art to his fellow art historians.⁷ The study of the Byzantine epigram was placed on new foundations after the publication of Marc Lauxtermann’s book in 2003. Lauxtermann explores the Byzantine epigram in its historical, cultural, and literary context and not merely as a literary product or as a source of information about the appearance of objects. He formalized the term *epigrams on works of art*, which he defined as “a genre in its own right and with its own formal characteristics.”⁸ For Lauxtermann, the term indicates “a kind of poetry that aims to express forms of visual imagination and to render in words mental perceptions of the visible.”⁹ A number of articles followed Lauxtermann’s publication. Importantly, the discussion of what a Byzantine epigram has continued with a multi-volume publication of the corpus of inscribed epigrams by Andreas Rhoby. The monumental publication, based on (but greatly expanding) a corpus collected by Hörandner, includes German translation and commentary for all epigrams, as well as detailed introductions that demonstrate Rhoby’s developing thinking on what an inscribed epigram is, and its relation to the object.¹⁰ In 2016, Ivan Drpić, in his book dedicated to *Epigram, Art, and Devotion in Later Byzantium* proposed that epigrams on works of art functioned as a *kosmos* accompanying an object. In his analysis, the word *kosmos* suggests not “a simple, unproblematic decoration . . . [but] a dynamic entity capable of amplifying, inflecting, and even altering the object.”¹¹ Even so, the epigram for Drpić is an addition to the object, one that enhances the response invited by the object and that can transform it into a devotional artifact. My proposal is that epigram and object should be considered as a single entity, a single artefact,¹² as both text and image were often planned together by a single patron. In turn, as will be argued below, this composite artefact, especially if its creation was related to gift-giving, could initiate social and religious rituals.

As discussed in the General Introduction to this volume, the production of epigrams on works of art increased impressively in Later Byzantium.¹³ As a genre, it had existed

5 Hörandner 1974.

6 See Hörandner 1987, 1991, 1992, 1994, 2001, 2003, 2017.

7 Esp. Maguire, *Image and Imagination*.

8 Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 152.

9 Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 152.

10 References to this interaction are found in the introduction of his books and the analysis of the corpus see, e.g., *BEIÜ* 2: 38–39, with further references.

11 Drpić, *Epigram, Art and Devotion*, 398.

12 See, e.g., Spingou 2017, esp. 55–58.

13 See p. xliv–xlv, in Part I.

since its rediscovery in the ninth century.¹⁴ Standardization (to some degree) and high demand from an elite that was distinguished by an intense interest in education and the promotion of the individual allowed such texts to come into vogue in the period in question. That changed again in the second quarter of the fourteenth century, after which no major epigrammatist can be identified.

Byzantine theorists of rhetoric had never defined epigrams on works of art by a single term. Still, such texts reveal a series of formal characteristics that invoke their primary function, that is to assure the proper perception and interpretation of an object. For example, the playful epigrams by Kallikles on a marble sculpture of St. George¹⁵ interpret the whiteness of the material, while the twelve epigrams on the depictions of the twelve Christological feasts by Gregory of Corinth are a verbal commentary on the meaning of each day.¹⁶ A further function of the epigram is to create added value or qualities for an object: the epigrams by Theodore Prodromos on the sword of Alexios Kontostephanos asks the warrior saints (who were also depicted on the sword) to add their military strength to the armor.¹⁷ The meter employed for epigrams on works of art in this period is either hexameters or dodecasyllables (most frequently). The narrator is usually either the very personal voice of the commissioner of the work or an impersonal poet.¹⁸ Only rarely does an object acquire a voice of its own.¹⁹

Similar to the non-dedicatory epigrams on works of art, dedicatory epigrams complement an object with words and create a single composite artwork.²⁰ In contrast to non-dedicatory epigrams, dedicatory examples record additions to the desired viewers' response and offer information about the act of dedication and the name of the dedicatee. The act of dedication is frequently indicated with verbs meaning "to bring."²¹ The name of the donor is recorded accompanied by indicators of his/her social status, such as the name of his or her family, or the court title or rank that the person or a spouse held at the time of the dedication.²²

A dedicatory epigram differs also from a non-dedicatory in its relation to hymnography. The relation does not come from the use of the same meter, but rather the quotation or evocation of words related to Christian love and piety. References to the *pòthos* of the donor are particularly predominant.²³ The term and the concept of the fervent love of

14 On the Byzantine epigram see Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 138–47.

15 Discussed by L. Andriollo, II.4.2 in this volume.

16 Discussed by N. Zagklas, II.4.3 in this volume.

17 Discussed by N. Zagklas, II.4.1 in this volume.

18 The former is considered to be a borrowing from *Ethopoïiae* by Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 89–95.

19 In contrast to the ancient Greek epigram, giving voice to an inanimate object is rare in Byzantium; however, depicted saints or Mary often acquire voice; dialog could also be at play. See, e.g., the dialog between Christ and his mother discussed by Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 166.

20 On dedicatory epigrams on works of art see Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 9–11, 67–117.

21 See, e.g., the verses on chalice covers dedicated by the sebastokratorissa Eirene in E. and M. Jeffreys, II.4.7 in this volume, and the prominent use of the verbs προσφέρω/εἰσφέρω and νέμω. Γράφω also implies dedication: see A. Rhoby, II.4.8 in this volume.

22 See, for example, A. Rhoby, II.4.8 in this volume.

23 Discussed in detail by Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 296–331.

a Christian for the Divine Son, Mary, or a saint is a direct borrowing from hymnography.²⁴ Such canons would have been familiar to poets and patrons and readers alike. The relation to a ritual text and the performative aspect of the epigram would transform the epigrams into personal hymns expressing mortal anxieties. One can refer, for example, to the first of the four epigrams on an icon veil dedicated by sebastokratorissa Eirene and discussed by Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys.²⁵ If the verses are compared to the collection of liturgical canons in the *Analecta Hymnica Graeca* (AHG), it appears that the author, Manganeios, borrowed and mixed into his poetry words and phrases mostly drawn from the context of hymnography.²⁶ The similarity of dedicatory epigrams to other forms of devotional poetry is further demonstrated in the example of two epigrams by Manuel Philes on the Lifegiving Source discussed by Alice-Mary Talbot.²⁷

The texts by Manganeios and Philes follow the most standardized form of dedicatory epigram. This has an introduction that includes a reference to an aspect of the life or the miracles of the saint or Christ that can provide a sort of analogy with the life or the plea of the dedicatee, and then some reference to the object dedicated and to the identity of the dedicatee, followed by a final supplication for salvation. The title of the first poem begins with the preposition, εἰς, as it is frequently the case for titles of epigrams on works of art. The second poem, however, is said to be a χαριστήριος [λόγος] (“thanksgiving speech”), suggesting that it belongs to a different poetic genre.²⁸

If the epigram has not survived as an inscription *in situ*, tracing its original function is usually impossible.²⁹ Indicative pronouns, prepositions, and adverbs of space and time may offer some suggestions regarding the intended function of the epigram, but recovering its actual use with certainty becomes an exercise in wishful thinking given that epigrams may have been composed for an inscriptional use, without ever resuming that function. Inscribed epigrams tend also to record essential information about the origins of the object, such as the donor or the date of construction (especially in the case of building inscriptions). That said, building materials and other objects that bear an inscription may have been re-used, as such the epigram may not be in its original context.³⁰

The patron of an epigram on a work of art emerges as the intermediary between the poet and the craftsman.³¹ The patron’s (or patroness’) contribution is recognized consist-

24 I have discussed this point in detail also in Spingou, *Words and Artworks*, 219–21.

25 II.4.6 in this volume.

26 See ἄβυσσος χαρίτων in AHG, Jan. 2, 3.3. ῥοαῖς κατήρδευσας in AHG, Sept. 6, 7.6. Παθημάτων κλύδων cf. AHG, May 9, 9.1 “εἰδωλικοῦ κλύδωνος / τῶν παθημάτων καύσωνα,” AHG, Oct. 18, 23.5 “τὸν ἄστατον κλύδωνα τῶν παθῶν,” AHG, Nov. 13, 31.5, “κλύδων παθῶν.” Or see the frequent use in hymnical texts of the words καύσων and ἄθυμία, that appear twelve times each.

27 II.4.11 in this volume.

28 Alice-Mary Talbot correctly considers the poem to be an epigram; its form and the direct references to a painted icon (v. 15) are central in texts suggesting a close affinity to the epigrammatic genre. On the use of the term λόγος see Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 22–24.

29 See the discussion in Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 48–66, with further bibliography.

30 See, e.g., the inscription in Santa Maria in Cerrate, discussed by L. Safran, II.4.5 in this volume.

31 On the subject see Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 29–48; Spingou 2014: 148–52, cf. Spingou, *Words and Artworks*, 250–59.

ently in the texts, where the person “who made” an artwork is said to be the patron and not the craftsman. What is more, letters show that patrons wrote to poets requesting the composition of verses and that poets answered by composing multiple epigrams from which the patron could choose.³² It seems unlikely that in these cases the poets had the actual objects (or the buildings) on which they were composing their verses before them.³³ Rather, patrons must have briefly described the objects and the purpose the epigram was called to serve. It is also possible that the poet was provided with a sketch of the architectural structure for which they were writing their verses.³⁴

It is impossible to know how many of the epigrams left to us were in fact used as verse inscriptions, and under what circumstances this might have happened. Nonetheless, we can celebrate that so many of them have survived, even if only in anthologies and collections of poetry. For even if we mourn the loss of the original context, we should remember that many of them never had such a physical context. Some were written as multiples from which the patron could choose. Others may have been written as rhetorical exercises.³⁵ This should not prevent modern scholars from looking for the primary function of the epigram. After all, an epigram on a work of art is a personal hymn, a commodity able to calm the patron’s anxiety regarding the correct perception of the object offered, and a means for expressing his/her most inner fears and wishes.

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³² See, e.g., the contributions by A. Rhoby, I.7.7, N. Zagklas, II.4.1 and E. and M. Jeffreys, II.4.7 in this volume.

³³ Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 39–40; Spingou 2014: 256–57.

³⁴ As suggested by, e.g., Brooks 2006.

³⁵ As Nikos Zagklas has suggested in *Neglected Poems*.

Lauxtermann, *Poetry*.

Maguire, 1996, *Image and Imagination*.

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II.4.1 Theodore Prodromos (c.1100–60)

On the Sword of Alexios Kontostephanos

NIKOS ZAGKLAS

Ed.: W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos, Historische Gedichte* (Vienna, 1974), 444–46

MS.:¹ Paris, BnF, Graecus 854 (s. XIII), f. 232v²

Other Translations: None

Significance

This poetic cycle was written for a sword. It is very likely that all four epigrams were inscribed at different places on the sword.

The Author

On Theodore Prodromos see E. Jeffreys, I.7.6.

Text and Context

In a dedicatory epigram for an icon of Christ written by Theodore Prodromos for Alexios Kontostephanos, the latter pleads with Christ, among other things, to stiffen his sword in the struggles against the enemies of the empire.³ It is interesting that Alexios Kontostephanos even commissioned Prodromos to compose a cycle of four epigrams for his sword.⁴ Irrespective of whether these four epigrams were written before or after the epigram for the icon of Christ, they explicitly demonstrate that Prodromos, one of the most important on-demand poets of the twelfth century, received several commissions from the same individual.

The iambic epigrams celebrate engravings of the images of the military saints Theodore and Demetrius on the double-edged sword of Alexios. But why did Prodromos produce four epigrams for the same commission? Did Kontostephanos choose one of them, or were all four inscribed at different places on the sword? After a closer look at the epigrams, the latter seems to be more likely, since each text conveys a slightly different

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1 Consulted.

2 Markesinis 2000: 302–06 and *idem*. Markesinis 2000–2005: 109–17; cf. also Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 104–05.

3 For a discussion of this poem see below.

4 On swords in Byzantium see Koliass 1988: 133–61; Parani, *Reconstructing*, 130–36; Grotowski, *Arms and Armour*, 342–57.

message. The first epigram claims that the saints will slaughter Alexios' enemies both in the West and East. In the second epigram, the sword is compared to the flaming sword of the Cherubim guarding the gates of Eden after Adam and Eve had been banished from the Garden of Eden. In the third epigram, we are told that Alexios will not be saved by the sword, but by the two military saints. In the last epigram, the engraved image of the two saints turns the sword's blade from being double-edged into quadruple-edged.

Prodromos' cycle of epigrams for Kontostephanos' sword is not the only example written for such an object. In the tenth century, John Geometres composed a group of five dodecasyllabic monostichs under the title "On a decorated blade,"⁵ while, in the early Palaiologan period, Manuel Philes wrote a cycle of three dodecasyllabic tetrastichs, entitled, "On the sword of the emperor's brother."⁶ In the twelfth century, apart from Prodromos' epigrams, an anonymous epigram, which was meant to be inscribed on the sword of the emperor Manuel I Komnenos, is transmitted in the *Anthologia Marciana*, *Sylloge C21*.⁷

The four epigrams are written in dodecasyllables without any prosodic errors. All the verses of the first two epigrams have a "Binnenschluß" after the fifth syllable, while in the last two epigrams the Binnenschluß is equally distributed between B₅ (epigram 3, vv. 2 and 4; epigram 4, vv. 1 and 4) and B₇ (epigram 3, vv. 1 and 3; epigram 4 vv. 2 and 3).

5 For a new edition see Tomadaki 2014: 215-16, with discussion on p. 421-22; for an English transl. and notes see van Opstall 2008: 57-58.

6 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, *Scor.* 214-16, ed. Miller, 1, 114-15.

7 For the text of the epigram and a discussion of the epigram see Spingou 2017: 47-72, cf. Lambros, "Ο Μαρκανός κῶδιξ 524," 178.

Text

<Εἰς τὴν σπάθην Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κοντοστεφάνου>

- a. Στομοῦσι καλῶς Χριστομάρτυρες δύο
Κοντοστεφάνου τὴν σπάθην Ἀλεξίου,
ὁ μὲν λεόντων εἰς σφαγὰς τῶν εἰς δύσιν,
ὁ δὲ δρακόντων εἰς τομὰς τῶν εἰς ἔω.
- b. Ὡς τὴν φλογίνην, Πέρσα, ῥομφαίαν τρέσον
Κοντοστεφάνου τὴν σπάθην Ἀλεξίου·
οἱ μάρτυρες γὰρ πῦρ ἀκοντίζουσί σοι·
φύγε πτοηθεῖς, μὴ τὸ πῦρ σε προφθάσῃ.
- c. Ἀλέξιος μάρτυρας ἐν σπάθῃ γράφων
Κοντοστέφανος ψαλμικῶς δοκεῖ λέγειν·
οὐ τῆς σπάθης σώσει με τὸ στίλβον στόμα,
ἰσχύς Θεοδώρου δὲ καὶ Δημητρίου.
- d. Κοντοστεφάνου τὴν σπάθην Ἀλεξίου,
τὴν δίστομον πρὶν καὶ πρὸ τῶν τυπωμάτων,
τετράστομον ποιοῦσι μάρτυρες δύο
ὡς ἄλλο διπλοῦν ἀκονηθέντες στόμα.

Translation

<On the Sword of Alexios Kontostephanos>¹

- a. The two martyrs of Christ² finely harden the sword of Alexios Kontostephanos; one to slaughter the lions in the West, the other one to kill the dragons in the East.³
- b. You, Persian,⁵ fear the sword of Alexios Kontostephanos just like the “flaming sword,”⁴ for the martyrs will hurl fire at you; go away terrified, before the fire burns you.
- c. In depicting the martyrs on the sword, Alexios Kontostephanos seems to say in the manner of Psalms: “the shining-lightning edge of the sword won’t save me, but the power of Theodore and Demetrius [will].”⁶
- d. The sword of Alexios Kontostephanos, which used to be double-edged before [the engraving] of the images, the two Martyrs have now turned into quadruple-edged, for they were whetted like another double-edged [blade].

Commentary

1. Though the poem is preserved without title in its single manuscript witness, its authorship by Prodromos is certain, since it can be found within a group of poems by the same author.⁸ Moreover, as mentioned in the Text and Context, Alexios Kontostephanos was a regular recipient of Prodromos' poems.
2. The word *χριστομάρτυρας* (meaning martyrs of Christ) is often used for these two saints. For example, it is used for St. Theodore in Choniates' *History* and for St. Demetrius in the thirteenth-century encomium by John Staurakios.⁹
3. Although the poet does not specify whether Demetrius or Theodore fights against the enemies in the West and the East, we know that St. Demetrius is the military patron of the Komnenoi against enemies from the West, while Theodore (Stratelates or Teron) appears against the enemies of the East.¹⁰ Moreover, Prodromos celebrates both military saints together with St. George, another important military saint, in a cycle of iambic and hexametric tetrastichs dedicated to their lives.¹¹ While in the poem the lion stands for the enemies from the West and the dragons for those from the East, in a ceremonial poem for Manuel Komnenos the imagery of the dragon is used for Norman Sicily.¹² Moreover, in a poem celebrating another campaign of John Komnenos, the imagery of the lion and dragon is used for the enemies from the South and North, respectively.¹³ Thus, Prodromos does not seem to be consistent in his use of animal imagery for the description of the enemies in his poetic output.
4. This is an allusion to Gen. 3:24, where God stationed two Cherubim with flaming swords to guard the gates of Paradise after Adam's and Eve's banishment from Eden.
5. Prodromos in his poetic corpus uses "Persians" for foreign enemies of the empire in the East.¹⁴
6. According to Hörandner,¹⁵ this is a reference to Ps. 43 (44):4. Here we are explicitly told, for the first time, that the two saints, whose images were engraved on the sword, are Theodore and Demetrius.

8 Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 156-57.

9 Ed. Iberites 1940: 334-76, e.g. 4.2, 8.38, 11.21, 18.43.

10 Grotowski, *Arms and Armour*, 115-23.

11 Ed. Giannelli 1957: 299-336; cf. also Philes, *Poems*; ed. Miller I 438 and II 294-306.

12 Ed. Hörandner, *Historical Poems*, 354, v. 200.

13 Ed. Hörandner, *Historical Poems*, 289, v. 69.

14 For the image of the Latins and Barbarians in Byzantine court poetry see Hörandner 1993: 162-68 = 1994: 115-31.

15 Hörandner 1974: 446.

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Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*.

II.4.2 Nicholas Kallikles (fl. first quarter of the twelfth century)

Epigrams on a Saint George Sculpted on Marble

LUISA ANDRIOLLO

Ed.: R. Romano, *Nicola Callicle, Carmi: Testo critico, introduzione, traduzione, commentario e lessico* (Naples, 1980), 80 nos. 3 and 4; other editions: L. Sternbach, *Nicolai Calliclis Carmina* (Cracow, 1903), 8 nos. 4 and 5; Manuel Philes, *Poems*, ed. Miller, I; ed. H. Guntios, *Cyri Theodori Prodrumi epigrammata ut vetustissima, ita piissima, quibus omnia utriusque Testamenti capita felicissime comprehenduntur: cum aliis nonnullis, quae Index versa pagella singillatim explicat* (Basle, 1536), quatr. ξ, ff. 4v–5r

MSS.:¹ Mt. Athos, Pavl. 9(136) (s. XVIII), p. 281

Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus Z 524 (s. XIII ex.), f. 97v

Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus Z 498 (s. XIV), f. 379v

Florence, BML, Plutei 32.19 (s. XIV), ff. 43v–44r

Jerusalem, Hieros. S. Sabae 415 (s. XIV), f. 41v

Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 1702 (s. XIII–XVI), f. 89r

Other Translations: R. Romano, as above, 134 (Italian); for a partial transl. of the first epigram see Maguire, *Nectar and Illusion*, 132

Significance

The following two short epigrams enjoyed a remarkable popularity among Kallikles' poems, and served as models for later authors like Manuel Philes. As is often the case with dedicatory epigrams, the poet elaborates on the relation between the material aspect of the object and its invisible spiritual value, and in so doing succeeds in creating some unexpected images.

The Author

The exact dates of the birth and death of Nicholas Kallikles are uncertain.² His life and career unfolded during the reigns of Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118) and of his successor, John II (r.1118–43). According to contemporary sources, Kallikles was a highly

1 I have consulted MSS. Marc. gr. 524 and Laur. Pl. 32.19; a more detailed description of the manuscript witnesses for Kallikles' poetry can be found in Romano 1976.

2 The death of Gregory Kamateros (before 1133), for whom Kallikles composed an epitaph (Kallikles, *Poems* no. 21, 96–97), provides a *terminus post quem* for the end of Kallikles' life. On Kamateros' life and career see Gautier 1986: 73–74.

esteemed physician, who even served as the personal doctor of Alexios I.³ Anna Komnene describes him as the most wise among the physicians surrounding Alexios on his deathbed and names him ὑπερφύη, making no secret of her admiration.⁴ The great esteem he enjoyed in the Palace made Kallikles particularly influential. The archbishop of Ohrid Theophylact (†1108), for example, asked for Kallikles' intercession with the emperor to obtain protection against allegations of fiscal abuse.⁵ The active role played by Kallikles at the Komnenian court, in a century during which *logos* was a powerful means of social ascent, makes his literary engagement an unsurprising aspect of his activities. He is credited with the authorship of about thirty occasional poems, mostly epitaphs or dedicatory epigrams written on behalf of members of the imperial family or representatives of the court aristocracy. The largest part of these texts is included in the *Anthologia Marciana*, which appears to have preserved Kallikles' personal collection of poetry;⁶ smaller groups of poems or isolated epigrams by the same author are transmitted also by a number of other manuscripts.⁷ Four epigrams inscribed on cross reliquaries can also be ascribed to him,⁸ whereas the attribution of a versified calendar containing dietary prescriptions should be rejected.⁹ The latest editor of Kallikles' poetry also ascribed the authorship of a pseudo-Lucianic dialog, the *Timarion*, to him.¹⁰

Text and Context

Among Kallikles' epigrams, these short texts enjoyed the greatest fortune. They have come down to us in six manuscripts.¹¹ In one of the textual witnesses, MS. Florence, BML, Plutei 32.19, these two epigrams are copied among the poems of Manuel Philes; the title reported by the same manuscript does not specify the name of the author. Hence Miller, who is the main editor of Philes' poems, considered them his work.¹² However, this attribution has been rejected by both editors of Kallikles' poems, Sternbach and Romano,

3 Kallikles, *Poems*, 13–16; Skoulatos 1980: 251–52; Kazhdan 1984: 44, 50; see also the introduction to Theophylact of Ochrid, *Letters*, ed. Gautier, p. 69–73.

4 Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, XV, 11, ed. Reinsch: 494, 498–499; transl. Sweter and Frankopan, 464–65, 468. Theodore Prodromos also mentions him, along with Michael Lizix, as an excellent doctor (Podestà [1947]: 21). Such compliments are all the more remarkable as references to the medical profession are quite rare in Middle Byzantine sources, and positive comments on medical doctors are even more unusual. However, during the twelfth century a certain respect for the medical profession seems to emerge: see Kazhdan 1984.

5 Theophylact of Ohrid, *Letters* nos. 93 and 111, ed. Gautier, p. 476–77 and 534–35, respectively. Theophylact also asked Nicholas to send him the books of Galenus or the commentaries to Hippocrates by the same author (*Letters* no. 112, ed. Gautier, 536–37).

6 Spingou, “Words and Artworks,” 48.

7 See the general description in Romano 1976 and in Kallikles, *Poems*, 43–54.

8 Kallikles, *Poems*, 29–31; see also B. Hostetler, I.6.8 in this volume.

9 Kallikles, *Poems*, 31–32.

10 Romano 1973: 309–15; *Timarion*, ed. Romano, p. 25–31; Kallikles, *Poems*, 27–28. The question concerning the authorship of the *Timarion* is controversial; see also Hunger, *Literatur* II, 151–54; Baldwin 1984: 233–37; Alexiou 1982: 29–45; Beaton 1996: 333–38.

11 Kallikles, *Poems*, 45, 80 (apparatus).

12 Manuel Philes, *Poems* no. 34, ed. Miller, I, 210.

who have ascribed these epigrams to Kallikles, in accordance with the rest of the manuscript tradition.¹³

The epigrams refer to a sculpted representation of Saint George, which most probably had the form of an icon carved in marble.¹⁴ The reference to the materials employed by the artist (pure white marble) and, most notably, the use of the deictic οὗτος in the first epigram, suggest that at least one of the two texts was meant to be used as a verse inscription. The second text could have been engraved on the icon, as well,¹⁵ or it could have been presented to the donor in order to choose the inscription that she/he preferred. Both texts are written in the third person; they make reference to the depicted saint, to the materiality of the representation, and to its symbolic implications, but they avoid mentioning the donor, whose identity remains unknown.

A variant in the title of epigram A, transmitted in the Florentine manuscript, specifies that the sculpture was kept at the monastery of Saint George at Mangana.¹⁶ The monastery was part of the complex built by Constantine IX Monomachos (r.1042–55) in the neighborhood called Mangana, below the Constantinopolitan acropolis and close to the seaside. His project also included a palace, a church, and a hospital. Alexios Komnenos spent his last days at the palace of the Mangana,¹⁷ while John II was proclaimed emperor by his supporters, who were gathered at the adjacent monastery of Saint George.¹⁸

The cult of Saint George was popular in the Byzantine East, particularly in Cappadocia and at the empire's borders, among military officers, and also within some prominent families of the capital. Sigillographic data show that the Monomachos family, who also had in their possession a relic of the saint, considered Saint George the family's patron saint, a devotion that was shared by their relatives and supporters. The accession of Constantine IX Monomachos to the Byzantine throne further advanced the popularity of Saint George's cult among imperial officers, who frequently had the effigy of George struck on the obverse of their seals.¹⁹ The Komnenoi, whose military and political influence increased significantly under Monomachos, also adopted this iconography on their seals with remarkable frequency, at least until the accession of Alexios I.²⁰ The cult seems to have been still in favor within the imperial branch of the family in the twelfth century.²¹

As a consequence of imperial and aristocratic favor, the cult of this military saint also enjoyed attention from the eleventh-century court *literati*: Christopher Mytilenaios and John Mauropos, in particular, celebrated in verses the magnificence of the Mangana

13 Kallikles, *Poems*, 17 n. 23; ed. Sternbach 1903: 8.

14 Maguire 2012: 132

15 Miller's edition of Manuel Philes' poems prints these two epigrams as one text (see n. 21).

16 Janin 1934: 169–78; Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 75–81.

17 Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, XV,11, ed. Reinsch, 497; transl. Sweter and Frankopan, 467.

18 Choniates, *History*, ed. van Dieten, 6, transl. Magoulias, 6; Zonaras, *Epitome*, XVIII, 28, ed. Büttner-Wobst and Pinder, p. 761.

19 Cheynet 2002: 119–24.

20 Cheynet 2005: 54–62.

21 Cheynet 2005: 63–66. The author of the *Satire against the hegoumens*, p. 25, calls St. George “the comrade” of the emperor “in battles,” referring to Manuel I Komnenos.

monumental complex.²² The two epigrams by Kallikles discussed below confirm the enduring popularity of the devotion to St. George in the court *milieu* in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. Though the exact identity of the donor remains unclear, the very fact that such texts appear in the collection of poetry by this court author suggests that they had been commissioned by prominent members of the Byzantine aristocracy. Theodore Prodromos, a near-contemporary of Kallikles, also composed some epigrams in honor of the *megalomartyr* George.²³ In later centuries, Manuel Philes devoted a number of epigrams to Saint George, and particularly to icons of the saint carved in stone.²⁴

Kallikles' epigrams revolve around a traditional motif, the relation between the physical aspect of the icon and its spiritual or symbolic value. This theme is developed through two antitheses: in epigram A, the white of the marble is opposed to the red blood shed by the martyr; in epigram B, the stone's static materiality is contrasted with the icon, which is defined as an *empsychos* object inhabited by the presence of the saint. The verse form adopted is the customary Byzantine dodecasyllable.

22 Mytilenaios celebrated the splendor of Saint George's church: Mitylenaios, *Poems* no. 95, 89. Mauropous wrote two epigrams on a liturgical book for the service of the same saint, probably performed at the imperial foundation: John Mauropous, *Poems* nos. 71 and 72, 37; see also Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 307–09.

23 Giannelli 1963: 349–78.

24 See in particular Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Scor. 75–78 and 166, ed. Miller I, 34–35 and 133; Maguire 2012: 132. This circumstance could have favored the inclusion of the two epigrams by Kallikles among Philes' poems in the MS. Florence, BML, Plutei 32.19.

Text

A. Τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν ἅγιον Γεώργιον ἐν λευκῷ λίθῳ τυπωθέντα¹

Παῖς Ἀβραάμ ὁ μάρτυς οὗτος ἐκ λίθων·
πλὴν εἴ τι σαρκὸς εἶχεν ἠρυθρωμένον,
ἐχινώθη τοῦτο, λευκὸν εὐρέθη,
μαρτυρικοῖς ἰδρῶσιν ἐκπεπλυμένον.

B. Ἔτεροι²

Φθάνει γεωργεῖν εἰς ἑκατὸν ἢ πέτρα,
οὐ στάχυν, ἀθλητὴν δε, τὸν χρυσοῦν στάχυν·
μὴ τὴν Ἀερμών εἶχεν ἢ πέτρα δρόσον,
δι' ἧς ὁ μάρτυς ἐκφυεῖς ἀνετράφη;

Translation

A. [Poem] of the same [author] on [a depiction of] Saint George sculpted in white marble

This martyr of stone (is) a son of Abraham:³
even if his flesh was (stained) red [with blood],
it became as white as snow, it was found to be bright white,
since it was washed by the sweat of martyrdom.⁴

B. Other [verses]

The stone hastens to produce a hundredfold,
not [just] an ear [of corn], but an athlete, a golden ear:⁵
was not the stone damp with the dew of Hermon,
thanks to which the martyr was begotten and nourished?⁶

Commentary

1. The manuscript tradition offers different titles for the poem. MSS Venice, Biblioteca nazionale Marciana, gr. Z 498 and Vatican, BAV, gr. 1702 give the title στίχοι τοῦ Καλλικλέος εἰς τὸν ἅγιον Γεώργιον. Florence, BML, Plut. 32.19 bears the title εἰς τὸν ἐν τῇ μονῇ τῶν Μαγγάνων λελατομημένον ἐκ λίθου λευκοῦ ἅγιον μεγαλομάρτυρα Γεώργιον. MS. Jerusalem, Mar Saba Monastery 415 writes τοῦ Καλλικλέος εἰς τὸν ἅγιον μεγαλομάρτυρα Γεώργιον.²⁵
2. The first printed edition (*b*), based on a lost manuscript, transmits the title εἰς τὸν αὐτόν; the manuscript Marc. gr. 498 has εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν τοῦ αὐτοῦ.²⁶
3. The opening of the poem implicitly refers to Gen. 24:34 and more specifically to the words by which the servant of Abraham presents himself to Rebecca's family: Παῖς

²⁵ Kallikles, *Poems*, 80 (apparatus).

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Ἄβρααμ ἐγὼ εἶμι. In Christian tradition, a similar formula is used with reference to Jesus, who is named υἱὸς Δαυίδ υἱὸς Ἀβραάμ (Mt. 1:1): Christ's descent from Abraham is evoked as a proof of his human nature and as a sign of continuity between the revelation of the Old Testament and the Christian faith. In our context, the phrase refers to Saint George' as a mortal creature, and it emphasizes further the antithesis between the saint's bodily martyrdom and his spiritual triumph.

4. According to the epigram, the martyrdom is meant to cleanse human bodily weaknesses, represented by the red color of the martyr's blood. This is opposed to the pure white and brilliance of the marble, which is described as λευκός ("clear", "bright") and symbolizes the spiritual perfection of the saint. The idea that the bloodshed in martyrdom could purify the soul and wash its sins has its roots in the New Testament. This notion is clearly expressed in Rev. 7:13, where we find also the chromatic antithesis between the white robes worn by the martyrs in Christ and the blood by which they were purified. The ultimate model is to be found in the sacrifice of Christ, that the martyrs imitate. Saints, and especially martyrs, are often referred to as soldiers or champions (ἀθληταί, cf. epigram B, v. 2) of Christ;²⁷ such a model of Christian perfection was particularly well embodied by a military saint like Saint George.

Since the early tenth century the cult of military saints had enjoyed great popularity in Byzantium, particularly among aristocratic families engaged in the wars against the Arabs.²⁸ An *akolouthia* for the officers and soldiers "who died at war or in chains," probably dating back to the early tenth century, explicitly testifies to the Christianization of military values.²⁹ Interestingly enough, this liturgical text exalts the redeeming power of the blood shed for the Christian faith in similar terms to those employed in Kallikles' epigrams. Sweat as a symbol of self-sacrifice is also recurrent in twelfth century poetry, most notably Prodromos' poems for John II. In his verses, the motif of imperial sweat serves to present the emperor's fight against external enemies as an ascetic struggle, undertaken for the sake of his subjects.³⁰

5. The poet merges evangelical echoes with references to the late Antique epic tradition, in order to overturn the traditional perception of the stone as a lifeless and sterile material: by doing so, Kallikles highlights the "living" (*empsychos*) nature and the spiritual power of the saint's icon. The image of the stone bearing hundredfold fruit recalls the parable of the sower (Mt. 13:3–23; Mk. 4:3–20; Lk. 8:4–15). In Kallikles' text the evangelic image is reinterpreted in an unexpected way: far from representing an inhospitable ground for the Word of God, the stone of the icon is revived and filled with divine grace, thanks to the holy presence of the martyr. At the same time, v. 2 seems to allude to a passage by Nonnus of Panopolis, where the primordial inhabitants of

27 On martyrs as imitators and champions of Christ see Rhee 2005: 92–97.

28 Andriollo 2014: 126–30.

29 See Detorakis and Mossay 1988, p. 188, vv. 47–49 and p. 190, vv. 87–92.

30 Magdalino, *Manuel*, 420; see, for instance, Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems* no. 10a, vv. 3–4, p. 249; no. 11, vv. 41–50, p. 254–55.

Beyruth are said to be born from the earth, like golden ears of corn, similar to gods (*Dionysiaca* XLI, 65).

6. In the Old Testament, the dew from mount Hermon or Aermion, the sacred mountain in Palestine, was traditionally connected with the notions of resurrection and eternal life: cf., e.g., Ps. 132(133):2–3.³¹ Such a symbolic meaning appears to be recurrent in Kallikles, who makes further reference to the stone and to the dew of the Aermion in his epitaph for John II.³² In Christian exegeses of the Old Testament the dew was considered a miraculous substance, a sign of divine presence and salvation: the dew associated with the miracle of the manna in Ex. 16:13–14,³³ and the dew fallen on the fleece of Gideon in Ju. 6:36–40 were interpreted as typological images referring to the Virgin and to the mystery of Incarnation.³⁴ The reference to a divine liquid oozing from the stone could also evoke stories, familiar to Byzantine readers, about miraculous oil exuding from holy icons or from the relics of saints.³⁵

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³¹ Theodore Prodromos: *Historical Poems* no. 39, v. 111, ed. Hörandner p. 38.

³² Kallikles, *Poems* no. 31, vv. 49–50, 114; see also no. 29, vv. 45–53, 108–09. For the same reason the image of the dew of Hermon appears also in the epitaph for the daughter-in-law of the *caesar* Nikephoros Bryennios by Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems* no. 39, v. 111, ed. Hörandner, 385.

³³ According to the biblical text, a thin layer of dew covered the manna sent by God to the people of Israel during their wandering in the desert.

³⁴ Hannick 2005: 72–73.

³⁵ Talbot 2003: 159–61; Paribeni 2008.

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II.4.3 Gregory of Corinth (c.1070–1156)

A Cycle of Epigrams on the *Dodecaorton*

NIKOS ZAGKLAS

Ed.: H. Hunger, “Gregorios von Korinth Epigramme auf die Feste des Dodekaorton,” *AB* 100 (1982), 638–46

MSS.:¹ Vienna, ÖNB, Theologicus Graecus 128 (s. XIII), f. 8v, 23, 37v, 45, 53, 73v, 75v, 89, 93v, 98v, 104, 108v.² The epigram on Hypapante is also preserved in Vatican City, BAV, Barberinus Graecus 74 (s. XVII), f. 13v;³ Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Allacci 130 (Martini 206), f. 17r (s. XVII);⁴ and Vatican City, BAV, Graecus 207 (s. XIII), f. 371r.⁵ The epigram on Antipascha is also transmitted in the manuscript Mount Athos, Moni Panteleimon 174 (s. XIV), f. 188r⁶

Other Translations: H. Hunger, as above (German)

Significance

A cycle of epigrams on twelve Christological feasts (the so-called *Dodecaorton*). In the thirteenth-century Viennese codex Theologicus Graecus 128, which is the only codex that preserves all of them together, they are used as book epigrams. However, it cannot be excluded that their original function may have been related to the iconographic program of a church or manuscript.

The Author

Although Gregory Pardos is one of the most prolific authors in the early Komnenian period, especially in the field of grammar and rhetoric, very little is known about his life and origins.⁷ Before his consecration as Metropolitan of Corinth (some time after 1092), Gregory Pardos was a teacher in Constantinople with the name Georgios.⁸ Pardos is the author of the first Byzantine commentaries on twenty-three canons for Dominical and Marian Feasts, written by various celebrated hymnographers, such as Kosmas the

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1 Consulted.

2 Hunger and Kresten 1984: 98–110.

3 Capocci 1958: 80–94.

4 Martini 1967: 223–24.

5 For the manuscript see Mercati and Cavalieri 1923: 249–54.

6 See Kotzabasi and Paraskeuopoulou 2007: 210.

7 The best study is still that of Kominis 1960a: 9–36.

8 It has even been argued that Pardos held a teaching post in Constantinople; see Browning, “the Patriarchal School,” 167.

Melodist, John of Damascus and Theophanes.⁹ He also composed a treatise on the dialects,¹⁰ a book on syntax,¹¹ and various *schede*.¹² A rhetorical treatise “On the four parts of the perfect speech,” which the manuscript tradition attributes to Gregory, was not written by him, but by an anonymous thirteenth-century rhetorician.¹³ Apart from the cycle of epigrams on the *Dodecaorton*, there is also an epigram penned by a certain grammarian called Gregory, who could be the same person as Gregory of Corinth.¹⁴

Text and Context

This cycle of twelve epigrams, of which each epigram includes between nine and eleven verses, forms a *Dodecaorton*,¹⁵ with the following twelve Christological feasts: Nativity, Epiphany, the Holy Meeting, Annunciation, Palm Sunday, Crucifixion, Deposition, Pentecost, Resurrection, *Antipascha* (St. Thomas Sunday), Ascension, and Transfiguration.¹⁶

There are some other examples of cycles of epigrams for a *Dodecaorton* by Theodore Prodromos¹⁷ and Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos.¹⁸ However, unlike Prodromos’ and Xanthopoulos’ works, these twelve epigrams are much longer and lack chronological order.¹⁹ Moreover, in the Viennese manuscript Theol. gr. 128, they survive together with Canons attributed to Kosmas the Melodist and John of Damascus and their matching commentaries by Gregory Pardos. Each epigram can be found at the beginning of the corresponding commentary, suggesting that they were used as book epigrams for each Canon and its commentary. The last four epigrams have been carefully placed in the main text – right before the beginning of a canon and its commentary – with the first letter of each verse being marked with red ink. In contrast, the first nine have been inserted in a less careful manner at the bottom of the folios that contain the beginning of a Canon. This may suggest that the first nine epigrams were added at later stage by the scribe (most probably, after the copying of the Canons and their commentaries).

The use of these texts as book epigrams raises the question of their authorship by Gregory of Corinth. Since they are transmitted in a thirteenth-century manuscript, it is possible that they are works of a scribe, especially if we think that the headings before the

9 Unfortunately, only the commentary on the Canon on Pentecost has been critically edited: see Montana 1995; for some provisional remarks on Pardos’ corpus of commentaries, Kominis 1960a: 91–97, *idem*. 1960b: 248–53; Skrekas 2008: XXIII–XXV.

10 Ed. Schaefer 1811.

11 Ed. Donnet 1967.

12 There are also nine *schede* preserved under the name of Gregory; one of them is transmitted in Laur. Conv. Sopp. 2 (Polemis 1995: 282), while the other eight are in Vaticanus Palatinus Gr. 92; cf. Vassiss 2002: 37–68.

13 Hörandner 2012: 87–131.

14 Τοῦ γραμματικοῦ κυροῦ Γρηγορίου εἰς τρικάνδυλον, ed. Gallavottie: 210.

15 See R. Taft, *ODB*, s.v. “Great Feasts” and *RbK I* s.v. “Dodekaorton.”

16 Hunger, 1982: 637–51; the epigram on Antipascha is also transmitted in fourteenth-century manuscript Ath. Pantel. 174; see Kotzabasi and Paraskeuopoulou 2007: 210.

17 Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 259–64.

18 Guntius 1536: f. 4.

19 The latter has already been noted in Hunger 1982: 637.

epigrams do not include any evidence for an authorship by Gregory of Corinth.²⁰ However, in some other manuscripts, some of the epigrams survive under his name.²¹ Moreover, unlike many book epigrams written by scribes, the prosody of these epigrams is correct.²² As Hunger has noted, their metrical qualities are in accordance with the iambic poetry written by other twelfth-century poets, such as Nicholas Kallikles and Theodore Prodromos.²³

If Pardos is indeed the author of these works, we cannot be entirely certain whether his original intention was to use them as book epigrams for his commentaries. It is likely that the thirteenth-century scribe changed their original function for the needs of the manuscript.²⁴ In contrast, it is possible that when Pardos first composed them may have had in mind the iconographic program of a manuscript, an icon, or a church. All twelve epigrams are very descriptive, while their vocabulary suggests that they could have been inscribed next to images of these twelve feasts.

20 In particular, epigram no. 1 bears the heading *στίχοι τῶν ἑορτῶν*; epigrams nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5 *στίχοι τῆς αὐτῆς ἑορτῆς*; epigram no. 7 *στίχοι τῆς αὐτῆς ἡμέρας*; epigrams nos. 9–12 just bear the heading *στίχοι*.

21 This is the case for the epigram on the holy meeting preserved in the codex Vaticanus gr. 207.

22 Gregory remains faithful to the rules of prosody; moreover, in 87 syllables he introduces the caesura after the fifth syllable, while in 30 verses after the seventh.

23 Hunger 1982: 647.

24 There are quite a few examples of Byzantine poems re-used in a different context: see Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 117–24, with bibliography.

Text

1.

Νῦν, οὐρανέ, σκίρτησον, εὐφράνθητί μοι,
 ἢ γῆ δὲ πᾶσα σὺν βροτοῖς χόρευέ μοι·
 Θεὸς γὰρ ἐξέλαμψεν ἐκ τῆς παρθένου,
 ὁ μητρός ἐκτός καὶ πατρός φανείς δίχα,
 5 ὁ πᾶσιν ἀπρόσιτος ἀπτὸς ἀρτίως.
 ὦ θαῦμα καινόν· πῶς Θεὸς μικρὸν βρέφος;
 μάγοι τὰ δῶρα προσφέρουσι τῷ βρέφει,
 νόες τὸν ὕμνον καὶ τὸ θαῦμα ποιμένες,
 σπήλαιον ἢ γῆ καὶ φάτνην ἐρημία,
 10 ἄχραντον ἡμεῖς παρθένον καὶ μητέρα.

2.

Τὸ φῶς τὸ θεῖον τὸ φλογίζον κακίαν,
 ὁ πάντα ποιῶν καὶ κινῶν θεῖω λόγῳ,
 οὗτος βροτωθεὶς ἐξ ἄκρας εὐσπλαγχνίας
 ῥεῖθροις προσῆλθεν ἀρρέπῳς Ἰορδάνου
 5 Ἰωάννου μέγιστον ἱερὸν λύχνον
 φωτισμὸν αἰτῶν, ὁ πλάσας ἅπαν φάος.
 βαπτίζεται δέ, μαρτυρεῖ Πατὴρ ἄνω·
 κάτω τὸ Πνεῦμα φαίνεται λύσιν φέρον·
 10 νῦν γὰρ Τριάς ἤστραψε τὴν θεῖαν χάριν
 ἅπαν καταυγάζουσα πλήρωμα κόσμου.

3.

Βρέφος παλαιῶν ἡμερῶν ὁ πρεσβύτης
 νῦν Συμεῶν γέγηθεν ἠγκαλισμένος.
 τὸ πῦρ λαβῶν γὰρ λαβίδος τῆς παρθένου
 ἄφλεκτός ἐστι, λάμπεται φέγγει λέγων·
 5 ἰδοὺ τὸ λύτρον ἦλθε τῆς οἰκουμένης,
 ἰδοὺ τὸ φῶς ἔλαμψε τοῖς ἐν τῷ σκότει.
 Τοῦτο κραταῖον τῶν κραταῖων τὸ βρέφος,
 καταθλάσει δὲ καὶ πύλας τοῦ θανάτου
 καὶ τοὺς ἐν ἄδη τῶν βρόχων ἐξελκύσει.

4.

Χαίρει χαρᾷ ξύμπασα σήμερον κτίσις,
 ἀγάλλεται μὲν οὐρανὸς σὺν ἀγγέλοις,
 εὐφραίνεται γῆ σὺν βροτῶν ὀμηγύρει·
 ὁ γὰρ στρατηγὸς τῶν ἄνω στρατευμάτων
 5 χαίρων Γαβριήλ, «Χαῖρε,» φησί, «Παρθένε,»

Translation

1.¹

Now, dance heaven, rejoice for me! The entire earth may dance together with the mortals in my honor;² for God shone from the [womb of] the Maiden, He who came to being without a mother and a father, [5] He who is unapproachable to all – He is now tangible for all.³ A novel marvel!⁴ How [can] God [be] a small baby? Wise men offer gifts to the baby, angels [offer him] hymns, the shepherds [offer him] astonishment,⁵ the earth [offers him] the cave, and the desert [offers] the crib [10] – and we [offer him] the undefiled Virgin and mother.

2.⁶

The divine light that burns the evil, the one who creates and steers everything through His divine Word, became mortal because of His most deep compassion, [and] came determined to the Jordan river [5] asking John for the great holy Light, He who created the entire light! He is baptized, the Father bears witness from on high; the spirit appears down here on earth to confirm it.⁷ [10] For now the Trinity flashed her divine Grace, illuminating flashes forth the entire fulfilment of the world.

3.⁸

The now old Symeon rejoices to hold in his arms the child of the ancient days.⁹ For although he received the fire from the tongs of the virgin,¹⁰ he remained untouched, and he is illuminated by the light saying: [5] “behold the redemption of the creation has arrived, behold the light shines for those who are in the dark. This child is the most powerful; He will even smash the gates of death into pieces and will drag those who are in Hades¹¹ out of the noose.”

4.¹²

Today the entire creation glows with enormous joy,¹³ the heaven celebrates together with the angels, the earth rejoices with throngs of men; for the commander of the heavenly army, [5] Gabriel, happily says “Hail Virgin!” announcing to the queen that the king is destined to illuminate the creation like a servant, in offering divinity for the deceased and leading to exaltation those who have fallen.

τῇ βασιλίδι μηνύων βασιλέα
 δουλοπρεπῶς μέλλοντα λάμπειν τῇ κτίσει,
 θέωσιν εἰσφέροντα τῶν τεθνηκότων,
 ὕψωσιν εἰσάγοντα τῶν πεπτωκότων.

5.

Ἄνω θρόνος φέρει σε καὶ πῶλος κάτω·
 ἐμὴν φορεῖς γὰρ εἰκόνα, πλαστουργέ μου,
 τὴν ἀσθένειαν, τὰς νόσους ἐπενδύη,
 ἄλγη διώκεις καὶ νεκροὺς ἄδου φέρεις·
 5 νεκρὸς τεταρταῖός τε Λάζαρος τρέχει.
 ζώντων δὲ πάντων καὶ νεκρῶν κρατῶν, Λόγε,
 πραῦς βασιλεὺς πρὸς Σιῶν ἔρχη πόλιν.
 παῖδες κλάδους σείουσιν, ὕμνοῦσι βρέφη,
 λαοὶ χιτῶνας στρωννύουσιν εἰς ἔδος,
 10 πόλις κλονεῖται, σείεται πᾶσα κτίσις.

6.

Σταυρῶ βλέπων σε τον Θεὸν καὶ δεσπότην
 δέδοικα φρίττων καὶ πτοοῦμαι καὶ τρέμω.
 ὃς οὐρανοὺς ἔτεινας, ἠπλωσας χθόνα,
 πῶς χεῖρας ἐξῆπλωσας ἐν σταυροῦ ξύλῳ,
 5 ἦλων δὲ πῶς ἠνεγκας ἀλγεινοὺς πόνους,
 πλευρὰν ἐνύγης, ἡμάτωσας τοὺς πόδας;
 ἃ μὴ φέρουσα σείεται χθὼν αὐτίκα,
 σκοτίζεται δὲ λαμπρὸν ἡλίου σέλας,
 καταπέτασμα σχίζεται θείου δόμου,
 10 θραύουσι πέτραι καὶ τρέμει πᾶσα κτίσις.
 θρηνεῖ τεκοῦσα καὶ μαθητῆς δακρῦοις.

7.

Ἦλων λέλυται σαρκίον ζωηφόρον,
 ἦλων ἀφεῖται τραυμάτων πεπληγμένων.
 ὦ πῶς ἀφηλῶν χεῖρας αὐτὰς καὶ πόδας
 ὁ Νικόδημος ὠχριᾶ τε καὶ τρέμει,
 5 ὦ πῶς Ἰωσήφ παρθένῳ συνδακρῦει.
 ἔμπνους ὁ νεκρὸς ἐστὶ, μὴ στέναζέ μοι·
 σοφίζεται γὰρ τὸν σοφιστὴν πανσόφως,
 ὅπως ἀφαρπάσειε τοὺς κρατουμένους
 καὶ τὸν κρατοῦντα ταρτάρῳ <ἐν> τῷ σκότει
 10 καὶ τὴν [ἀεὶ πληρώσαι ἐξ αὐτοῦ λύσιν.]

5.¹⁴

A throne carries you in heaven, while a donkey (carries you) on the earth;¹⁵ for, my creator, you put on my image, imbued with its weaknesses [and] diseases, you send away the sufferings and bring back the dead from Hades;¹⁶ [5] And even Lazarus, who was dead for four days, runs.¹⁷ O Word, you who rule over both the living and dead, you come as a gentle King to the city of Sion. The youths wave branches, the children sing praises, the crowds spread tunics on the way, [10] the city shakes, [and] the entire creation quakes.¹⁸

6.¹⁹

In seeing you, God and Lord, on the cross, I shiver out of fear, and I am terrified, and I tremble. You who stretched out the heavens, you who unfolded the vastness of the earth! How did you stretch out [your] hands on the wood of the cross? [5] How did you endure the grievous pains of the nails? How did you pierce your side? How did you stain your feet with blood? The earth does not bear this and immediately shakes, the bright light of the sun darkens, the veil of the divine house tears apart, [10] the rocks split and the entire creation quakes. The one who gave birth to him wails and the pupil mourns.

7.²⁰

The life-bringing flesh is set free from the nails, it is released from the wounds smitten by the nails. – Oh how these hands and feet are unnailed [from the cross]! – Nicodemus turns pale and shivers,²¹ [5] – Oh how does Joseph wail together with the Virgin! – The dead is alive, don't bewail for me! He deceives the deceiver in the most ingenious way, so that he may snatch away both the subjects and the ruler in the dark of Tartaros [10] and complete the eternal release from death.²²

8.

Τὸ θεῖον ἦλθε Πνεῦμα τοῖς ἀποστόλοις
 πνοῇ βιαία καὶ πυρὸς θεωρία
 ἕκαστον αὐτῶν συνετίζον εἰς ἄκρον,
 τὸν νοῦν ὀπλίζον πρὸς πάλιν τῶν δαιμόνων,
 5 γνῶσιν διδάσκον Τριάδος σελασφόρου·
 γλώσσαις λαλοῦσιν ἄλιεῖς παραυτικά
 ταῖς τῶν παρόντων ἔθνικῶν ἀθροισμάτων
 ὡς Πνεύματος φέροντες ἄρρητον σθένος.

9.

Ὁ ζῶν ἀνέστη· ξένιον τοῦτο ξένον
 τὸ σαρκί θνητῇ συγκραθῆναι τὸν Λόγον.
 τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντα συντρέχει παραυτικά·
 νεκροὶ τρέχουσιν οἱ πάλαι σεσηπότες,
 5 χαλκαὶ πύλαι πίπτουσι συντεθλασμένα·
 παγὶς συνετρίβη γὰρ ἡ τοῦ θανάτου
 καὶ πάντες ἐβρύσθημεν γὰρ ἐκ τῶν μνημάτων.
 ποῦ σου τὸ νίκος καὶ τὸ κέντρον, ὦ δράκον;
 ποῦ σου τᾶ κλεῖθρα καὶ σιδήριοι πύλαι;
 10 ἀπηνθρακώθης προσβαλὼν τῷ δεσπότη.

10.

Εἰσῆλθε Χριστὸς τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων,
 ἐπευλόγησε τοὺς σοφοὺς ἀποστόλους.
 Θωμᾶς ἀπιστεῖ καὶ μαθεῖν καλῶς θέλει·
 ἔλθων δ' ὁ Χριστὸς δεικνύει χεῖρας, πόδας,
 5 πλευρὰν νυγεῖσαν, καὶ βοᾷ Θωμᾶς τάχει·
 ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ θεὸς ζῶν ἐκ τάφου
 καὶ τοὺς θανόντας ἐξεγείρων τῷ Λόγω.
 αὐθις νέμει τὸ Πνεῦμα Χριστὸς τοῖς φίλοις,
 ἐγκαινίσας δὲ καρδίας ἀποστόλων
 10 πηγὴν διαυγῆ δεικνύει χαρισμάτων.

11.

Ἀνῆλθε Χριστὸς ἐξ ὄρους πρὸς τὸν πόλον,
 πατρῶον ἐξώρμησεν εἰς πυρὸς θρόνον
 καὶ σάρκα θνητὴν τὴν κατακεκριμένην
 ἄνω τίθησιν ἀγγέλων, ἀρχαγγέλων,
 5 κυριοτήτων καὶ θρόνων πυριπνόνων,
 θρόνῳ καθίζει τοῦ Πατρὸς βροτῶν φύσιν.
 μήτηρ πάρεστι σὺν μαθηταῖς εἰς ὄρος,

8.²³

The Holy Spirit came to the Apostles in the form of a mighty wind and the spectacle of a fire making each of them wise to the uttermost degree, preparing [their] spirit for the struggles against demons, [5] teaching knowledge of the light-bearing Trinity. The fishermen immediately spoke in the languages of the current flocks of pagans, for they bear the unintelligible strength of the Holy Spirit.

9.

He is risen alive! This is an extraordinary gift: the unification of the Word with the mortal!²⁴ All the other things are immediately and in every respect in harmony; the long-ago decayed dead are running, [5] the bronze gates fall down completely destroyed;²⁵ Death's snare was crushed and we have all been released from [our] graves. O serpent, where is your victory and where is your sting? Where are your fences and metal gates? [10] You were burned because you encountered the Lord.

10.²⁶

The Lord came forth from locked doors, He blessed the wise Apostles. Thomas mistrusts [him] and wants to examine [him] thoroughly. Christ comes [and] shows him his hands, feet, [5] pierced side, and Thomas quickly cries out: "My Lord and my God, alive from the Grave, [you] raised the dead with the Logos." Again, Christ bestows the Spirit on [His] beloved [disciples], in renewing the hearts of the Apostles, [10] he discloses the clear source of graces.

11.²⁷

Christ rises from the mountain to heaven. He sets out on the fire-illuminating throne of his Father and puts the condemned mortal flesh above the Angels and Archangels, [5] Lordships and fire-breathing Thrones;²⁸ He places the mortal nature on Father's throne.

10 ὀρῶσι θεῖους ἀγγέλους ἀφιγμένους
λέγοντας οὕτως· «δευτέρα παρουσία
ἐλεύσεται τάχιστα τόνδε τὸν τρόπον
κρίνων ἅπαντας καὶ φίλους σώζων μόνους.»

12.

5 Τοὺς τρεῖς μαθητὰς προσλαβὼν ὁ δεσπότης
ὄρους ἀνῆλθεν εἰς βάσεις Θαβωρίου
δειξάσθαι θελήσας τὴν ἄφραστον οὐσίαν,
ὡς ἦν ἐφικτὸν τοῖς φοροῦσι σαρκίον.
ἄγει σὺν αὐτοῖς καὶ νόμου τοὺς προκρίτους
ἐκ τῶν νεκάδων, ἐκ πυλῶν οὐρανίων.
εἶτ' ἀγλαὸν φῶς ἀστραπηβόλον μέγα
ἤστραψε τὸ πρόσωπον ἡλίου πλέον,
10 χιτῶνες ἐξέλαμπον αἴγλην φωσφόρον·
νεκροὶ μαθηταὶ τῆς ξένης θεωρίας.

[His] mother is on the mountain together with the disciples, [and] all see the divine angels who arrive saying the following [things]: “In the Day of Judgment [10] He will swiftly come in this way to judge all, and to save only [His] friends.”

12.²⁹

After having taken the three disciples with Him, the Lord ascended the foothills of Mount Thabor;³⁰ for He wished to reveal [His] ineffable nature, to the extent this is possible for those wearing flesh. [5] In addition to them, He brings those chosen by the law from the flock of the dead out of heaven’s gates.³¹ Then splendid light hurls lightning flashes, his countenance brighter than the sun, the tunic flashes forth beaming light; [10] the disciples are terrified by the extraordinary spectacle.

Commentary

1. The first epigram treats the feast of the Nativity of Christ described in Mt. 1–2 and Lk. 1–2.
2. Whereas both Heaven and earth are here summoned to celebrate Christ's birth, the opening verse of an epitaph by Basil Kekaumenos for Anastasios Lizix²⁵ urges heaven and earth to lament Lizix's death. This is a good example of how a common imagery can change according to the specific needs of a work.
3. Here the poet plays with the tangible (mortal) and intangible (divine) nature of Christ.
4. ὦ θαῦμα καινόν is a very common phrase in Byzantine poetry.
5. Allusions to the adoration of the Magi and Shepherds described in Mt. 2:1–12 and Lk. 2.
6. The second epigram is devoted to Epiphany which celebrates the Baptism of Christ by John the Baptist in the Jordan river (cf. Mt. 3:13–17; Lk. 3:22; Jn. 2:1–11).
7. A very strong visual description, with Christ being baptized, the Father speaking through the clouds, and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove.
8. The third epigram is devoted to the Hypapante which commemorates the holy meeting of Simeon with Christ in the Temple (Lk. 2:22–38) forty days after the latter's birth (celebrated on February 2).
9. A contrast between the timeless God in the form of a baby and the aged Simeon.
10. An allusion to Is. 6:6. This verse also includes a *paronomasia* (λαβών – λαβίδος).
11. Hunger prints Ἄιδῆ, but the ms. reads ἄδῆ.
12. The fourth epigram treats the feast of the Annunciation (cf. Lk. 1:26–38) which commemorates the archangel Gabriel's announcement of the Incarnation to the Theotokos (it is celebrated on March 25).
13. The same idea of the heaven and earth rejoicing is to be found in the opening verse of the epigram on the Nativity.
14. This epigram treats the feast of Palm Sunday which commemorates Christ's triumphal entrance to Jerusalem one week before his Resurrection (cf. Mt. 21:1–11, Mk. 11:1–11, Lk. 16:28–44; Jn. 12:12–19).
15. The first verse is based on a contrast between the two images of Christ seated upon a throne and a colt signifying the double nature of Christ. The same image is encountered in an epigram on Palm Sunday from a cycle of epigrams preserved in the *Anthologia Marciana* (ms. Marc. g. 524).²⁶
16. Hunger prints Ἄιδου, but the ms. reads ἄδου.
17. An allusion to the raising of Lazarus by Christ four days after his death. The story is described in Jn. 11:1–44.
18. The description of the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem is very close to the narrative offered by the Gospels (cf. Mt. 31:8; Mk. 11:8; Lk. 19:35).

²⁵ Mercati 1925: 336

²⁶ Ἄνω σε, Χριστέ, τὸν καθήμενον πόλω/Πώλος δι' ἡμᾶς εὐτελής φέρει κάτω. Hörandner 1992: 109; for further parallels see Hunger 1982: 641.

19. The sixth feast is that of the Crucifixion, which commemorates the apex of Christ's Passions.
20. The seventh epigram commemorates the Deposition of Christ from the Cross and His burial.
21. Nicodemus was a Pharisee who assisted in Christ's descent from the cross and His burial (cf. Jn. 19:39).
22. Hunger's conjecture ἀεὶ πληρώσαι ἐξ αὐτοῦ λύσιν is not very convincing, because of syntactical flaws.
23. The eighth epigram deals with Pentecost, which celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples described in Ac. 2:1–31.
24. A wordplay on ξένιον and ξένος.
25. This is an allusion to Ps. 107:16.
26. The tenth feast of the *Dodecaorton* is St. Thomas Sunday (*Antipascha*) which commemorates Thomas' doubts concerning the full resurrection of Christ, as described in Jn. 20:19–31.
27. The Ascension celebrates the ascent of Christ into heaven (for accounts describing this story, see Lk. 24:50–53; Ac. 1:9–12).
28. A reference to some classes of celestial beings (Angels, Archangels, Lordships, and Thrones). Ps.–Dionysius Areopagite made a very detailed division of incorporeal beings into three Triads: (a) Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones; (b) Virtues, Dominations, Powers; and (c) Principalities, Archangels, Angels., *On the Celestial Hierarchy* (chapter VI) 26,1–27,2.
29. The last epigram is dedicated to the feast of the Transfiguration, which celebrates the appearance of Christ as light to three of his disciples on Mount Tabor (cf. Mt. 17:1–8; Mk. 9:2–8; Lk. 9:28–36).
30. The three disciples who witnessed Christ's Transfiguration on Mount Tabor are Peter, James, and John.
31. This is a reference to Moses and Elijah who appeared on Mount Tabor talking with Christ.

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II.4.4 John Apokaukos (c.1155–1233)

An Epigram on the Basin in the Palace

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, “Επιγράμματα Ἰωάννου τοῦ Ἀποκαύκου,” *Ἄθηνᾶ* 15 (1903) no. 12, 475; repr. in I. Delimaris, *Πατέρες τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικοὶ συγγραφεῖς τῆς δυτικῆς Ἑλλάδος 1: Ἄπαντα Ἰωάννου Ἀποκαύκου* (Nafpaktos, 2000), 474; F. Dimitrakopoulos, “Τὰ ποιήματα τοῦ Ἰωάννου Ἀπόκαυκου,” *Ναυπακτικὰ* 10 (2001), 574

MS.:¹ St. Petersburg, RNB, Φ no. 906, gr. 250 (= Granstr. 454) (s. XIII), f. 80v

Other Translations: I. Delimaris, as above, 490–91 (Modern Greek)

Significance

This is an outstanding example of an epigram on a work of art that guides the viewer towards a perception of the art object. The text is distinguished by the prominent use of the verb νοέω (to perceive spiritually, to consider) and the vivid imagery.

The Author

See T. Tsampouras and F. Spingou, I.2.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

As is often the case for epigrams on works of art, the specific object to which this epigram refers cannot be identified. Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus suggested that the epigram below was attached to an extant basin, placed at the episcopal palace in Nafpaktos,² while according to Kosmas Lambropoulos' reading it is an epigram on the depiction of *Nipter*.³ References to the properties of the Baptism and, most importantly, allusions to the object itself,⁴ rather strengthen Papadopoulos-Kerameus' view that the epigram was composed for a basin and not an iconographical program.

1 Consulted.

2 On the episcopal palace see F. Spingou, I.8.5 in this volume.

3 That is, the washing of the feet of the disciples (Jn 13:1–17): Lambropoulos, *Ἀπόκαυκος*, 113 n. 64.

4 See vv. 1 and 4.

Although the material from which the basin was made is not revealed in the text, there are some hints regarding the iconographic program that it bore.⁵ The reference to the disciples and Christ may indicate that they were depicted on it.⁶ Mentions of an active imperial patronage suggest that the emperor or a ruler may also have been depicted as a thirteenth disciple.⁷

Taking into account the numerous references to Christ's Disciples and the "strengthening" properties of Christian Baptism, it is possible that this basin had been used as a baptismal font, and thus could have stood in the famous *episkopeion*, the episcopal palace, as the title also suggests.⁸ The Greek word βάπτω – from which the verb βαπτίζω also derives – means "to dip in" and it was used also for the smith tempering the red-hot steel,⁹ making the connection between the basin and the Baptism easier.

The epigram is divided into two parts. In the first part (vv. 1–3), the poet refers to the function of the basin in Christian faith. In the second part (vv. 4–8), the poet discusses the emperor and his "quality" as a ruler anointed by God. The metrical structure follows the usual principles of the Byzantine dodecasyllable.

5 The use of the verb χαλκεύομαι in v. 1, from which the word χαλκός (cooper) derives, might suggest that the basin was of copper; the connection remains rather uncertain, as the verb has the meaning "to be worked on an anvil"

6 Vv. 2–3.

7 V. 5.

8 On the *episkopeion* of Nafpaktos see F. Spingou, I.8.5 in this volume.

9 See LSJ s.v.

8. Cf. Gregory of Nanzianos, *On the Holy Baptism*.¹²
9. This verse has been associated by Papadopoulos-Kerameus with Ps. 32(33):15. However, it may be better understood as a reference to the book of Ez. 14:5. In the following passage God is speaking to Ezekiel on how to confront a sinful nation:

ὅπως πλαγιάσῃ τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ τὰς καρδίας αὐτῶν τὰς ἀπηλλοτριωμένας ἀπ' ἐμοῦ ἐν τοῖς ἐνθύμασι αὐτῶν.

He [= a man of the house of Israel] should turn aside the house of Israel, according to their hearts that are estranged from me [the Lord] in their thoughts.

If this is indeed the allusion implied in v. 8, then Apokaukos sees the emperor as a new Ezekiel.

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Lampropoulos, *Ἀπόκαυκος*.

¹² Gregory of Nanzianos, *On the Holy Baptism*, XXVI. 3–6, col. 396: “Ἐως θερμὸς ὁ σίδηρος, τῷ ψυχρῷ στομωθήτω, μή τι παραπέσῃ μέσον καὶ διακόψῃ τὸν πόθον.

II.4.5 Unknown (1269)

An Inscription from Santa Maria di Cerrate, near Squinzano, Italy

LINDA SAFRAN

Ed.: L. Safran, *The Medieval Salento: Art and Identity in Southern Italy*, Middle Ages series (Philadelphia, 2014) no. 114C, 314; other editions: S. Castromediano, *La chiesa di S. Maria di Cerrate nel contado di Lecce* (Lecce, 1987), 16 (lower lines); G. Cozza-Luzzi in C. De Giorgi, *La provincia di Lecce: Bozzetti di Viaggio*, 2 vols. (Lecce, 1882–88; repr., Galatina, 1975), 2, 317; G. Cozza-Luzzi in C. De Giorgi, *La chiesa di Santa Maria di Cerrate (note archeologica)* (Florence, 1888), 21; G. Cozza-Luzzi, “Epigrafe greca nell’abbazia di S. Maria di Cervate (o Cerrate),” *Bessarione* 4/25–26 (1898–99), 339–54; N. Festa, “Una nuova ricostruzione dell’epigrafe greca della badia di Cervate,” *Bessarione* 6/37–38 (1899), 161; D. Kemper, *SS. Niccolò e Cataldo in Lecce als ein Ausgangspunkt für die Entwicklung mittelalterlicher Bauplastik in Apulien und der Basilicata*, Manuskripte zur Kunstwissenschaft 41 (Worms, 1994), 70–71; A. Guillou, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques médiévales d’Italie* (Rome, 1996) no. 171, 180–81; A. Jacob, “Le ciborium du prêtre Taphouros à Sainte-Marie de Cerrate et sa dédicace,” in *Cavalieri alla conquista del Sud: Studi sull’Italia normanna in memoria di Léon-Robert Ménager*, eds. E. Cuozzo and J.-M. Martin (Bari, 1998), 117–33; A. Rhoby, in *BEIÜ* 3, no. IT36, 505 and no. IT35, 503; A. Jacob, “Épigrammes byzantines de l’Italie méridionale gravées sur pierre: quelques observations sur un ouvrage récent,” *RSBN* 51 (2014), 179–82; A. Rhoby, “The Greek Inscriptions of Norman-Staufian Apulia in the Late Eleventh, the Twelfth and the Thirteenth Centuries: Texts and Contexts,” in *Oltre l’Alto Medioevo: Etnie, vicende, culture nella Puglia normanno-sveva* (Spoleto, 2020), 393–417 (405–7)

Monument/Artefact: Limestone ciborium on re-used columns, fig. II.4.5

Other Translations: L. Safran, as above; A. Rhoby, “The Greek Inscriptions,” as above (English); A. Guillou, as above; A. Jacob, as above (French); D. Kemper, as above; A. Rhoby, *BEIÜ*, as above (German); S. Castromediano, as above; G. Cozza-Luzzi, all three as above (Italian)

Significance

This is the only extant ciborium from an Orthodox context in the Salento. Its capitals have been dated to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, so the inscription indicates a re-use of earlier materials, including imported marble columns. The inscription twice refers to the altar underneath; while this one is not medieval, many regional churches that contain Greek inscriptions do have their original free-standing or attached altars,



Fig. II.4.5 Santa Maria di Cerrate, ciborium, inscription on west face, 1269

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sometimes painted to resemble colorful altar cloths, and several depictions of altar tables are also preserved, but none with the ciborium. The example at Cerrate was certainly a luxurious addition to the monastery; perhaps it was Symeon's entrance gift.

Text and Context

The monastery of Santa Maria di Cerrate, about 15 km northeast of Lecce, was founded before 1096, probably by Bohemund, prince of Taranto and Antioch and a leader of the First Crusade. Despite engaging in hostilities with the Byzantine Empire, Bohemund and other Normans were great patrons of Orthodox monasteries in southern Italy. Cerrate remained an Orthodox foundation, albeit a steadily shrinking one, throughout the Middle Ages. Its original form is unknown, as the current triple-apsed basilica dates to the twelfth century; a columned loggia of uncertain date was added to the north flank. In both form and decoration, the Cerrate church – with its open-truss roof, interior wall articulation, portal sculpture, and round-arched exterior frieze – imitated Santi Niccolò e Cataldo in Lecce, built by the Norman ruler Tancred in 1180 and subsequently a model for other large churches in the region. The fresco paintings inside Cerrate range in date from the twelfth to the fourteenth century; of these, the earliest are military saints, holy bishops, angels, female saints, and a Koimesis scene. The latter was duplicated below an

Assumption of the Virgin in the fourteenth century, on a different wall, and later removed to the adjacent museum. The language of the identifying texts is uniformly Greek, although the second Koimesis includes a small supplicant whose prayer is in Latin. The style of all of these paintings is byzantinizing, even if some of the iconography and the disposition of the images are not.

The ciborium's dodecasyllabic inscription, one of a handful in Greek in the region, is divided into two parts consisting of two lines each: an upper text at the very top of the ciborium architrave (revealed only in 1993) and a lower one, framed by a double relief molding, just above the column capitals. The text below reproduces this arrangement, but the bottom verses should be read before the top ones, which conclude, as is usual, with the date. The uppermost line is damaged at the top edge where, at least in the nineteenth century,¹ nails were inserted to suspend lamps near the altar on the feast of the Birth of the Virgin (September 8).

The text is incised between double guide lines, and the initial crosses, some letters, and points between verses still retain the dark lead fill that originally made the text more legible. Ligatures of straight and rounded letters, occasional misspellings, and certain letterforms without local analogues among the region's Greek inscriptions suggest that the engraver and constructor, Taphouros, had only a rudimentary grasp of the language.² Nevertheless, the inclusion of minuscule letters here looks forward to their much wider use in fourteenth-century inscriptions.

Both the patron and the artist are named twice. This gives unusual emphasis to the artist, even in a region that contains over a dozen inscriptions in which artists or builders (who may also be patrons) are named in Greek. The construction and decoration in 1196 of a rock-cut Orthodox monastery dedicated to the "hieromartyr Blasios," San Biagio, at San Vito dei Normanni, is credited to a hegoumenos named Benedict, a financial supporter whose name began with M, and "master Daniel and Mar[tin?]." Although neither name on the Cerrate ciborium is accorded special visual prominence, Symeon's name in the lowest line is carefully incised one word from the left edge so that it is not obscured by the supporting column capital.

The text was likely composed locally by a mediocre poet. As Jacob has noted,³ the first word, Πύκασμα, is used in Ps. 117 (118):27, which continues with a reference to the "horns" of the altar that must have resonated at a monastery "of the horns" (*Cerrate*).

1 De Giorgi, *La provincia di Lecce*, 2, 317.

2 Ed. Jacob, "Le ciborium," 122–23.

3 Ed. Jacob, "Le ciborium," 127.

Text**Diplomatic Transcription¹**

+ Δουλους τρεφε τραπέζη (και) στοᾶ σκεπε τον Συμεων τε κτητορα ρακενδ[υ]την :
 Ταφουρον αῡ δειμαντα τον ξεστην Θ(ε)ε̄. Α[μην] / εν ε̄τι, ς̄ ψ̄ σ̄ζ̄ μηνι μάρτιο της
 ἰνδικτοιῶνις ῑ β̄ .

+ Πύκασμα τερπνόν τῆς τραπέζης Κ(υρι)ω ὄπερ κατεσκευαζε Ταφουρος θύτης κο/ποις
 Συμεών . τοῦ προεστῶτος τόδε ὄρον θε<α>τά δόξαν υψίστω νεμε ἔξ ου κάτεισιν ἀγαθων
 πασα δοσοις.

Edited Text

Δούλους τρέφε τραπέζη (καί) στοᾶ σκέπε,
 τὸν Συμεών τε κτήτορα ρακενδ[ύ]την,
 Ταφοῦρον αὖ δείμαντα τὸν ξέστην, Θεέ· ἀμήν·
 ἐν ἔτει ςψοζ' μηνι Μαρτίῳ, ἰνδικτιώνης ιβ'.

Πύκασμα τερπνόν τῆς τραπέζης Κ(υριο)υ
 ὄπερ κατασκεύαζε Ταφοῦρος θύτης
 κόποις Συμεών τοῦ προεστῶτος τόδε·
 ὄρων, θε<α>τά, δόξαν ὑψίστω νέμε
 ἔξ οὗ κάτεισιν ἀγαθῶν πᾶσα δόσις·

Translation

Nourish, O God, the servants of your altar and protect under your portico Symeon, the rag-wearing patron,² as well as he who constructed it, Taphouros, the engraver.³ Amen. In the year 6777,⁴ in the month of March in the twelfth indiction.

Gracious protection of the altar of the Lord, which the priest Taphouros constructed thanks to the expense of the abbot Symeon; when you see it, visitor, give glory to the Highest, from whom all good things come.

Commentary

1. The diplomatic transcription reproduces the appearance of the words and lines, including the absence of breathing marks and paucity of accents, whereas the edited text normalizes these errors and highlights the meter.
2. Nothing is known about Symeon. “Rag-wearing” is synonymous with “monk” and is used in contemporary Salentine poetry and manuscript colophons (Jacob 1996: 129).
3. Taphouros the ξέστης (from ξέω), who in the lower text is also credited with having “constructed” (κατεσκεύαζε) the ciborium, is not attested elsewhere although the surname *Tafuro* is still common in the region.
4. That is, 1269 CE.

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II.4.6 Manganeios Prodromos (c.1100–after c.1162)

Verses on Icon Veils Dedicated by the Sebastokratorissa Eirene in Churches in Constantinople

ELIZABETH AND MICHAEL JEFFREYS

Ed.: Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys, in Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems*, nos. 91–94; previous editions: Text A (no. 91): E. Miller, *Recueil des historiens des croisades: historiens grecs*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1881), 654, vv. 1–5; 692, vv. 1–31; 698, vv. 12–15. Text B (no. 92): E. Miller, “Poésies inédites de Theodore Prodrome,” *Annuaire de l’association pour l’encouragement des études grecques en France* 17 (1883), 35. Text C (No. 93): Miller, “Poésies,” as above, 36. Text D (No. 94): Miller, “Poésies,” as above, 36–37
MS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus XI.22 (s. XIII ex.), ff. 82r–v
Other Translations: Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys forthcoming; only nos. 93 and 94: Nunn, “Encheirion,” 96 and 95–96, respectively

Significance

While the thrust of these epigrams, expressed in the persona of the sebastokratorissa, is to reveal her unhappy circumstances at several points in the 1140s, there are also hints at the ornamentation of the veils, although the iconographical elements can only be guessed at.

The Author

See E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, I.3.15.

Text and Context

The poems in this section are part of a cluster of epigrams in the manuscript Marcianus Graecus XI.22 for dedications of liturgical objects made in churches of the Virgin by the sebastokratorissa Eirene and women from her immediate family in the 1140s. This set presents verses to accompany offerings of *encheiria*, or icon veils, decorative fabrics to be placed before an icon.² Although no contemporary examples survive,³ by analogy with later pieces it is likely that Manganeios’ verses were to be embroidered on the fabric. The epigrams usually name the donor and indicate the reasons for the votive offering.

¹ Consulted.

² As discussed in Nunn, “Encheirion,” 73–102.

³ The earliest comparable embroidered liturgical cloths are a late twelfth-century fragmentary cloth in the Treasury of San Marco, Venice, and the *aeres* (chalice veils) in the Halberstadt cathedral treasury: see Woodfin 2012: 36–37.

Text

- A. Καὶ οὗτοι οἱ στίχοι εἰς ἅγιον ἐγγχείριον τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τῆς Ὁδηγητρίας γεγονὸς καὶ αὐτὸ παρὰ τῆς σεβαστοκρατορίσσης

Ἄβυσσος ὤφθη χαρίτων μοι, Παρθένε,
 ἀλλ' εἰς ἄβυσσον συμφορῶν ἐξετράπη·
 κλάδῳ συνήψας βασιλικῆς πορφύρας –
 σεβαστοκράτωρ Ἀνδρόνικος ὁ κλάδος –
 5 ἀλλὰ κλύδων ἔχει με τῶν παθημάτων·
 ῥοαῖς με κατήρδευσας εὐκλείας πάλαι,
 ἀλλὰ στεναγμῶν ῥεῦμα νῦν με συνέχει·
 εὐτεκνίαν δέδωκας, ἀλλὰ τῶν τέκνων
 ἀτυχία καὶ ζῶσαν ἐστέρησέ με·
 10 πολλῶν με πεπλήρωκας εὐτυχημάτων,
 ἀλλὰ βρίθω νῦν τῶν περιστατημάτων·
 εἶχον κλέος πρίν, ἀλλὰ νῦν ἀδοξίαν,
 δρόσου ψεκασμούς, ἀλλὰ νῦν ὄμβρους πόνων·
 εἶχον ποταμὸν τῶν ψυχαγωγημάτων,
 15 ἀλλ' εὕρον ἰλὺν τῶν παραπικρασμάτων·
 εὐθυμίας ἔπινον ἄκρατον μέλι,
 ἀλλ' ἐκροφῶ νῦν κόνδου τῆς ἀθυμίας,
 καί μου θερίζει πικρία τὴν καρδίαν·
 πρηστήριοι καύσωνες ἐκφλέγουσί με,
 20 καὶ λοῖσθος ἄνθραξ κατεπυρπόλησέ με·
 κἂν μὴ προέστης ἢ συνήθης προστάτις,
 καί μοι τὸν Ἄλέξιον ἀπεχαρίσω
 τὸ λοῖσθον ἔρνος τοῦ κλάδου τῆς πορφύρας
 ἀμετρία τε πυρετοῦ κεκμηκότος,
 25 ὡς μηδὲ τὴν αἴσθησιν ἀρτίαν ἔχειν,
 ὁδοῦσιν ἤδη θανάτου βεβρωμένου,
 τάχ' ἂν με κατέκαυσεν ἢ φλόξ τοῦ πάθους·
 ἀνθ' οὗ τὸ πέπλον τοῦτο κοσμήσασά σοι
 σεβαστοκρατόρισσα λάτρις Εἰρήνη·
 30 ὑπὲρ μεγίστου δῶρον εὐτελὲς φέρω,
 σὺ δ' ἀντιδοίης τῶν ἀναγκῶν μοι λύσιν.

- B. Εἰς ἐγγχείριον τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τῆς Βασισιωτίσσης γεγονὸς παρὰ τῆς σεβαστοκρατορίσσης

Τραγωδίας ἄξιον οὐδὲν ἐν βίῳ
 οὗ πείραν, ἀπείρανδρε μήτερ, οὐκ ἔχω.

Translation

- A. These verses too¹ were on a holy encheirion of the most holy Theotokos the Hodegetria,² also made by³ the Sebastokratorissa⁴

You have proved a chasm of graces for me, Virgin,
 but I have fallen into an abyss of disaster:
 you united me to a branch⁵ of the imperial porphyra –⁶
 Andronikos the Sebastokrator⁷ was the branch –
 5 but the rough water of sufferings now possesses me;
 you watered me once with the streams of fame,
 but a flood of groans has now oppressed me;
 you gave me the blessing of children, but from those children
 misfortune separated me, though I lived still;⁸
 10 you filled me with many successes,
 but now I am rich only in misfortunes;
 I had glory before, but now disgrace,
 I had a sprinkling of dew, but now storms of pain;
 I had a river of delights,
 15 but I have found the mire of bitterness;
 I used to sip the pure honey of prosperity,
 but I now drink to the dregs the cup of despondency
 and bitterness lays waste my heart;
 blasts of heat consume me,
 20 and the final blaze has utterly burned me;
 and if you had not been present, my usual guardian,
 and had not bestowed on me Alexios,⁹
 the last shoot of the branch of the porphyra,
 when Andronikos had grown weak through excessive fever
 25 so that he did not even have full consciousness¹⁰
 but was already being devoured by the fangs of death,
 the blaze of suffering would have completely consumed me.
 In return for this I have decorated this covering for you,
 I the Sebastokratorissa, your worshipper Eirene;
 30 I offer a worthless gift for the greatest of favors:
 may you grant in return a solution to my sufferings.

- B. On an encheirion¹¹ of the most holy Theotokos the Bassiotissa,¹² made by the Sebastokratorissa

There is nothing in this life worthy of tragedy
 which I have not experienced, mother who knew no man.¹³

ἔπαθον ἀνύποιστα, δεινὰ ποικίλα·
 ὁ συκοφάντης ἐξεμυκτήρισέ με,
 5 ὁ γλῶτταν αὐχῶν, ὡς μάχαιραν καὶ βέλος,
 ἔτρωσεν, ὠνείδισεν, ἐχλεύασέ με·
 ἐξεστενώθην, πνιγμονῇ συνεσχέθην,
 ἐξηπορήθην, ἤλθον εἰς Ἄδου στόμα,
 ἔθηκα βάσιν εἰς πέταυρον παμφάγου·
 10 εἰς ἀπόγνωσιν παρὰ μικρὸν ἐρρίφην,
 εἰ μὴ με συνέστησεν ἡ δεξιὰ σου.
 τίθημι γοῦν σε καταφυγὴν ἐσχάτην,
 καὶ σοὶ τὸ μικρὸν τοῦτο προσφέρω δόμα,
 ὡς ἂν τὸ κλυδώνιον αὕτη κοιμίσεις
 15 καὶ τῶν ὀδυνῶν τοὺς τaráχους εὐνάσεις,
 ἐν τῇ μεταστάσει δὲ τῇ τῶν ἐνθάδε
 τῇ δεξιᾷ με συγκατατάξαις στάσει
 σεβαστοκρατόρισσαν οἰκτρὰν Εἰρήνην.

C. Ἔτεροι εἰς ἅγιον ἐγχείριον τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τῆς ἐν τοῖς Κύρου, γεγονὸς παρὰ τῆς σεβαστοκρατορίσεως

Ἄν τις ποταμὸς καὶ ῥύμη τῶν ῥευμάτων,
 ἐνταῦθα ταῦτα καὶ Θεοῦ χρυσῆ πόλις·
 γαστήρ γὰρ ἡ σὴ τοῦ θεανθρώπου πόλις,
 5 ὁ δ' αὖ ποταμὸς Πνεῦμα τὸ ζῶν καὶ μένον,
 καὶ ῥευμάτων ὄρμημα, ῥοῦς χαρισμάτων.
 εὔρον σε τοίνυν τὴν θεοῦ χρυσῆν πόλιν,
 περιοχὴν σώζουσαν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου·
 εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἐσκέπασεν ἡ δεξιὰ σου
 τὸν ἀπὸ δένδρου πορφυρανθοῦς μοι κλάδον,
 10 τρωθέντα δεινῶς ἐν δόρατι τὴν κόρην
 καὶ τοῦ θανάτου ταῖς πύλαις ἠγγικότα,
 τάχ' ἂν κατέσχε ψύξις αὐτὸν θανάτου·
 τῶν σῶν ἐπλήσθην τοιγαροῦν δωρημάτων.
 ὑπὲρ δὲ τοῦ λείποντος αἰτῶ καὶ πάλιν,
 15 κύρωσον ἀρχῆς τῷ βασιλεῖ μου πλάτος
 καὶ κύρος αὐτῷ κατὰ βαρβάρων δίδου·
 καὶ τοῖς ἔμοῖς βότρυσι τοῖς ἠνθηκόσι
 τὴν τοῦ κρατοῦντος θάλψιν αὐξήσεις ἔτι.
 ταύτην δυσωπεῖ τὴν δέησιν Εἰρήνην,
 20 σεβαστοκρατοῦς Ἀνδρονίκου σύζυγος.

I have suffered unbearable pains, various dangers:
 the informer has derided me,
 5 he who wielded his tongue, like a knife and arrow,
 wounded, insulted and mocked me;
 I was imprisoned, I was held fast by the throat,
 I was in distress, I came to the mouth of Hades
 I set my foot on the devil's trap;
 10 I was all but thrown into despair,
 had your right hand not supported me.
 I regard you thus as my last refuge,
 and I offer you this small gift,
 so that you yourself may calm the surging wave
 15 and soothe the upheavals of sufferings,
 and that in my departure from this life
 you may marshal me on God's right hand,¹⁴
 the Sebastokratorissa, pitiful Eirene.

C. Other verses¹⁵ on a holy encheirion of the Most Holy Theotokos in *ta Kyrou*,¹⁶ produced by the Sebastokratorissa

If there exist a river and rushing streams,
 then these are here and God's golden city;¹⁷
 for your womb is the city¹⁸ of God who became man,
 and the river likewise is the living, indwelling Spirit
 5 and an onset of streams, a flood of delights.
 So I have found you to be God's golden city,
 a precinct giving salvation from death;
 for if your right hand had not protected
 my branch of the porphyrogennetos tree,¹⁹
 10 badly wounded as he was by a spear in his eye²⁰
 and approaching the gates of death,
 the chill of death would perhaps now have held him;
 thus I have been filled with your benefactions.
 I make supplication again on behalf of my absent son:
 15 grant to my emperor breadth of rule
 and give him power over the barbarians;
 and for my grapes²¹ which now have flourished
 increase still more the sovereign's warmth.
 Eirene pleads with you for this petition,
 20 wife of the Sebastokrator Andronikos.

D. Ἔτεροι εἰς ἅγιον ἐγχεῖριον γεγονὸς παρὰ τῆς αὐτῆς σεβαστοκρατορίσσης, ἐν τῇ ὑπερα-
γίᾳ Θεοτόκῳ τῆς Πηγῆς

Ἄκουε καὶ νῦν, τοῦ Δαυίδ ἡ θυγάτηρ,
 ὅσοις με κακοῖς ἐξέθλιψε πολλάκις
 ὁ τῶν ἄνωθεν ἐκπεσῶν ἀποστόλων.
 ἡ δεξιὰ μου, διέγνωσ, παραστάτις,
 5 ὅπως δὲ πάλιν ἐκδιήνοιξε στόμα
 ζητῶν με πᾶσαν συλλαβεῖν τοῖς ἐγκάτοις·
 καὶ τοῦτ' ἐπέγνωσ καὶ κεκώλυκας, κόρη,
 ἐν οἷς ὁ βότρυς τῆς ἐμῆς εὐκληρίας,
 κακῶ συναντήματι δεινοῦ Τελχίνος,
 10 οἴμοι, κακῶς πέπονθεν τρωθεῖς τὴν κόρη·
 δι' ὃν τὰ χρηστὰ σπλάγχνα τοῦ βασιλέως,
 ἄνθραξι λύπης ἐμφλόγου κεκαυμένα,
 τῶν δακρῶν ἔπηξε τοὺς μαργαρίτας,
 οὓς ὁ κρατῶν ἔσταξεν ἐσφαιρωμένους.
 15 πηγὴν σε τοίνυν ηὔτύχησα χαρίτων,
 πηγὴ χαριτόβρυτε τοῦ ζῶντος Λόγου·
 ἔν μοι τὸ λεῖπρον ὑπὲρ οὗ κλίνω γόνυ·
 ἔτι πλατύναις τῶ βασιλεῖ τὰ κράτη,
 ἔτι βραβεύσαις μακροκύκλους ἠλίους
 20 εἰς ἀντίληψιν τῶν ἐμῶν ριζωμάτων.
 ταῦθ' ἵκετεύει παρακλήτωρ Εἰρήνη,
 καὶ τόνδε δῶρον τὸν πέπλον σοι προσφέρει,
 ἠχοῦσα κλῆρον εὐτυχῆ συζυγίαν
 σεβαστοκρατοῦς Ἀνδρονίκου δεσπότη.

D. Other verses²² on a holy encheirion produced by the same Sebastokratorissa, in the Most Holy Theotokos of the Pege²³

Listen now too, daughter of David,²⁴
to the many evils with which I have often been afflicted
by him who fell from among the apostles above.²⁵
You, my right hand and defender,²⁶ you have seen
5 how again he has opened his mouth
seeking to swallow me whole into his innards.
This too you have witnessed and prevented, maiden,
when the fruit of my fortunate childbirth²⁷
in an evil meeting with a terrible Telchin²⁸
10 – alas! – suffered a dreadful wound to his eye.
For him the kind heart of the emperor,
seared by the coals of fiery grief,
formed pearls from tears,²⁹
rounded tears which the ruler shed.
15 So I have found you, fortunately, a source of blessings,³⁰
grace-bearing source of the living Word.
There remains one request for which I bend my knee before you:
may you spread the emperor's power yet further,
may you bestow on him yet more long years
20 for the protection of my descendants.
This request is brought by your suppliant Eirene,
and she offers you this cloth³¹ as a gift,
she who boasts the lot of a blessed marriage
with the lord Andronikos the Sebastokrator.

Commentary

1. This dedicatory lament on Eirene's miserable circumstances is expressed with associative sequences (water: vv. 6–7, 13–14, fire: vv. 19–20) with chiasmic phrases (vv. 13, 16–17) and striking syntactical parallelism (vv. 14–15). It offers no hint of the encheirion's decoration. It was probably written not long after Andronikos' death in 1142, since references to him in texts from later in the 1140s make no mention of these death-bed dramas.
2. The Theotokos the Hodegetria refers to the renowned icon of the Theotokos of uncertain date which was housed in the Hodegon monastery (the monastery "of the Guides"); in the twelfth century, it was regularly processed through the city.⁴
3. It can be debated whether "made by" should be taken literally, implying that Eirene contributed with her needle to the work, or as a statement of patronage. The Byzantine evidence for the participation of aristocratic women in textile skills is weak, in contrast to what is known for Western ladies, for example, Margaret of Scotland (1045–93).⁵
4. The sebastokratorissa Eirene, widow of Andronikos Komnenos (see n. 7) was a noted literary patron in the 1140s.⁶
5. Trees, branches, twigs, and shoots as metaphors of imperial descent are exploited extensively by Manganeios Prodromos and other twelfth-century writers.
6. The porphyra, the imperial birthing chamber, was lined with porphyry (purple marble) and used from the ninth century for the births of a reigning emperor's children; hence the epithet "porphyrogennetos" (purple-born).⁷
7. Andronikos, second son (1108/11–42)⁸ of John II Komnenos, died in the summer of 1142 whilst escorting by sea the body of his elder brother, the co-emperor Alexios, on its return from John II's Cilician campaign; he then contracted the disease that had afflicted his brother.
8. There were five children. From several of Manganeios Prodromos' poems it is apparent that in the 1140s Eirene underwent more than one period of imprisonment, for unknown reasons: it is likely that these lines refer to the first of these episodes, hence the separation from her children and the stark contrasts in the next lines between her previous and present circumstances.
9. Alexios was born on Easter Sunday.⁹ However, the year is uncertain although, according to Varzos, it is more likely to be 1140 or 1141 rather than 1135, for he responded to his father's body with baby-talk.

4 As discussed in Pentcheva, *Icons and Power*, 12–43.

5 Jeffreys 2014: 188–89.

6 See Jeffreys 2014: 177–94.

7 See Dagron 1994: 105–42.

8 Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 76, vol. 1, 357–79.

9 Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 44.158–60; Varzos, *Γενεαλογία* no. 132, vol. 1, 189–218.

10. These lines suggest that Andronikos was in a coma on his arrival in Constantinople, and died shortly after. This is a third solution to the dilemma over when he died: other sources suggest that he died before embarking on the ship, or during the voyage.¹⁰
11. Eirene's indignation is as great as in Text A (no. 91), suggesting a date around 1144–45. As in Text A, this epigram offers no hint about the decoration or iconography of the fabric.
12. The epithet "Basiotissa" can only refer to an icon in the monastery τῶν Βάσσοῦ, in the district "ta Bassou."¹¹ Although certainly in existence from the ninth century, little is known about the monastery in the twelfth century, apart from surviving seals of monks and *hegoumenoi*. The icon of the Virgin was in the right side of the church (according to the anonymous ninth-century *Life of Theophano*).¹² Current scholarship argues that epithets such as Bassiotissa refer to a locality rather than an iconographic type.
13. The Virgin Mary.
14. "On God's right hand": that is, on the Day of Judgement (Mt. 25:33), and thus attain eternal life.
15. This poem is to be dated in the early 1150s, where it seems to be placed in the undated narrative of Kinnamos. Eirene's death took place soon after, in c.1152/3. This may be one of the last poems written for her. It demonstrates Eirene's continued use of votive offerings, but without suggesting the visual aspects of the encheirion.
16. The church of the Theotokos in the district of ta Kyrou is now identified with the Kalenderhane Camii.¹³ A fresco in a niche that survives from before the rebuilding c.1195 after a fire, shows a standing Virgin with a Christ Child before her, generically of the Nikopoios type;¹⁴ inscribed Ἡ ΚΥΡΙΟΤΙΣΑ, it arguably reflects the church's miraculous icon,
17. Ps. 45(46):4.
18. "Womb is the city," one of the many metaphors used of the Virgin Mary.
19. "My branch of the porphyrogenetos tree": that is, the Sebastokratorissa's son John (1126–76);¹⁵ cf. the tree and purple imagery of Manganeios Prodromos, *Poems*, 91.3–4 = Text A. The porphyrogenetos is Eirene's deceased husband Andronikos (cf. 91.3–4).
20. This accident took place during a tournament organized by Manuel in Herakleia of the Mysians (modern Bitola).¹⁶ According to Kinnamos, Manuel was so devastated that he made John protosebastos and protovestiarios in recompense.
21. The grapes are Eirene's five children.

10 The alternatives are set out in Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, vol. 1, 359–61.

11 Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 61, 320–21.

12 Ed. Kurtz, 4.6–7.

13 Striker 1997, esp. A. Berger on topography, p. 7–16; on its icon see Berger, p. 11 and Striker and Hawkins in Striker 2007, p. 124–26.

14 Striker and Hawkins, p. 125, 150.

15 Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 128, vol. 1, 142–55.

16 Kinnamos, *Deeds*, 126.

22. This offering would seem to have been made as a consequence of the same event recorded in Text C (no. 93), thus between 1147/8 and 1152/3.
23. The renowned church of the Theotokos of the Pege (Spring) lay outside the western walls of Constantinople; its spring was miracle-working.¹⁷
24. The “daughter of David” is the Virgin Mary.¹⁸
25. The devil.
26. Cf. Ps. 120(121):5.
27. The Sebastokratorissa’s son John;¹⁹ see n. 20 (93.10–11) for the event that caused his wound.
28. In Manganeios Prodromos’ mythology, a Telchin was a malevolent demon; in the *Theogony* of his contemporary John Tzetzes (written for the Sebastokratorissa Eirene), the Telchins, and the Furies, sprang from blood shed by the castrated Ouranos.²⁰
29. A hint at the decoration on the *encheirion*.
30. An allusion, as in the next line, to the church’s dedication.
31. The fabric, a piece of cloth or a garment (*peplos* may mean both) was possibly decorated with an image of the Theotokos, by analogy with a comparable poem by Manuel Philes on a much later fabric offered to the Theotokos of the Spring by an otherwise unknown Eirene the *archontissa*.²¹

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¹⁷ Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 223–28; C. Mango and N. Patterson Ševčenko, *ODB*, s.v. Pege.

¹⁸ Cf. Lk. 1:32 and, e.g., Ps. 132(133):11.

¹⁹ Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 128, vol. 1, 142–55.

²⁰ Tzetzes, *Theogony* (ed. Matranga), vv. 80–87.

²¹ Talbot 1994: 141 nn. 35 and 155.

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II.4.7 Manganaios Prodromos (c.1100–after c.1162)

Verses on Chalice Covers Dedicated by the Sebastokratorissa Eirene

ELIZABETH AND MICHAEL JEFFREYS

Ed.: Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys, in Manganaios Prodromos, *Poems*, nos. 95–96;
previous edition: E. Miller, “Poésies inédites de Theodore Prodrome,” *Annuaire de
l’association pour l’encouragement des études grecques en France* 17 (1883), 37–38

MS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus XI.22 (s. XIII ex.), f. 82v

Other Translations: Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys forthcoming

Significance

While the thrust of these epigrams, expressed in the persona of the sebastokratorissa, is to reveal her unhappy circumstances at several points in the 1140s, there are also hints at the gold embroidery and pearls that decorated the veils, although the iconographical elements can only be guessed at.

The Author

See E. Jeffreys and M. Jeffreys, I.3.15.

Text and Context

The poems in this section are part of a cluster of epigrams in Marc. Gr XI. 22 for dedications of liturgical objects in churches of the Virgin by the sebastokratorissa Eirene and women from her immediate family in the 1140s. This set presents verses to accompany offerings of chalice coverings.

¹ Consulted.

Text

A. Εἰς ἄγια ποτηροκαλύμματα γεγονότα παρὰ τῆς σεβαστοκρατορίσεως

Κάλυμμα χρυσόγραφον ὑφάνασά σοι,
σεβαστοκρατόρισσα λάτρις Εἰρήνη,
αἰτῶ τὸ χειρόγραφον ὧν παρεσφάλην
ρήξασα τὸν μάργαρον ὃν τίκτει κόρη.

5 Καὶ τοῦτο λάτρις Εἰρήνη σοι προσφέρω,
σεβαστοκρατόρισσα τῷ μαργαρίτῃ·
σύ δ' ἀντιπρυτάνευε τὴν σωτηρίαν
ὁ θῦμα τυθεῖς ὑπὲρ ὧν κατεκρίθην.

10 Τῷ μαργάρῳ σοι τῶν ἐλύτρων τῆς κόρης
εἰς λύτρον ὧν ἤμαρτον εἰσφέρω τόδε
σεβαστοκρατόρισσα λάτρις Εἰρήνη·
σύ δ' ἀντιλυτρώσαις με τῶν ἐναντίων.

B. Εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ

Καὶ τοῦτο ταυτόγραπτον αὐτῇ σοι νέμω
τῷ καινοφυεῖ καὶ μεμαργαρωμένῳ·
σύ δ' ἀντιλευκάναις με χίονος πλέον,
καὶ μαργαρώσαις τὴν κατ' εἰκόνα χάριν.

5 Τυποῖ σε πῦρ πνεύματος εἰς μαργαρίτην,
ἀποστρακοῖ δὲ παρθενικὴ κογχύλη·
σκέπην δὲ συνθέλουσα σοὶ νέμω σκέπην
σεβαστοκρατόρισσα λάτρις Εἰρήνη.

10 Τῷ παμβασιλεῖ τῷ μεμαργαρωμένῳ
καὶ τοῦτο χρυσόστικτον Εἰρήνη λάτρις
σεβαστοκρατόρισσα δῶρον εἰσφέρω,
ὡς ἀντιλάμψοις ψυχικῶ μαργαρίτῃ.

TranslationA. On holy chalice-covers produced by the Sebastokratorissa¹

Having woven you a cover with golden writing,²
 I, the Sebastokratorissa, your worshipper Eirene,
 ask for the bond for sins I committed
 when I cried out against the pearl that the maiden bore.³

5 I, Eirene your worshipper, bring this also to you,
 the Sebastokratorissa to the pearl;
 vouchsafe salvation in return,
 you who were sacrificed for sins for which I was condemned.

To you, the pearl from the Virgin's shell,⁴
 10 I offer this in expiation of my sins,
 I, the Sebastokratorissa, your worshipper Eirene;
 may you in return ransom me from my enemies.

B. On the same subject⁵

This cover too I bring you, similarly embroidered,⁶
 to your novel nature and pearly hue;⁷
 may you in return whiten me whiter than snow,⁸
 and make pearly my form which is in your image.

5 The fire of spirit forms you as a pearl;
 the shell of the Virgin develops your firm surface.
 I, who also wish for shelter, give you a covering,
 the Sebastokratorissa, your worshipper Eirene.

To the king of all who is covered in pearls
 10 this golden embroidery too your worshipper Eirene,
 the Sebastokratorissa, brings you as a gift,
 so that you may shine back on the spiritual pearl.

Commentary

1. Writing in the persona of Eirene, Manganeios Prodromos could have written these verses at any point in the 1140s when Eirene was under imperial displeasure.
2. The phrase “golden writing” is a strong indication that these verses were to be placed on the chalice-cover.²
3. The “pearl” in v. 5 is Christ and the “the maiden” in v. 6 the Virgin Mary.
4. There is word-play in vv. 9–12 on ἔλυτρον (covering, shell), λύτρον (ransom, atonement), and ἀντιλυτρόω (I ransom; a verb only found here: see *LBG*, s.v.).³
5. These lines were probably written at the same time, and with the same intentions, as no. 95.
6. Several otherwise unattested words are found in this epigram: ταυτόγραπτον (v. 1), ἀντιλευκάναις (v. 2), χρυσόστικτον (v. 10).
7. The emphasis on pearls (vv. 2, 4, 5, 9, 12), as in Text A (no. 95), suggests that these form a substantial part of the embroidered decoration.⁴
8. Ps. 50(51): 9.

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² On embroidered coverings for liturgical vessels see Woodfin 2012: 35–38; Johnstone 1967: 85, 86.

³ Discussion in Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 281.

⁴ See also Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 281.

II.4.8 Manuel Philes (c.1270 or slightly later–after 1332/34 or mid 1340s)

Epigram on an Icon of the Archangel Michael on Behalf of the Protostrator Glabas

ANDREAS RHOBY

Ed.: Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Esc. 82/Flor. 224, ed. E. Miller, vol. 1, 36 and 432, respectively
MSS.:¹ Florence, BML, Plutei 32.19 (s. XV), f. 264r

Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo, Graecus X.IV.20 (s. XV/XVI),
f. 21r

Other Translations: None

Significance

The verses form a laudatory epigram on a work of art, which is addressed to the archangel Michael. As with many other poems of Philes,² the epigram is written ἐκ προσώπου (“on behalf of”), as if the commissioner himself had composed the verses. Within Philes’ preserved oeuvre there are three poems, which were composed on behalf of Tarchaneiotes’ wife Maria: one is the epigram on the outer cornice of the Pammakaristos chapel,³ two more poems are addressed to the Mother of God, Mary, the donor’s namesake.⁴

The Author

See A. Rhoby, with additions by M. Bazzani, I.4.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

At an unknown date, Michael Tarchaneiotes Doukas Glabas († between 1305 and 1308)⁵ commissioned an epigram for a portable icon of the archangel Michael, his patron-saint. It is very likely that the verses were inscribed on the icon, presumably on the silver-gilt cover as v. 5 suggests. Tarchaneiotes is one of Philes’ main sponsors; he commissioned

¹ Not consulted. According to Stickler 1992: 210, 217 the epigram is also preserved in the codd. Escorial, R.III.17 and Athens, EBE, Μετόχιον τοῦ Παναγίου Τάφου 351.

² E.g. Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Esc. 161, Esc. 117, and Esc. 231, ed. Miller, 1, 72, 117, 122, etc.

³ See A. Rhoby, II.7.5 in this volume.

⁴ Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Esc. 164 and 165, ed. Miller, 1, 74–76.

⁵ *PLP* 27504.

many works from the poet, among them the inscriptional decoration for the chapel of the St. Mary Pammakaristos church in Constantinople.⁶

In the epigram below, the patron addresses the archangel Michael, who may illuminate him, guide him towards the right way of life and set him free from his material passions. From v. 5 one learns that the icon has a gilded revetment.

⁶ *BEIÜ* 1: no. 215 and M15; *BEIÜ* 3: TR76, TR77.

Text

Εἰς εἰκόνα τοῦ ἀρχιστρατήγου Μιχαήλ ἐκ προσώπου τοῦ πρωτοστράτορος τοῦ Γλαβᾶ¹

Ἦ πνεῦμα καὶ φῶς καὶ πυρὸς μένος φλέγων,²
 ὡς πνεῦμα τὸν νοῦν, ὡς δὲ φῶς τὴν καρδίαν,
 ἀναψύχον φώτιζε καὶ ῥύθμιζέ με,
 καὶ τῶν παθῶν μου τὴν κακὴν ὕλην φλέγε.
 5 τὴν πίστιν ἀθρεῖς, τὸν χρυσάργυρον βλέπεις·
 τί λείπεται γοῦν εἰς τιμὴν τῆς εἰκόνης;
 ὁμώνυμός σοι τὴν τιμὴν πρωτοστράτωρ
 Δούκας ὁ Γλαβᾶς ἐκ ψυχῆς τάδε γράφει.

Translation

Epigram on an icon of the *archistrategos* Michael³ on behalf of the protostrator⁴ Glabas

O spirit and light and consuming force of the fire!
 Like spirit [does to] the mind, like light [does to] the heart,⁵
 refresh, illuminate, and correct [my way];
 yet, consume the wicked matter of my passions.⁶
 5 You behold the faith, you see the gold and silver.⁷
 Thus, what is missing for offering honor to the icon?⁸
 Your namesake, in the rank of⁹ protostrator
 Dukas Glabas writes this for you from his soul.

Commentary

1. “ἐκ προσώπου τοῦ πρωτοστράτορος τοῦ Γλαβᾶ” is missing from the Escorial manuscript.
2. “φλέγον” in the Laurentianus.
3. The title/appellation ἀρχιστράτηγος/*archistrategos*, meaning commander-in-chief, was frequently used for the archangel Michael, who was considered as the “supreme commander of the Heavenly Host” (see Apoc. 12:7–9).
4. The title πρωτοστράτωρ is attested as early as the eighth century. During the Palaiologan period, it was one of the highest functionaries and a commander of troops; he also had ceremonial duties.⁷ According to Pseudo-Kodinos it was eighth in the Palaiologan hierarchy, following *megas doux* and preceding *megas logothetes*.⁸
5. The beginning of the epigram is difficult to interpret: whereas v. 1 may serve as address to the archangel, the term πνεῦμα in v. 2 seems to mean “Holy Spirit,” and φῶς refers to God; the source of v. 2 is 2Cor. 4:6.⁹

7 A. Kazhdan, *ODB*, s.v. “protostrator.”

8 Macrides *et al.* 2013: 465 and *passim*.

9 Ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ὁ εἰπῶν· ἐκ σκοτόυς φῶς λάμπει, ὅς ἔλαμπεν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν πρὸς φωτισμὸν τῆς γνώσεως τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν προσώπῳ Χριστοῦ.

6. The expression “wicked matter of my passions” (τῶν παθῶν μου τὴν κακὴν ὕλην) is also frequently used by Byzantine authors;¹⁰ it describes the burden of the material passion on earth, as e.g. described by Clement the Hymnographer (ninth century).¹¹
7. The noun χρυσάργυρος as term for “silver-gilt cover” is mainly attested in the oeuvre of Manuel Philes.¹² Verse 5 therefore strongly suggests that the epigram refers to the revetment of a portable icon.
8. V. 6 is a rhetorical question which indicates that “gold and silver” (χρυσάργυρος) is the most prestigious material with which he adorned the icon and which he offered to the archangel.
9. It is interesting to observe that τιμὴν is used in vv. 6 and 7 at exactly the same position. Whereas in v. 6 it describes the “honor” of the icon, in v. 7 it refers to the “honor” of the patron.

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¹⁰ Cf. *TLG*.

¹¹ Ed. Magrì 1979: can. 1,68: Πρόσδεξαι, Κύριε, τὰς προσελθούσας σοι ψυχάς, τῆς κοσμικῆς ὕλης τῶν παθῶν συμβολικῶς γυμνωθείσας.

¹² *LBG* s.v.

II.4.9 Hagioanargyrites (fourteenth century)

Verses on a Steatite Icon with the Depiction of Christ's Birth and a Bust of Christ

ANDREAS RHOBY

Ed. : Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Flor. 228, ed. Miller, vol. 1, 430

MS.:¹ Florence, BML, Plutei 32.19 (s. XV), f. 258v

Other Translations: I. Kalavrezou, "The Mother of God in Steatite," in *Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. M. Vassilaki, (Milan, 2000), 190

Significance

This is an example of an epigram which asks the reader to react to the object it is attached to. He or she is invited at the end of the epigram to speak out the words ὦ ξένου τόκου ("O [what a] mysterious birth"), in order to express admiration of the miraculous birth of Christ. At the beginning the author addresses the stone directly: even if the stone is small, it is of value because it bears a depiction of Christ. In addition, the verses play with the meaning of the word ἀμίαντος, which is also the case in Philes' poems on steatites.² Ἀμίαντος λίθος is the Byzantine term for steatite³ but it is also an epithet for the Mother of God.⁴ This particular pun is also attested in an epigram which is preserved *in situ* on a thirteenth-century *enkolpion* from the Vatopedi monastery on Mount Athos.⁵

The Author

Hagioanargyrites, who probably lived in the (first half of the) fourteenth century, is otherwise unknown.⁶ One of his ancestors might have been Michael Hagioanargyrites, an official at the imperial court at the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century.⁷ Since Hagioanargyrites' verses are transmitted among poems of Manuel Philes, he might have been a student of the latter. It cannot be excluded that the appellation "Hagioanargyrites" does not refer to a family name, but instead designates a monk of a monastery dedicated to the SS. Anargyroi.⁸

1 Not consulted.

2 Kalavrezou-Maxeiner 1985: I 79.

3 Kalavrezou-Maxeiner 1985: I 79; Kalavrezou 2000: 188f.

4 Eustratiades 1930: 4.

5 *BEIÜ* 3: AddII8.

6 *PLP* 91049; Rhoby forthcoming.

7 *PBW* Michael 237.

8 Ed. Miller 1, 430 n. 6. Cheynet 2009: 94 suggests that all surnames beginning with "Hagio-" might indicate the connection of a family to a monastery. However, it is not possible to connect Hagioanargyrites with one

Text and Context

The ekphrastic verses were composed at an unknown date, but possibly they are contemporary with those composed by Manuel Philes, that is in the first half of the fourteenth century. It is very likely that – due to the length of the epigram – the verses were indeed inscribed on a steatite icon depicting Christ's birth, and a bust image of Christ. Manuel Philes is notable for having composed several epigrams referring to steatite icons,⁹ which is also evidence for the resumption of the organized production of steatites in the Palaiologan period.¹⁰

Hagioanargyrites' verses are addressed to the stone (λίθος): it is small but it contains two depictions, namely – as indicated by the title – a bust of Christ and the birth of Christ. V. 4 even implies that it was the stone itself which gave form to the depiction of Mary; this is an allusion to the softness of the steatite, which is easy to form. The last two verses are dedicated to the miracle of the birth of Christ.

The verses are written in the usual meter for Byzantine epigrams, the dodecasyllable, whose prosodic rules, i.e. the sequence of long and short syllables (as in the iambic trimeter, the forerunner of the dodecasyllable) are honored. Hagioanargyrites' verses are thus in no way inferior to the ones by Philes.

of the Hagioi Anargyroi monasteries in Constantinople and Thessaloniki because they were nunneries: cf. Kidonopoulos 1994: 1–4; Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 350.

⁹ Kalavrezou 2000: 189.

¹⁰ Kalavrezou-Maxeiner 1985: I 47f.

Text

Στίχοι εἰς λίθον ἀμίαντον ἔχοντα ἐγεγλυμμένην τὴν Χριστοῦ γέννησιν καὶ ἄνωθεν τὸ Χριστοῦ λεμίον.¹ Τοῦ Ἁγιοαναργυρίτου

Τιμῶ σε, λίθε, κἄν μικρὸς μὲν τὴν θέαν,
 ἀλλὰ τὸν ἀχώρητον ἐντὸς εἰσφέρεις·
 ἀλλ' ὡς ἀληθῶς ἀμίαντος τυγχάνεις,
 τὴν ἀμίαντον ἐντυποῖς γὰρ μητέρα,
 5 ἦν παρθένον σύνοιδα, κἄν λεχῶ βλέπω
 βρέφος θεὸν κύουσιν· ὦ ξένου τόκου.

Translation

Verses on a Steatite (Icon) with the Birth of Christ and, Above, a Bust of Christ Carved on It. By Hagioanargyrites

I honor you, stone, although you are small to look at,
 but you contain within you the unlimited.²
 Indeed, you are truly immaculate,
 you give form to the immaculate mother,
 5 whom I know as Virgin, although I see her in her childbed
 giving birth to an infant; oh [what a] mysterious birth!

Commentary

1. The manuscript offers the reading τὸν Χ(ριστὸ)ν λεμί(ον), which most likely has to be corrected to τὸ Χριστοῦ λεμίον.¹¹ The orthography λεμίον does not need correction because a similar form (λεμίν) is also attested elsewhere.¹²
2. ἀχώρητος is an epithet of Christ which is also attested elsewhere,¹³ as for example stated by the third-century author St Hippolytus, who assigns the adjective to both God-Father and God-Son.¹⁴

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Janin, *ÉglisesCP*.

¹¹ The existence of a not attested adjective λεμίος (or λαμίος) (“depicted as bust image”) is less likely.

¹² *Lampe, TLG*; see also *LBG* s.v. λαμίον.

¹³ *Lampe* s.v. 1b.

¹⁴ PG 10 : 701B: ἀχώρητος γάρ ἐστι καὶ ὁ υἱὸς ὡς ὁ πατήρ, καὶ πάντα περιέχει.

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II.4.10 Unknown (c.1100)

Chapel of the Holy Trinity, Monastery of St. John Chrysostom, Koutsovendis, Cyprus

ANNEMARIE WEYL CARR

Ed.: BEIÜ 1, no. 222, 319–20, with a list of previous editions, above all T. Papacostas, *Byzantine Cyprus, The Testimony of Its Churches, 650–1200*, 3 vols. (DPhil. dissertation, University of Oxford, 1999), vol. 3, fig. 149; Papageorghiou, “Βυζαντινή ἐπιγραφική”, 106; C. Mango, *DOP* 44 (1990), 79, figs. 83, 84; C. Mango and E. J. W. Hawkins, *DOP* 61 (1964), 335, fig. 41

Monument/Artefact: Inscription in the Holy Trinity chapel, monastery of St. John Chrysostom near Koutsovendis (fig. II.4.10)

Other Translations: Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 456; C. Mango, as above, 79; C. Mango and E. J. W. Hawkins, as above, 335 (English); BEIÜ 1, no. 222, 319–20 (German)

Significance

The inscription is at the bottom of the west face of the south bema pier.¹ In its alliterative language and perfect scansion, the poem is as pitch-perfect as the elegant paintings it accompanies, thus complementing their cultural refinement. It states the motivation that prompted a high proportion of Byzantine art patronage: the perceived need to display piety and seek absolution for sins.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

Among the earliest portions of the Roman Empire to be Christianized, Cyprus passed smoothly with the rest of the Mediterranean Levant to the control of East Rome in the fourth century, and sustained a vibrant Greek-speaking culture into the seventh century. Its vigorous economy and ample forests invited Umayyad invasion in 648–653, in the wake of which a status of neutrality was imposed on the island, confirmed in a treaty of 688.² Cyprus paid tribute to both empire and caliphate, and was bound to report the

¹ Mango 1990, fig. 84; Mango and Hawkins 1964, fig. 41.

² See Tahar Mansouri 2014: 99–106.



Fig. II.4.10 Koutsovendis, Chapel of the Holy Trinity, Monastery of St. John Chrysostom: donor inscription, south bema pier

Photo: The Byzantine Institute and Dumbarton Oaks Fieldwork Records and Papers, c.late 1920s–2000s

© Collections and Fieldwork Archives, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University, Washington, D.C.

military activity of either power to the other. This neutrality continued until 965 when Nikephoros II Phokas (r.963–969) reintegrated Cyprus into the empire.

The period of neutrality is sparsely documented, though it is clear that the population remained dominantly Christian, Chalcedonian, and Greek-speaking; the century following 965 is if anything even more silent.³ Several surviving cross-in-square churches and the murals at St. Nicholas *tis Stegis* reflect contemporary Byzantine templates,⁴ but the period is also punctuated by two rebellions against the Byzantine state, and nothing suggests a surge of cultural efflorescence. This began to change at the end of the eleventh century, when Cyprus assumed strategic importance as a Byzantine naval base in the wake of Seljuk and Crusader invasions on the Syrian mainland. Military and religious officials from the inner circles of the Byzantine court arrived with their entourages on the island, and Cypriot nobles must have assumed government positions. The affluence accompanying this interaction left as one of its markers a wave of new patronage shaped

³ Papacostas 1999, vol. 1, p. 208–25.

⁴ Papacostas 1999: 143–47; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 54–59.

by metropolitan literary and artistic styles. No monument more emphatically symbolizes this new access to metropolitan models than the parekklesion of the Holy Trinity, built onto the *katholikon* of the monastery of St. John Chrysostom near Koutsovendis at the behest of the *Dux* of Cyprus, Eumathios Philokales.⁵

An aristocrat of the highest rank who figures in Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*, Philokales employed masons conversant with the Constantinopolitan brick and masonry building techniques, and painters skilled in contemporary metropolitan styles and iconographic conventions. He also incorporated in his iconographic program at least two self-referential, poetic epigrams, giving his building a literary elegance appropriate to its visual pretension. One of the epigrams is heavily abraded; the other is given below.

The Holy Trinity was not the only example of accomplished artistic patronage on Cyprus at this time, but it was the most influential.⁶ Though its brick construction had no sequel, its painters seem to have trained the major artists of the ensuing generation, above all the Asinou Master; its incorporation of poetic epigrams was imitated; and its conception, as a private chapel of limited size and calculated elegance, was embraced by local aristocrats.⁷ Philokales himself may have prompted less loving regard. Reputedly cruel and power-hungry,⁸ he is also conspicuously bold in his epigram, presuming the expiation that patrons usually plead for. His boldness seems to have been reinforced by the placement of his own portrait just above the text in the place usually occupied by the saint being beseeched: in this case, since it is on the south bema pier, Christ himself.⁹ The Cypriot holy man, St. Neophytos, who matured as a monk at Koutsovendis, may have thought of Philokales when deploring donors who spent extorted wealth on works of art believing God would reward them.¹⁰

5 See Papageorghiou, *Christian Art*, 169–85; Papacostas 2007: 25–156; Mango 1990: 63–94; Mango and Hawkins 1964: 333–40. Kotoula 2007: 54 treats the building as a funerary chapel, but Mango found no accommodation for a tomb.

6 See Papageorghiou 1963: 73–83; Carr 2014: 167–86.

7 See Panagia Phorbiotissa, Asinou see A.W. Carr, I.2.6 in this volume, and the church of the Panagia, Trikomo see A. W. Carr, II.6.8 in this volume.

8 On Philokales see Papacostas 2007: 62–76.

9 Mango 1990: 78–79.

10 See the Enkleistra of St. Neophytos, A. W. Carr, I.3.5 in this volume.

Text

Τὴν ἐν προσώποις τρισὶ προσκυνουμένην
 ἄναρχον ἀρχὴν υπεράρχιον φύσιν·
 ἄμαχον ἀλκὴν ὑπερούσιον μόνην·
 ποθῶν σφόδρα σε δοῦξ Κύπρου Φιλοκάλῃς
 5 Εὐμάθιος πρῶτιστος νωβελλισίμων
 βάθρων ἀπ' αὐτῶν τὸν νεῶν ἤγειρέ σοι
 πρὸς ἐξιλασμὸν ὧν κακῶς παρεσφάλῃ.

Translation

Loving you greatly, O you who are worshipped in three persons –
 principle without beginning, nature primordial, might invincible,
 alone transcending all substance –
 the dux of Cyprus Eumathios Philokales,
 5 the very first among the *nobelissimoi*,
 built this church for you from its very foundations
 to expiate the evils he has erred in committing.

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II.4.11 Manuel Philes (c.1270 or slightly later–after 1332/34 or mid 1340s)

Epigrams on the Lifegiving Source (*Pege*)

ALICE-MARY TALBOT

Translations previously published in A.-M. Talbot, in “Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges and Its Art,” *DOP* 48 (1994), 148–49

Ed.: A. Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Scor. 157, ed. Miller, vol. 1, 67–68

B. Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Scor. 156, ed. Miller, vol. 1, 66–67

MSS.:¹ A. Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo, Graecus X.IV.20

(s. XV), ff. 38v–39r

B. Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo, Graecus X.IV.20 (s. XV),

ff. 38r–v

Paris, BnF, Graecus 2876 (s. XIV), f. 262r

Other Translations: None

Significance

The epigrams written by Philes provide further testimony on the healing cult at the shrine, and the pious gifts made by grateful recipients of miraculous cures. The epigrams were, in all likelihood, originally inscribed on the objects mentioned in the poems. The epigrams thus provide evidence of lost votive gifts, and an idea of the substantial length of the poems that could be accommodated on these objects.

The Author

See A. Rhoby, with additions by M. Bazzani, I.4.2.

Texts and Context

A group of Philes’ poems is related to the healing shrine of the Lifegiving Source (Zoodochos Pege), a monastery located just outside the walls of Constantinople.² The monastery functioned continuously throughout the history of the Byzantine Empire; the spring still operates to this day in a suburb of Istanbul called Balıklı. Its healing miracles are recorded in an anonymous account of the tenth century, and in an early fourteenth-century text by Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos.³

¹ Not consulted.

² On the shrine of Pege see A. Alexakis, I.2.4 in this volume; see also Majeska 1984: 325–26.

³ See A. Alexakis, I.2.4 and I.8.2 in this volume.

Epigram A: This ten-line epigram in dodecasyllable verses was commissioned by the monk Hilarion Kanabes in supplication for a spiritual healing.⁴ In all likelihood it was inscribed on the reservoir which served as the basin for the holy spring water located in the underground crypt of the shrine.

Epigram B: This poem was commissioned by the *sebastos* Manuel Atzymes, who was cured of a paralyzed hand by his prayers to the Virgin of the Source.⁵ Philes compares the Virgin's healing of Atzymes with Christ's miraculous cure of the man with the withered hand. The epigram was most likely painted on the frame of an icon that depicted Manuel, the donor, extending his healed hand to the Virgin in a gesture of thanksgiving.⁶ Poems of twenty-four verses could fit onto an icon frame, thanks to the Byzantine penchant for using abbreviations and ligatures in their inscriptions.

4 He is known only from this poem and one other by Philes; see *PLP* no. 10857, which equates Hilarion with John Kanabes, who commissioned an epigram on a mosaic icon of the Twelve Feasts.

5 Manuel Atzymes (*PLP* 1632) is known only from this poem.

6 On the depiction of donors in frames see Carr 2006: 189–98.

Text

A. Εἰς δεξαμενὴν ὕδατος ἀνατεθεῖσαν τῇ ζωοδόχῳ Πηγῇ παρὰ Ἰλαρίωνος μοναχοῦ

Τῷ τῶν παθῶν καύσωνι τακεῖς ἐκτόπως,
 ὧ ζῶσα πηγή τῶν Θεοῦ τεραστίων,
 δεξαμενὴν ὕδατος ὠργάνωσά σοι,
 ὡς ἂν ἐπ' αὐτῇ δεικνυοῦση τὸν πόθον
 5 τὸ ζῶν ὕδωρ πίνοιμι τῆς σωτηρίας,
 φυγῶν τὸ πῦρ ἐκεῖνο τῆς τιμωρίας.
 ὁ πλούσιος γὰρ ἐκφοβεῖ με, παρθένε,
 ὃς μάλα διψῶν ἀποτηγανίζεται.
 Ἰλαρίων σὸς ταῦτα φησὶ! Κανάβης,
 10 οἰκτρὸς μοναχὸς εὐτελής, εὔνους δ' ὄμως.

B. Πρὸς τὴν θεομήτορα χαριστήριος

Ὁ σὸς μὲν υἱὸς θαυματουργῶν, παρθένε,
 καὶ τῇ λογικῇ πρακτικῇ συνεισφέρων,
 ἄνικμον ἐψύχωσε χειρὸς ὀστέον,
 ῥήματος αὐτῷ ζωτικὴν δοῦς ἰκμάδα·
 5 καὶ γὰρ ἰατρὸς κοσμοσώστης εὐρέθη,
 προπατορικῆς ἐκτεμῶν χειρὸς πάθος,
 σὺ δ' ὧ Μαριάμ, τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς δρόσε,
 τῆς σῆς με πηγῆς ταῖς ῥοαῖς ἀναψύχεις,
 καὶ τὸν πρὶν ἡμίξηρον ἐξ ἁμαρτίας
 10 χλωροῖς πάλιν, σώτειρα, κοσμεῖς ὀργανοῖς,
 καὶ τῶν ἰατρῶν τὴν σοφὴν ψῆφον λύεις
 τῇ πρὸς τὸ λυποῦν μυστικῇ χειρουργίᾳ.
 ῥάβδος γὰρ ἐν σοὶ γλυκερὸν θάλος φύει,
 καὶ πῦρ ὑπελθὸν οὐ καταφλέγει βάτον,
 15 καὶ ῥοῦς διαστάς, ὡς φυγὰς ὑποστρέφει.
 χειρὶ σε λοιπὸν ζωγραφῶ σκιαγράφου,
 σμικρᾶς ἀμοιβῆς οὐ καταλλήλου χάριν.
 τείνω δέ σοι τὴν χεῖρα τὴν σεσωσμένην,
 ὁ χθὲς θανατῶν ἄρτι φανεῖς ἄρτίπους·
 20 ἐμοὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ καὶ ψυχῆς λύσεις πόνους
 παρειμένης πόρρωθεν ἐκ τῶν πρακτέων,
 εὐσπλαγχνίας ἄβυσσε καὶ τεραστίων.
 ὁ σὸς Μανουὴλ ταῦτα φησὶν Ἀτζύμης,
 ὃν καὶ σεβαστὸν τὴν τιμὴν σὺ δεικνύεις.

Translation

A. On the water reservoir dedicated to the Lifegiving Source by the monk Hilarion

O living source of the miracles of God,
 I, who am exceedingly consumed by the burning heat of passions,
 have arranged [the construction of] a reservoir for you
 so that at this [reservoir] which demonstrates my love
 5 I may drink the living water of salvation,
 and escape the fire of punishment.
 For, O Virgin, I am terrified by [the example of] the rich man²
 who suffers greatly from thirst and is broiled [in hellfire].
 Your [servant] Hilarion Kanabes³ says these words to you,
 10 a pitiable and worthless monk, but nevertheless well disposed.

B. A Poem of Thanksgiving to the Mother of God

O Virgin, your Son, working miracles,
 and joining action with word,
 restored life to the dry bone of a hand,⁴
 giving it the living moisture of His word.
 5 For He has been revealed as a world-saving doctor,
 excising the affliction of our forefather's hand.⁵
 But you, O Mary, dew of my soul,
 refresh me with the streams of your spring,
 and, O Mistress of Salvation, you adorn again with fresh limbs
 10 one who was previously half-withered because of his sins,
 and you repeal the "wise" judgment of the doctors
 with your mystical surgery on the painful [area].
 For in you the rod brings forth a sweet shoot,⁶
 and descending fire does not burn the bush,⁷
 15 and the waters divide and turn back like a fugitive.⁸
 Therefore I paint you with the hand of an icon-painter,
 as an unsuitably small repayment.
 And I extend to you the hand which you have saved,
 I, who only yesterday was on the point of death, but now am revealed sound
 of limb;
 20 For you shall also relieve the suffering of my soul,
 which has for long been paralyzed on account of its deeds,
 O bottomless source of compassion and miracles.
 Your [servant] Manuel Atzymes says these words,
 Whom you reveal with the dignity of *sebastos*.

Commentary

1. Miller prints ταῦτά φησι, however the manuscript has ταῦτα φησί which is correct as the two words are separated by a metrical caesura.
2. Mt. 19:16–30; Mk. 10:17–30; Lk. 18:18–30.
3. It has been suggested that Hilarion Kanabes is to be identified with John Kanabes, one of the *nouveaux riche* of the early fourteenth century.⁷ The family name Kanabes appears for the first time probably in the eleventh century, but the Kanaboi never became influential in the Constantinopolitan court.⁸
4. Cf. Mt. 12:9–14, Mk. 3:1–6; Lk. 6:6–11.
5. Gen. 3:23.
6. Num. 17:9.
7. Ex. 3:1–6.
8. Ex. 14:15–30.

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⁷ Talbot 1994: 148; Ryder 2007: 208–13, 282.

⁸ Cheynet, *Pouvoir*, p. 142.

II.5 Reading: Book Epigrams

Introduction

KRISTOFFEL DEMOEN

“Book epigrams” is the generic term for a diverse range of metrical texts that present manuscripts and their contents: they describe the manuscript in which and on which they are written, structure the main text, praise the author or his oeuvre, identify the scribe or the owner of the manuscript, dedicate the work to a patron or to God, declare the editorial motivations, instruct the readers or ask them to pray for the producers of the manuscript, explain or comment upon a miniature, etc. They are revealing for the Byzantine attitude towards books as devotional and/or aesthetic objects, for social aspects of the medieval reading culture and for literary aesthetics.

An End as a Start

In 1289/1290, a scribe named Makarios finished his work, a codex containing theological works, now Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud gr. 40, with the following *subscription*.¹

+ τῷ συντελεστῇ τῶν καλῶν Θεῷ χάρις :-+++
+ τὸν δακτύλοις γράψαντα, τὸν κεκτημένον,
τὸν ἀναγινώσκοντα | μετ εὐλαβείας,
φύλαττε τοὺς τρεῖς ἢ τριάς τρι|σολβίως :-

Gratitude to God, the creator of all good things.
The one who has written (this book) with his fingers,
the one who has produced/acquired it, and the one who reads it with piety,
safeguard these three, O Trinity, in threefold happiness

These verses are followed by a sentence in prose in the same script and layout as the preceding dodecasyllables. It consists of the year in which the scribe completed his task and a request to the readers, who are asked to pray for the sinful scribe. There then follows

For inspiration, help, and comments I wish to thank Floris Bernard, Ilse De Vos, Maria Tomadaki, Rachele

1 For epigrams that serve as illustrations in this Introduction, I refer to the online searchable *Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams (DBBE)*, which includes at present some 11,600 epigrams, roughly one third of which date to the period covered in this volume (consulted March 2016, revised December 2020; new data are constantly added, so all numbers given in this contribution are subject to change). *DBBE* offers further textual and contextual data, bibliography, and links to the *Pinakes* manuscript database and to published or online images, if available. The permalinks for the Makarios verses are www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/18372, 18373, and 19907. Spelling and punctuation are normalized. In this example, I include some indications of the subscription's layout: the signs indicating the beginning and the end of the epigrams, and the line breaks, which do not coincide with the verse ends; poetry and prose are not visually distinguished in this case.

one final verse in cryptography, mentioning the scribe's name: Χεῖρ ἔμοῦ παντλήμονος τοῦ Μακαρίου (“The hand is mine, of the all-wretched Makarios”).

This final, personalized line is a unique verse,² whereas the first monostich (τῷ συντελεσῆ...) is one of the most widespread metrical formulas in colophons occurring, as it does, in more than 250 Greek manuscripts. In the same way, the poem τὸν δακτύλοις γράψαντα... belongs to a well-known type. It is preserved in some fifty manuscripts from the tenth century onwards, with many variations. This prayer in three verses is a prototypical book epigram in many respects: the metrical form, the unstable text, the anonymous origin, and the flexible insertion within different contexts.³ Most interestingly, this short poem combines several participants involved in the production of a manuscript, without specifying any of them by name: the scribe, whose physical labor is expressly mentioned, the one who has paid for it (patron, donor, commissioner, owner), the user (reader or singer), and finally the Trinity, under whose protection all the actors are placed. The acts of transcribing, sponsoring, and reading books were considered as beneficial for the soul.

Indeed, books are precious, often sacred, objects, revered in both monastic and intellectual circles of Byzantine society. Byzantine culture had a marked tendency to attach metrical texts to meaningful objects, aptly labeled the “epigrammatic habit” by Paul Magdalino.⁴ All kinds of buildings, icons, frescoes, jewels, and other works of art were inscribed with poems – see several other texts in this volume.⁵ The same goes for books as artefacts. Several thousands of them (roughly estimated at about 10 percent of the preserved Byzantine manuscripts) contain at least one book epigram. As with other inscriptions, most were inserted at the time of the production of the manuscript. Some, however, were added later by their readers and/or owners.

Definitions and Denominations

Book epigrams, then, are verse inscriptions “on” books. The book not only serves as their physical support and the means of their transmission (as with other texts), but also as their subject and theme. Their purpose does not differ from inscriptions on other objects: they clarify, motivate, present, or look back at the production of the object on which they are inscribed.

Similar paratexts (on this term, see p. 1371) are also frequently written in prose, or in a combination of poetry and prose, as in the example above. Prose and verse paratexts generally fulfill the same functions. However, it can be said that book epigrams, i.e. metrical paratexts, take on some specific roles: it is a privileged genre for self-representation, for framing patronage, for praise and blame. Furthermore, it gives vent to personal experience and emotion to a degree unattested in prose paratexts.

2 It is not referenced in Vassis 2005 or 2011.

3 In a thirteenth-century *sticherarium* of Mount Sinai, for instance, the reader (v. 2) is replaced by the singer, τὸν καὶ ψάλλοντα: www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/18605.

4 Magdalino 2012: 32.

5 And of course the series *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*: Rhoby 2009–2018.

The modern term “book epigram” is a recent coinage⁶ but it is definitely in line with Byzantine usage. Photios, for instance, quotes an introductory poem from his copy of Lucian. The poem is literally entitled “book epigram”: τὸ τῆς βίβλου ἐπίγραμμα.⁷ Besides, in hundreds of manuscripts book epigrams are preceded by the explicit label ἐπίγραμμα, mostly completed by the preposition εἰς (epigram on . . .) and the name of an author or the title of a work, sometimes just ἐπίγραμμα εἰς τὴν βίβλον (the book).⁸

The great majority of book epigrams have no title at all; when they have titles, these often simply start with εἰς (On): the content was deemed more important than the generic identification. When a noun is given the most common label is the neutral στίχοι (verses), sometimes as iambic, heroic, elegiac, etc. This is all in accordance with the observations made by Rhoby on labeling Byzantine poetry in general.⁹ Yet the remarkable fact with book epigrams is the relatively high proportion of poems that are expressly indicated as “epigrams” (more than half as much as στίχοι).

One notable case with regard to labeling book epigrams is the early fourteenth-century Gospel book Stavronikita 53. On f. 242r we find two popular poems on John the Evangelist, one consisting of five dodecasyllables, the other of four dactylic hexameters.¹⁰ The two poems are preceded by the common title Στίχοι εἰς τὸν ἅγιον Ἰωάννη τὸν εὐαγγελιστὴν καὶ θεολόγον (Verses on saint John the Evangelist and Theologian) and followed by a prose note on John’s Gospel.¹¹ In the right margin the verses are identified as ἰαμβεῖοι (iambic) and ἠρωοὶ (heroic), respectively, in the same red ink as the title and the poems themselves: the adjectives are clearly dependent on the noun στίχοι. Yet another label is appended in the same margin, written vertically along the two poems, in the same golden ink as the initial letters of the title and the poems: it reads ἐπίγραμμα in the singular form (fig. II.5a). Here, then, *epigramma* appears to be the general denomination for the (poetic) epilogue.

Texts and Paratexts; “Literary” and “Inscribed” Epigrams; Primary and Secondary Function

Book epigrams can alternatively be defined as “metrical paratexts.” The term “paratexts” goes back to Genette and his seminal *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*.¹² The essence of paratexts is that they stand next to (*para*) a main text which they present to the readers,

6 The first systematic discussion of the genre with this label is Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 197–212; on 197, he defines book epigrams as “verses that are intimately related to the production of literary texts and manuscripts.”

7 Bibl. 128,96b, ed. Henry 1960: 103.

8 Exceptionally, we find ἐπίγραμμα τῆς βίβλου, as in Photios: www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/21257 and 21733.

9 Rhoby 2015b.

10 Incipit Βροντῆς τὸν υἱὸν τῆς βροτῶν μὴ θαυμάσει; (The son of the Thunder, what mortal will not admire him?), preserved in some 45 manuscripts (www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/1883) and Βροντῆς θεόφωνος Ἰωάννης πανάριστος (Thundering with a divine voice, John the best of all), almost 120 witnesses (www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/1881).

11 On this popular note see Nelson 1980: 8–9.

12 Genette 1997.

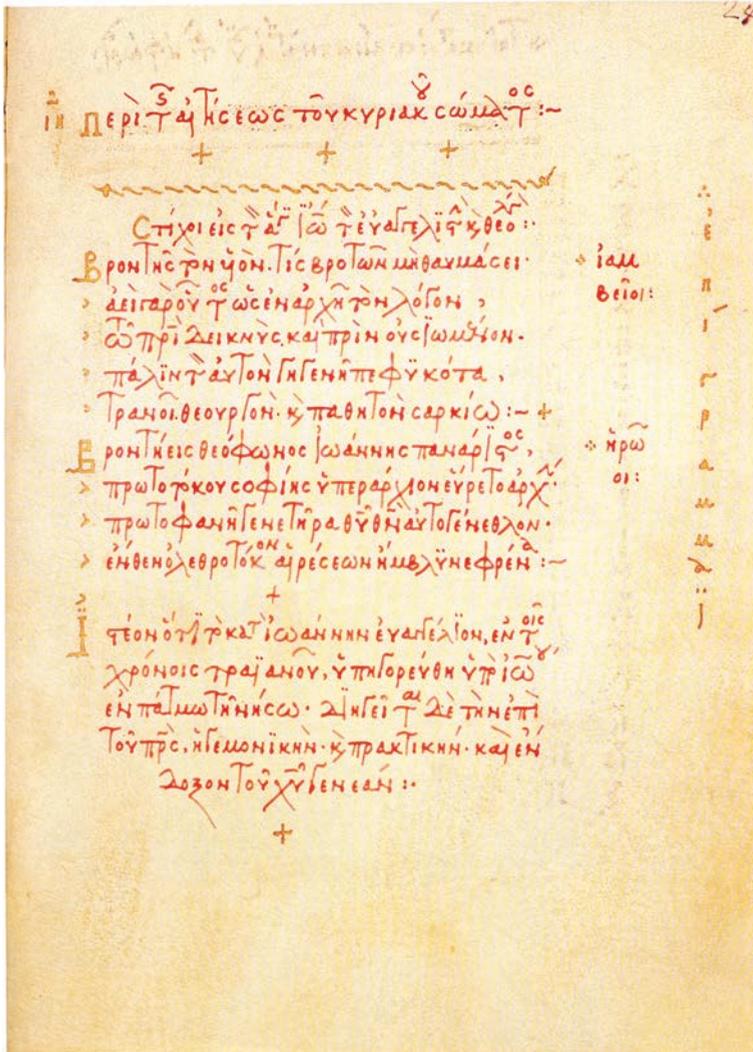


Fig. II.5a Athos, Stavronikita 53, f. 242r. Stavronikita Monastery, Mt. Athos
 © Stavronikita Monastery

shaping and influencing their expectations and reading by offering explanation, interpretation, advice, etc. Paratexts are found on the “thresholds” between the inner world of the text and the outer world of its users, between the book as ideal reality and as material reality. In this sense, book epigrams are real paratexts. They precede, follow, or appear in the margins of the main text(s) transmitted in the manuscript, performing an epi-graphic (or epi-grammatic) function.

Now, as with other inscriptions, book epigrams are known to us through two kinds of textual transmission. They are either preserved *in situ* (i.e. in the margins of manuscripts, to be compared with preservation on stone for epitaphs and other inscriptions) or known

from their inclusion in literary works. The latter may be through citations (as with the Photios example mentioned on p. 1371) or, more frequently, as part of literary collections or anthologies. The same poems can be, and often are, transmitted in both ways, but their actual function depends on and changes with their location, regardless of their original intention: they are “inscribed” as paratext in one manuscript, and “literary,” belonging to the main text, in another.

Not all book epigrams, however, have the same capacity for being decontextualized: those most intrinsically related to the manuscript as a singular artefact (colophons and dedications) are less appropriate for inclusion in anthologies than those focusing on the main text or their authors. Collections such as the *Planoudean Anthology* (1299/1301) offer dozens of epigrams on authors and books, clearly considering them as an acknowledged sub-genre of the epigrammatic tradition; many of them also turn up as paratexts in manuscripts of the authors concerned. Paris, BnF, gr. 1630 (fourteenth century) includes a series of anonymous epigrams on the apostolic letters and the evangelists that are also to be found as real book epigrams in earlier New Testament manuscripts.¹³

The original function of these epigrams is not always clear. Several well-known Byzantine authors chose as the subject of their poems the works of their predecessors and colleagues – the tradition goes back to Hellenistic times. Some of these poems are transmitted as part of their personal oeuvre and were also inscribed as actual book epigrams in their appropriate (intended? new?) context. Quite often epigrams originally composed by famous poets turn up anonymously in later manuscripts. Examples of such re-used poems by Theodore Prodromos and Manuel Philes will be discussed in II.5.2 and II.5.4.

Categories and (Sub-)Genres

The enormous amount of book epigrams is heterogeneous in many respects. They can be categorized along different criteria: spatial (place in the manuscript), chronological (as related to the date of the manuscript), pragmatic (function, depending on content), formal (language, meter, and visual presentation – these will be dealt with on p. 1378). The spatial options are limited: book epigrams are to be found in liminal or marginal positions within the manuscript, notably at the front, at important divisions between main texts or quires, at the end, or in the margins. There is, obviously, a correlation with the other categories: dedications will commonly be found at the beginning and colophons at the end; later additions tend to be written in the margins or at blank spaces, i.e. usually at the end of (sections of the) manuscripts.

Indeed, most but not all, book epigrams were included at the time of the production of the manuscript itself. Additions, responses, or comments by later scribes, readers or owners – often traces of an immediate reader response – have been labeled “post-editorial” paratexts by Walraff and Andrist.¹⁴ As for those that belong to the original stage of the manuscript, they further distinguish between “traditional” and “editorial” para-

¹³ Hörandner 2008; on the manuscript see also Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 290–93.

¹⁴ Walraff and Andrist 2015: 239–40; on these marginalia by readers see Cavallo 2006: 133–37.

texts. The former are copied along with the main text. Editorial paratexts, by contrast, are added by the producers (scribes, redactors, collectors, patrons) of a specific manuscript and typically pertain to the book as a material object and a unique collection of texts. One should primarily think of dedications, prefaces explaining the rationale of the collection, and scribal colophons. Unlike the traditional paratexts that mostly have an undefined origin but may go back to the time of writing of the corresponding main text, these epigrams are, by definition, contemporary to the production of the manuscript. This is not to say that they were composed for the occasion, since there is a lot of recycling and appropriation in paratexts of this sort. Makarios' conventional colophon verses cited above are a case in point. It should be noted, however, that there is no sharp distinction between traditional and editorial paratexts, since the latter may be copied in later manuscripts, too, and hence become traditional. Examples of this crossing of boundaries (the Klimax colophon and Manasses' dedicatory epigram) are discussed in Rachele Ricceri and Re-naat Meesters (II.5.3) and Maria Tomadaki (II.5.5) in this volume.

The pragmatic division according to content and function basically follows the roles that can be identified in the communicative situation that book epigrams establish: (1) the scribe; (2) the patron; (3) the reader; (4) the manuscript itself; (5) the content of the manuscript: the main text(s) and its/their author(s); (6) the images (only for illuminated manuscripts). These categories partly coincide with those proposed by Lauxtermann (*Poetry*). The book epigrams presented in greater detail have been selected along these lines.

This classification into sub-genres has to be adopted cautiously. It is, of course, an artificial distinction, imposed *post factum*: the labels only vaguely parallel those used by the Byzantines themselves in their categorization of literary epigrams, most famously in the *Anthologia Palatina*. More importantly, there are obvious overlaps between various categories: author-related epigrams, for example, may also address and exhort the reader; scribe and patron may play equal roles in the same epigram; the manuscript and its contents are obviously closely related. Many poems, especially the longer ones, cannot be simply subsumed under just one heading. Still, many mostly display features of one of the following categories.

- (1) *Scribe-related epigrams* (also “colophon verses” or “metrical subscriptions”) focus on the practices of writing and copying. The scribe announces that he has completed this book, sometimes specifying where (in which monastery) and/or when. He may express his joy over the fact that the work is completed and he often attributes all glory to God, or thanks Him in a prayer. It should be noted that the scribe is often not just “the one who has written (this book) with his fingers”: he could also act as a compiler and, in the case of book epigrams, as a poet – although scribe-related epigrams are the most formulaic group, as with the Makarios subscriptions. A more elaborate and original example of a scribal epigram is presented in II.5.3.
- (2) *Patron-related or “dedicatory” epigrams* give information about the identity and motivations of the κτήτωρ (*ktetor*), the person who had the manuscript made, who paid

for it or to whom it is dedicated – the roles of donor, commissioner, producer, owner, or dedicatee are not always easy to distinguish.¹⁵

In line with the Byzantine mentality, religious devotion is often mentioned as the principal motive behind patronage. These epigrams are comparable to similar inscriptions on objects or buildings: they may inform us about the patronage and social contexts of book production. For a dedicatory poem by Manasses addressing the Sebastokratorissa Eirene, see Maria Tomadaki, II.5.5 in this volume.

- (3) Many book epigrams address the *reader of the book*. They guide his reading, anticipate a response or ask for recognition and prayers. They often emphasize the edifying qualities of the main text, recommending it for the spiritual well-being of the reader. Conversely, some readers respond to the book in post-editorial paratexts, confirming the value of what they have read and recommending it to future readers. A late twelfth-century manuscript with orations by Gregory of Nazianzos has several notes and poems on its last folios, written by various hands. One of the most common scribal epigrams (incipit “Ὡσπερ ξένοι χαίρουσιν ἰδεῖν πατρίδα, “As strangers who are glad to see their fatherland”) is followed by the following poem:¹⁶

Θησαυρὸν ἀσύλητον ἂν εὐρεῖν θέλης,
ἀληθινῆς γε γνώσεως ψυχοτρόφου,
καὶ διαφανεῖς καὶ τιμαλφεῖς λυχνίτας,
ἐπηβόλως ἔπελθε τήνδε πυκτίδα.

If you want to find an inviolate treasure,
consisting of true knowledge that feeds the soul,
and distinct and costly precious stones,
then start reading this volume in an attentive way.

As a direct reply to this exhortation, a monostich was written on the next page: διῆλθεν Ἐφραΐμ τήνδε πυκτίδα, ξένε (“Ephraim has read this volume, stranger”),¹⁷ in its turn followed by another poem addressing new readers:

Καλῶς διελθὼν ταυτηνὴ τὴν πυξίδα,
πέλαγος ἀόριστον γνώσεως λάχης.
If you read this volume in the right way,
you will acquire an endless sea of knowledge.

- (4) Verses were frequently used to *order and structure the book and to emphasize its divisions*: many manuscripts include monostichs functioning as titles of the main text(s) or as headings of the table of contents, epigrams announcing the end of a work, short

15 See Krumbacher 1909, who points out that the verb κτάομαι, so frequent in Byzantine dedications (see τὸν κεκτημένον in the Makarios subscription), refers to the possession of an object as well as to its “funding” and “founding.”

16 www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/20879. The poem is clearly structured around New Testament images: compare v. 1 with Mt. 19:21 and v. 3 with Mt. 13: 45–46.

17 More or less the same line, with different names, is repeated twice on the same folio.

summaries, etc. They are often formulaic, and one may wonder, especially in the case of single verses, whether scribes were aware of the metrical nature of lines such as Πίναξ σὺν Θεῷ τῆς παρουσίας πυκτίδος (“The table, with [the help of] God, of the present volume”) or εἴληφε τέρμα δέλτος . . . (“The book . . . has come to an end”).

Widespread texts like the Homeric poems, the Psalter, or the New Testament sometimes have metrical titles announcing or summarizing a new book, psalm, or epistle (Kristoffel Demoen, II.5.1 in this volume).

- (5) Epigrams focusing on the *contents of the book* mostly praise the author of the main text and/or the merits of that text. When the author is a saintly figure such as an Evangelist or a Church Father, praise often amounts to religious celebration (for an example, see the poem on Gregory of Nazianzos by Theodore Prodromos, II.5.4 in this volume). The author is frequently asked to intercede with Christ as a reward for the service that the scribe or patron has given him: such poems combine elements from several categories of book epigrams. Epigrams on authors and their works are also called “laudatory” – although there are some that criticize (mostly pagan or heterodox) authors as well. This category of book epigrams is often revealing for literary aesthetics and taste. One telling example is the poem by the twelfth-century scholiast Isaac Tzetzes (a brother of John Tzetzes) directed against the (notoriously difficult) Hellenistic poet Lycophron:¹⁸

Λόγους ἀτερπεῖς πολλὰ μοχθήσας γράφεις,
ἀνιστορήτως βάρβαρα πλέξας ἔπη (...)
μόνον νέοις ἰδρῶτα, μωρὲ Λυκόφρον,
οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν ἢ κενοὶ λήρων λόγοι.

You write unpleasant phrases, spending much labor
and ignorantly weaving barbaric verses,
(... two verses with obscure words ...)
merely sweat for the young, you foolish Lycophron,
nothing but vain words of nonsense.

This book epigram is preserved in at least four manuscripts of Lycophron’s *Alexandra*; in a thirteenth-century manuscript preserved in Heidelberg (ms. UB, Palatinus gr. 18), the epigram is framed by a comics-like depiction of Lycophron and Isaac Tzetzes, each with a scroll displaying the first words of their respective poems.¹⁹

- (6) In the Heidelberg manuscript the image thus serves as an illustration added to a book epigram. The opposite occurs more frequently: *epigrams being added to images*, mostly miniatures.²⁰ They may be composed specifically for a particular image, be copied from earlier illuminated manuscripts, or taken from collections where they had another function. Some image-related epigrams serve as captions that describe

18 www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/3725, discussion in De Stefani and Magnelli 2009: 615–16, who surmise that the poem might be by John Tzetzes himself. See also Rhoby 2019: 115–118.

19 <http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/cpgraec18/0196>.

20 *BEIÜ* 4 is wholly devoted to epigrams in illuminated manuscripts: Rhoby 2018.

Ἰδοὺ κλίμαξ, ἀνθρῶπτε, καὶ βαῖνε πρόσω,
καὶ γῆθεν ἀρθεὶς μὴ στραφῆς βλέψων κάτω,
ἐπεὶ σε Χριστὸς ὁ βραβεὺς τῶν βαθμίδων
καλεῖ δι' αὐτῆς καὶ προτείνει τὰ στέφη.

Look here, man, the ladder, and step onwards,
and when you are lifted off the ground, do not turn back to look down,
since Christ, the arbitrator of the steps,
calls you through it and offers the crown.

This poem appears to be written for the occasion: it has a deictic opening word, both the earth (γῆ) and Christ (ΙΣ ΧΣ) are indicated on the illustration, and the final verse corresponds to the illustration's reference to the victory (NIKA) in heaven. Yet this epigram is also transmitted as part of the literary works of Manuel Philes: it is the final poem of a cycle of thirty-three tetrastichs on the heavenly ladder,²³ from which the producers of the Stavronikita manuscript may have taken it. Was it originally meant to accompany a similar depiction of a ladder? We cannot say – the epigram makes sense also when applied to the *Ladder* as mere text. Image-related epigrams from an early fourteenth-century biblical manuscript will be presented in II.5.3 in this volume.

Textual Features

On the matter of language, style, and meter, the entire spectrum of medieval Greek is present in the corpus of book epigrams. Indeed, some were written by professional poets, others by scribes who had clearly enjoyed only limited education. The most popular meter is, unsurprisingly, the dodecasyllable (about 75 percent of the epigrams in the period from 1081 to 1330) in all its forms, from elegant iambs observing accentual and (the obsolete) prosodical rules to clumsy lines of (at best) twelve syllables with penultimate accent. Next comes the dactylic hexameter; politikos stichos and elegiacs are rare in the corpus. Quite often the metrical and prose paratexts are combined (as in the Makarios subscription) and the distinction between the two is sometimes gradual, with verses degrading when names, titles, or dates are given. The borderline between poetry and prose becomes very thin in these cases.

The insertion of new names, titles, places, and dates in pre-existing compositions, especially in dedicatory and colophon verses, is a typical phenomenon in book epigrams.²⁴ Indeed, they tend to be endlessly re-used, re-cycled, appropriated, and adapted, and these variations frequently affect the whole text, not just the personal data. Book epigrams are “living” (or “open” or “fluid”) texts, challenging notions like authorship and originality – and challenging modern editorial practice. The identification of the writer in a book epigram itself does not mean that it is his personal creation, but only that this person has physically written (or commissioned) this particular version of the poem – and even this

23 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Flor. 209.33, ed. Miller, I, 388; within the cycle, the tetrastich bears the title Εἰς τὴν ἄνοδον τῆς ἱερᾶς κλίμακος (On climbing the holy ladder).

24 It should be mentioned that sometimes colophons were (thoughtlessly? respectfully?) copied as a whole, without changing names and dates.

is not always the case: names may have been simply copied as part of an existing poem. Conversely, many book epigrams are copied anonymously, even when they are the work of well-known poets, as in the case of Philes' *Klimax* tetrastich.

Since metrical paratexts are by definition *inscribed* epigrams, they often display stylistic devices known from (other) inscriptions. These include deictic elements (e.g. τήνδε, ταυτηνί, and ἰδοῦ in the examples quoted on p. 1375 and 1378) and various speaking voices and addressees: the book or its author may be addressed, or the book may be speaking in the first person to the reader, just as epitaphs address the passer-by. Other frequently occurring *topoi* are the “desire” or “devotion” (πόθος, προθυμία) with which the book was produced, and the humble, even self-deprecatory, stance of the scribe, sometimes also of the patron.

The Aesthetics of Book Epigrams

The affinity of book epigrams with (real/other) verse inscriptions²⁵ is often reinforced by their visual presentation: they are often, although by no means as a rule, written in a different color (e.g. in red ink, as in fig. II.5a and II.5b) and a distinct handwriting, notably some form of the so-called *Auszeichnungsmajuskel*, the “distinctive majuscule,” which is sub-divided into different types: the Alexandrian, the Constantinopolitan, and the epigraphic variant. The latter imitates the script from monumental Early and Middle Byzantine inscriptions in stone.²⁶ The distinctive uncials are often not used in a “pure” form, as in fig. II.5a and II.5b, which are in a mixed script based on the Alexandrian majuscule. Book epigrams are also frequently distinguished from the main text by non-textual signs or an ornamental framing. These visual features of book epigrams stress the fact that they are not mere vectors of a message, but also signposts and, crucially, part of the ornamentation, embellishing the manuscript as an artistic object.

To conclude, an epigram expressly links the material beauty of the book as an object with the spiritual beauty of its contents. A Gospel book dated to the thirteenth–fourteenth century (Athens, Byzantine Museum, 157) rounds off each gospel with a well-known poem in dactylic hexameters. Following the epigram on John, the book as a whole ends with these dodecasyllables:²⁷

Ὅρῶν τὸ κάλλος τῆς προκειμένης βίβλου
τὴν ἀστραπὴν, ἄνθρωπε, τῶν λόγων νόει
οὓς ἢ τετρακτὺς τῶν σοφῶν ἀποστόλων
ἐρητόρευσε πνεύματος μουσουργίαις.

When looking at the beauty of the present book,
consider, man, the lightning of the words
which the foursome of the wise apostles
has written rhetorically, inspired by the Spirit.

²⁵ On this affinity see Rhoby 2015a.

²⁶ See Hunger 1977 for the introduction of the term, Stefec 2011 for discussion of several examples.

²⁷ www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/18290.

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II.5.1 Author Unknown

An Aristophanean Epigram on the Psalter

KRISTOFFEL DEMOEN

Ed.: K. Demoen (provisional text); see also A. Rhoby in *BEIÜ* 4, F24, p. 149

MSS.: A: Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery, 761 (a. 1088), f. 1v (epigram by a later hand)

V: Vatican, BAV, Borg. gr. 10 (s. XII), f. 208r (epigram by a later hand, probably from the fourteenth century)

P: Paris, BnF, Coisl. Gr. 13 (a. 1304), f. IIv

U: Uppsala, Universitetsbiblioteket, Gr. 10 (a. 1369), ff. 303r–v

J: Jerusalem, Patriarchal Library, Timiou Stauroou 81 (s. XVI), f. 14r

Other Translations: A. Rhoby in *BEIÜ* 4, F24, p. 150 (German)

Significance

This is a characteristic example of a laudatory book epigram, consisting of a praise of the book and its contents, as well as an exhortation to the reader.

Although this epigram on the Psalter is built around traditional themes and images, it is unique in its accumulation of long compounds, several of which are *hapax legomena*. The compounds, moreover, show considerable variety in the different witnesses. Extravagant neologisms are typical of Byzantine Greek in general, but a word of 18 syllables, largely exceeding the limits of one verse, is exceptional indeed. The only obvious parallel, and probably the source of inspiration for the anonymous poet, is the famous 78-syllable word for a food dish created by Aristophanes in his comedy *Assemblywomen*, filling verses 1169–1176.¹

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

“As long as the text history of the Byzantine Psalter remains a mystery and important manuscripts have yet to reveal their contents, it makes no sense to study just one of the popular book epigrams on the Psalter ... Without a clear picture of the manuscript tradition we have only a text – but not a context.” Since this sobering statement by Laux-

¹ As de Montfaucon 1715: 59 observed: “Sic ludit Calligraphus ad modum Aristophanis.”

termann in a section on the “usually badly written” Psalter epigrams,² the situation has changed, especially thanks to Parpulov’s doctoral thesis (2004) and its publication as a book (2014). From the latter’s electronic appendix B1, a spreadsheet with a description and the contents of Greek Psalters written on parchment, one can conclude that at least 72 out of 613 Psalters contain one or more epigrams. In his appendix D7, “Psalter Epigrams in Verse,” Parpulov provides the text of 75 different such poems. The popularity of these laudatory epigrams on the Psalter and its alleged author, David, is confirmed by the material included in the *Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams*: to date (December 2020) it has 558 witnesses (occurrences) from 172 Psalter books, and the corpus is ever growing. Moreover, some of these epigrams on the Psalter are also to be found in manuscripts not containing the Psalms themselves. More factual information has thus become available over the last decades, but an integrated study of the poems and the manuscript tradition, as advocated by Lauxtermann, still remains a desideratum.

Most by far of the book epigrams on the Psalter are anonymous, and many rehearse the same themes again and again: David is compared to Orpheus, the enchanting power of whom he largely surpasses; the musical and poetical characteristics of the psalms are stressed (they are often called “hymns,” or “odes,” or “songs,” and several instruments are mentioned); their apotropaic and soteriological value is omnipresent: they ward off the demons and safeguard the souls of the scribe, the owner, the patron, and the user of the Psalter; their qualities are due to divine inspiration. The anonymous and repetitive character of the epigrams explains that they tend to be open to minor and major variations.

The poem presented below is a case in point. It is preserved in the five manuscripts listed above.³ All versions are, sometimes crucially, different, and no single witness gives an acceptable text: all but one of these witnesses have several unmetrical verses (i.e. not counting twelve syllables), and none makes completely good sense. In the oldest manuscripts, A (a. 1088) and V (s. XII), the epigrams were added by supplementary hands at an uncertain date.⁴ A and V share several readings, that are different from P (a. 1304), which has the oldest certainly dated witness of the epigram itself, yet gives a flawed text in many respects.⁵ The later witnesses U (1369) and J (s. XVI) offer several good readings. U is the only version without blatant metrical errors, but it is incomplete: it is a conflation of the

2 Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 203.

3 Combined information on the textual tradition is taken from Vassis 2005: 728; Parpulov 2014: 223–24 (epigram 19); see also www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/2523.

4 Transcription of A in Pelekanidis et al. 1991: 292. Here the epigram precedes the Psalms. Transcription of V in Franchi de Cavalieri 1927: 124. The epigram occurs at the end of the manuscript, and is written in a Hodegon hand, probably from the fourteenth century, according to Parpulov 2014: 224 (Cavalieri dates it to the thirteenth century).

5 It was transcribed by de Monfaucon 1715: 59 and forms the basis of the text in Parpulov 2014: 223–24. The epigram is written in Alexandrian distinctive majuscule, in a quaterfoil at the beginning of the manuscript (a Psalter with Biblical Odes, originating from Athos’ Lavra Monastery). An image is provided by Nelson 1991, pl. 33 and by Rhoby 2018: 611 (image XXXI). See www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/21406.

first six verses of our epigram and another Psalter epigram.⁶ The provisional text offered here is based on A and V, with some emendations inspired by U and J.

It will be clear that a critical edition of this kind of fluid text offers a specific challenge to philologists. In this particular case, the situation is further complicated by the existence of a related poem (same incipit, but only five verses), which is first attested in a manuscript of the early eleventh century.⁷ Our poem appears to be a free expansion of this shorter version, which will not be dealt with here since it falls outside the chronological scope of this volume.

The composition of the poem is based on the two different meanings of the word ψαλτήριον (which appears, in a variant form, as the very last word of the epigram): “psalter” (the book) and “psaltery” (the instrument). A similar blending of different semantic fields takes place in the remarkable compounds, several of which are marked by synaesthesia. The first four verses inform the reader how David, metonymically indicated by his mouth and his heart, has uttered and sung the (psalms contained in the) book (βιβλῶν and πικτίδα); in the second part, a series of instruments are mentioned, all of them often associated with David, and the reader is encouraged to watch the psalter(y). The epigram may have been originally written for an illuminated Psalter, as it would be a fitting caption to a miniature of David playing the lyre, but this is mere speculation.

6 The variant readings from U are to be found in Parpulov’s apparatus, as are the subsequent verses, taken from his epigram 34. The epigram here belongs near the end of the Psalter, following a Paschal Table and preceding the Akathistos Hymn. Transcription of J in Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1897: 349. The epigram belongs to a series of similar poems, as part of the 18 introductory folios preceding the psalms.

7 Jerusalem, Panaghiou Taphou 22, end of the codex (a Synaxarion). Other witnesses of the same short version are to be found in two London Psalters (available online): MS. London, British Library, Royal 2.A.vi (in a hand of the thirteenth century), f. 280v and Harley 5533 (late thirteenth century), f. 165v. See www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/4277.

Text

Τὴν ἄσματωδοφαλμοσύνθετον βίβλον,
 τὴν θεοκοσμοψυχόσωστον¹ πυκτίδα
 προφητοτερπνόφθεγκτον² ἔφρασε στόμα
 καὶ πνευματεμόρητος ἦσε καρδία·
 5 τὴν χειροχορδοβροντόκρουστον κιννύραν
 καὶ τὴν μελουργόναβλον κυμβαλολύραν,³
 θέλγουσαν καὶ πλήττουςαν καὶ ψάλλουσάν γε,
 τὴν ἀκτινοχρυσοφαιδροβροντολαμπρο-
 φεγγοφωτοστόλιστον⁴ ὄντως καὶ θείαν
 10 χερουβικοχάρακτον τήρει ψαλτήραν.⁵

Translation

The book consisting of Canticles, Odes, and Psalms,⁶
 the volume that saves the soul through divine order
 has been uttered by the mouth that speaks graciously and prophetically
 and been sung by the heart that is filled with the Spirit;
 5 the kinnor⁷ that is played by striking the strings with the hands and sounds
 like the thunder
 and the cymbal-lyre accompanied by the harmonious navla,⁷
 charming and moving and singing to the harp,
 the psalter(y) that is dressed with shining bright light, thundering
 cheerfully with golden beams, the really divine (psalter)
 10 that is carved by the cheroubim: behold it.

Commentary

1. The manuscripts have two different readings of the long epithet. Both are recorded as *hapax legomena* in *LBG*: βροντοκοσμοψυχόσωστος (“durch göttlichen Schmuck die Seele rettend”) from P and θεοκοσμοψυχόσωστος (“das Weltall erschütternd und die Seelen rettend”) from V. The latter can be found in the other manuscripts, too.
2. The epithet προφητόφθεγκτος is also attested elsewhere (*PGL* has it from John of Damascus). The insertion of –τερπνο– turns it into another *hapax*. David, who is implied by the mouth and the heart in vv. 3–4, is often called a prophet: one of the most common verse inscriptions of the Psalter reads Δαυίδ προφήτου καὶ βασιλέως μέλος (“Song of David, the prophet and king”).⁸
3. V. 6 is arguably the most doubtful verse of the poem. The manuscripts offer five thoroughly different texts, in verses ranging from 11 to 15 syllables. One thing is clear: several instruments are mentioned and creatively combined into new words. As with

8 The *DBBE* lists 34 witnesses: www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/1912 (December 2020). See also Parpulov 2014: 242 for epigrams 66 and 67, both starting with the words Δαυίδ προφήτου.

the alternatives in v. 2, *LBG* includes the readings from P, μελοαυλονευροπληκτροκίνητος (“zur Musik Flöte, Saite und Plektron bewegend”) and from V, μελουργόναβλος (“mit melodischer Harfe”). The first makes an unmetrical verse, whereas the second reading is confirmed by J, which has also the unattested but plausible compound κυμβολόραν. The verse thus combines a series of instruments that also occur together several times in the Septuagint: the kinnor, a lyre-like stringed instrument (κινύρα or κινύρα, see v. 5); the navla, a kind of harp (νάβλα); the cymbals (κύμβαλα).⁹

4. The longest word, perhaps from Byzantine literature, certainly from *LBG*,¹⁰ where it stands close to a word that may have been the source of inspiration for our poet: ἀκτινολαμπροφεγγωφωτοστόλιστος (“mit glänzenden Lichtstrahlen funkelnd”), used in the (probably tenth-century) *Synaxarion of Constantinople* (May 9, 2.65). The extra constituent parts in our compound include χρυσόφαιδρο (gold-shining), which may refer to the bright colors of the decoration or possibly the miniature of the Psalter it was originally composed for.
5. The verb τηρέω, the imperative of which seems to govern the second part of the poem from v. 5 onwards, can mean both “watch, look carefully at” and “observe, respect.” The two related meanings may be at play here.¹¹ The final word ψαλτήραν is derived from the very rare feminine noun¹² instead of the more common ὁ ψαλτήρ or τὸ ψαλτήριον.
6. Apart from orthographical mistakes, the first verse is the only one that is identical in all manuscripts, and the neologism ἄσματῶδοψαλμοσύνθετος is the only compound for which they all have the same reading. Its exact meaning is not self-evident, though. *LBG* interprets “aus dem Hohenlied, den Oden und Psalmen bestehend,” but is this correct? Byzantine psalters do regularly include, besides the psalms, the biblical odes, but not the Song of Songs. It seems safer to consider the first part of the compound as referring to songs or canticles in general, perhaps indicating the *troparia* (short hymns) included in some psalters.¹³ It is a nice coincidence (?) that the very first adjective of a poem teeming with complex compounds refers to the compounded character (σύνθετος) of the book for which the epigram is composed.
7. For the kinnor and the navla, see v. 6 with n. 3.

9 The most telling passage is 2Reg (2Sam) 6:5, where David himself is said to celebrate, along with the house of Israel, with all kinds of instruments: ἐν ὄργανοις ἡρμωμένοις ἐν ἰσχύι καὶ ἐν ᾠδαῖς καὶ ἐν κινύραις καὶ ἐν νάβλαις καὶ ἐν τυμπάνοις καὶ ἐν κυμβάλοις καὶ ἐν αὐλοῖς. See also, among other examples, 1Macc 13:51: ἐν κινύραις καὶ ἐν κυμβάλοις καὶ ἐν νάβλαις. Such a combination of instruments used for divine worship is also present in the 150th, i.e. the last “real” psalm. As said before, Psalter epigrams frequently mention musical instruments: they thus may be said to respond to the end of the Psalter itself.

10 Thanks are due to Erich Trapp, who confirmed our intuition in this respect.

11 Compare the final verses of a long book epigram from the early fourteenth-century Vat. Palat. gr. 367: τήρει γοῦν μετ’ ἀκριβείας/πάντα τὰ ἐν τῆδε βίβλω (“So observe precisely all things in this book”): www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/17691, vv. 89–90.

12 TLG online gives two occurrences: *Physiologus* 21.11 (for the instrument, psaltery) and *Acts of Vatopedi* 157.28 (for a psalter book: ψαλτήρα ἐρμηνευμένη). In our poem, both meanings would make sense.

13 For the contents of Psalter books see Parpulov 2014: 52–68 (§§ 2.1 and 2.2) and Appendix B1.

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II.5.2

Manuel Philes and (An) Anonymous Poet(s) Epigrams on the Evangelists in an Illuminated Gospel Manuscript

KRISTOFFEL DEMOEN

Ed.: E. N. Dobrynina, *New Testament with the Psalter: Greek Illuminated Manuscript at the State Historical Museum in Moscow* (Russian and English) (Moscow, 2014), 16

MS.: Moscow, Gosudarstvennyj Istoričeskij Musej, Synod. gr. 407 = Vlad. 25 (second quarter XIV s.), ff. 29v, 30r, 85v, 86r, 120v, 121r. (for f. 120v and 121r, see fig. II.5.2)²

Other Translations: German translations in Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder* (C and E) and A. Rhoby in *BEIŮ* 4, 98 (C), 257 (A), 381–83 (B, D–F)

Significance

Whereas the three poems in the headpieces are text-related book epigrams, quite uniformly introducing the opening passages of the respective Gospels, the three image-related epigrams show a remarkable divergence in their relation to the work of art on which they are inscribed.

The Author

See A. Rhoby, with additions by M. Bazzani, I.4.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

Given the enormous number of Byzantine Gospel books, numerous epigrams on the evangelists have been preserved. Several of them became very popular, transmitted in dozens of manuscripts. Many of these common epigrams, often repeating the same themes and motifs, have been collected in more or less reliable studies, and the ongoing project *Paratexts of the Bible* intends to make available the material in its entirety.³ Similarly, miniatures depicting the evangelists are widespread and their iconography has become more or less standardized. At the intersection of verbal and visual introductions

I wish to thank Alice-Mary Talbot, Leslie Brubaker, Andreas Rhoby, Rachele Ricceri, and Maria Tomadaki for help, comments, and suggestions.

1 Consulted.

2 Reproductions in Dobrynina 2014: 66–67. See also Rhoby 2018: 698–700 (images CXXIX–CXXXI).

3 Basic collections by von Soden 1902: 377–87 (unfortunately without a clear indication of his sources); Kominis 1951; and an exemplary case study by Follieri 1956. For the ongoing project, directed by Martin Wallraff and Patrick Andrist, see www.paratexbib.eu.



Fig. II.5.2 Moscow, RNB, Synodicus gr. 407, ff. 120v-121r (olim 111v-112r)

© RNB

to the Gospels, there are illuminated manuscripts in which the portraits or other decorations are accompanied by epigrams.⁴ This combination raises the much-debated question of the relation between word and image, art and text. The case of one such manuscript, which contains six epigrams, will be presented here.

The Moscow, Synod. gr. 407, has been the object of a collected volume, following a restoration of the manuscript.⁵ The origin and the date of the original manuscript are uncertain, but it is clear that the miniatures and the epigrams were added later, probably in the second quarter of the fourteenth century at the Hodegon monastery in Constantinople.⁶ Each of the four Gospels is preceded by three illustrated pages: the first (on a recto side) has a miniature with the symbol of the evangelist,⁷ the second (verso) his portrait, and the

4 Nelson 1980 pays attention to both. *BEIŪ* 4, devoted to epigrams on miniatures, includes the material presented in this contribution. I thank Andreas Rhoby wholeheartedly for sharing some of his material, still unpublished when this chapter was first written (2016).

5 Dobrynina 2014, with many high-quality images and contributions by the editor herself (mainly codicological), Boris Fonkich (palaeographical), and Olga Popova (on the miniatures).

6 Remarkably, the three authors mentioned in n. 5 propose slightly different dates for the manuscript as well as for the miniatures and the epigrams. For the additions, the 1330s (Dobrynina and Popova) and the middle of the fourteenth century (Fonkich) are proposed.

7 The manuscript follows the canonical arrangement of the Palaiologan period: Matthew is represented as an angel, Mark as a lion, Luke as a calf, and John as an eagle: see Nelson 1980: 33–34 and 112, table C. The

third (the opposite recto) a fine headpiece (a decorated square with an inscribed blank quatrefoil or circle) and the beginning of the text itself. The first three portraits (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) are accompanied by an epigram. Matthew's epigram is written in minuscule script underneath the miniature, in black ink and as if it were prose; the other two epigrams, by contrast, are written in red ink, in a distinctive majuscule, and have two verses above and two verses underneath the portraits, the verse divisions being marked by commas. Likewise, the first three headpieces contain an epigram written in red ink, in a type of Alexandrian majuscule; the headpiece preceding John's Gospel is left blank. Fig. II.5.2 shows the portrait and the headpiece of Luke. As we will see, two of the three epigrams surrounding the author portraits refer directly to the image; the epigrams in the headpieces have been chosen for their relevance to the opening chapters of the respective Gospels rather than to the miniatures on the opposite page.

The epigrams have indeed been *chosen*, but not (most probably) *composed* for this particular manuscript. Four of the six epigrams (poems B–E) are also transmitted in the literary collections of Manuel Philes, whose date of death is uncertain but certainly close to the probable date of the addition of his verses in our manuscript.⁸ As a matter of fact, the Moscow manuscript may well be the oldest witness for several of these epigrams. The first epigram (A) is a well-known poem on Matthew, preserved in manuscripts from the tenth century onwards; the last one (F), is not attested elsewhere, as far as we know. Its meter and style make it quite possible that we should attribute it to Philes as well.

Although for chronological reasons it cannot be completely excluded that Philes wrote the quatrains for this manuscript in his old age, the odds are that this is a typical case of epigrams by noted poets being re-used as inscriptions for works of art.⁹ Whether they were originally intended to be inscriptions for specific purposes or composed as independent poems (possibly with canonical iconographical schemes in mind), eventually they were freely transferred back and forth from literary collections, from sample books, or from inscriptions, to new contexts. Painters or scribes apparently freely picked and combined material from these models, as can be inferred, for instance, from two further manuscripts. Athos, Meg. Lavr. A 32 (s. X, the epigrams were added later) and Tirana, gr. 12 (s. XIV ex.) also have four Philes epigrams accompanying miniatures of the evangelists. The latter has one poem in common with the Moscow manuscript (text C), whereas Athos and Tirana share the same epigram on Luke (Miller I, 18 = Esc. 30), but as a whole the three manuscripts have assembled three distinct cycles from the same author. It may also be noted that none of the manuscripts with Philes' poems in literary transmission has all four of his epigrams from the Moscow manuscript.¹⁰

Moscow manuscript is not included in Nelson's table C, but is in line with most manuscripts of the period listed by Nelson.

8 A complete survey of the indications for Philes' death is in Rhoby 2016, who cautiously concludes that we have no firm indications for any literary activity after 1332 or 1334, but that Philes may have lived well into the 1340s.

9 On the phenomenon see, e.g., Maguire 1996: 6–10.

10 This much can be deduced from the lists in Stickler 1992: 209–42.

As a series, the six epigrams illustrate and confirm the observations made over the last decades by scholars studying the interaction between word and image such as Maguire (see n. 9), Nelson,¹¹ Talbot,¹² James, Brubaker, and Barber.¹³ The general tendency is to regard word and image as parallel media in Byzantine illuminated manuscripts. Pictures do not duplicate texts; they may interact on different levels and add new levels of meaning, but they generally can do without each other, too – as indeed they often do. Most of the epigrams that follow here are also transmitted in non-illuminated manuscripts, without losing their signification (the reader can use his imagination instead of viewing an image). Conversely, miniatures obviously can have a direct impact on the viewer without the mediation of words. Yet the combination does have an added value, as fig. II.5.2 should demonstrate without further words.

The text given below is based on Dobrynina's transcription from the Moscow manuscript, with some silent corrections facilitated by the excellent reproductions of the relevant folios in her volume. Her square brackets indicate additions of missing or unreadable letters, taken from other manuscripts.

All poems are written in correct prosodical dodecasyllables. Epigrams B–F (i.e. Philes and the unique final poem) use the so-called *dichrona* with some freedom: α, ι, and υ are measured either long or short, regardless of their obsolete value (examples: E v. 3 παρᾶ, v. 4 τῖνός, F v. 3 βουθῦσία).

11 Nelson 1980: 79, particularly on evangelist miniatures with epigrams: “the coordination of the visual and verbal is more the exception.”

12 For instance, Talbot 1999: 75 on Philes: “the poet did not so much intend to describe as to evoke his subject.” Her survey of the evidence of Philes' surviving inscriptional epigrams, i.e. preserved *in situ*, does not include epigrams on miniatures, although she mentions some manuscripts in n. 38.

13 All three, e.g., in James 2007. As James herself says: “images and words ... are concerned not with each other but with the viewer and reader, and have the power to lead the viewer/auditor to something which lies beyond both, the object for which word and image are both signifiers” (p. 9). Brubaker speaks of “parallel streams of communication,” and adds that “words give resonance to the images” (p. 58). See also, for an application to Philes' epigrams, the introduction in Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 33–52; she does not mention the Moscow manuscript.

TextA. Under a miniature of Matthew (f. 29v)¹

[Ο] πρὶν τελώνης καὶ σχολάζων τοῖς φόροις
 εὐαγγελιστῆς νῦν δέδεικται προ[σ]φώρας,²
 Ματθαῖος ὁ κράτιστος ἐν θεηγόροις·
 τὴν τοῦ λόγου γὰρ σαρκικὴν ἐνδημίαν³
 5 καθιστορεῖ τε καὶ σοφῶς⁴ διαγράφει.

B. Between the heading of the Gospel of Matthew and its opening lines (f. 30r)⁵

Θεὸς τὸν Ἀδάμ εἰς Ἐδὲμ τάττει πλάσας,
 αὐτὸς δε⁶ θελχθεὶς γευστικῶς παρεσφάλῃ·
 καὶ γίνεται σὰρξ ὁ σπορευὺς πάντων λόγος,
 ὅπως ὁ κόσμος εὐρεθῆ σε[σ]ωσμένος.

C. Above and below a miniature of Mark (f. 85v)⁷

Ἐχων ὁ Μάρκος τὸν σκοπὸν πρὸς τὸ γράφειν
 μένει σιωπῶν, οὐ γὰρ ὡς ἄπνους τύπος
 ἀλλ['] ὡς ἔτι ζ]ῶν καὶ κινεῖται καὶ πνέει,
 κἂν ἀτρέμας πέπηγεν ἡρέμα γράφων.

D. Above the opening lines of the Gospel of Mark (f. 86r)⁸

Ὁ Μάρκος ἰδὼν τὸ σκότος τῆς ἀπάτης
 ὄλην κατασχὸν τὴν βροτῶν σχεδὸν φύσιν,
 τὴν προδρομικὴν οὐ παρήλθε [λυ]χνίαν
 ἐφ' ἧς τὸ φῶς ἔλαμψε τῆς σωτηρίας.

E. Above and below a miniature of Luke (f. 120v)⁹

Ἄνθρωπε, σιγῶν, εὐλαβῶς ᾧδε σκόπει
 μήπως ὁ Λουκᾶς συγχυθῆ πρὸς τὸ γράφειν·
 τοῦ γὰρ παρὰ σοῦ θᾶπτον ἀκούσας ψόφου
 τὴν χεῖρα κινεῖν μέχρι τινὸς οὐ θέλει.

F. Above the opening lines of the Gospel of Luke (f. 121r)¹⁰

Ἄφες προφήτα βουθυτεῖν Ζαχαρία·
 τὸν γὰρ νοητὸν Ἰσραὴλ μόσχον θύει
 δι' οὗ λύσιν πέπονθεν ἡ βουθυσία·
 θύσον δὲ σαυτὸν εἰ καλῶς θύειν θέλεις.

Translation

A. Under a miniature of Matthew (f. 29v)

The former publican, who devoted himself to taxes,
 now appears as an evangelist in a fitting way:¹¹
 Matthew, the mightiest among theologians.
 Indeed, he scrutinizes and wisely records
 5 the fleshly sojourning of the Word.

B. Between the heading of the Gospel of Matthew and its opening lines (f. 30r)

God has placed Adam in Eden after his creation,
 but the latter was seduced, and by tasting committed a transgression.¹²
 Now the Word, the sower of all things, becomes flesh
 so that the world might be saved.

C. Above and below a miniature of Mark (f. 85v)

Mark is wholly concentrated on writing
 and remains silent. No, not as a lifeless image,
 but as someone who is still alive: he moves and breathes,
 even though he remains immobile as he is quietly writing.¹³

D. Above the opening lines of the Gospel of Mark (f. 86r)

Mark, who saw that the darkness of deceit
 had gained possession of almost the entire nature of mortals,
 did not pass over in silence the lampstand of the forerunner¹⁴
 on which shone the light of salvation.¹⁵

E. Above and below a miniature of Luke (f. 120v)

Look here, man, in silence and devotion,
 so that Luke is not disturbed in his writing,
 for as soon as he hears any noise from you
 he will refrain from moving his hand for a while.¹⁶

F. Above the opening lines of the Gospel of Luke (f. 121r)

Stop sacrificing, prophet Zacharias,¹⁷
 for Israel sacrifices the spiritual calf¹⁸
 through which the sacrifice has been redeemed;¹⁹
 sacrifice yourself, if you want to sacrifice correctly.

Commentary

1. The miniature is heavily damaged. Matthew is seated; his gospel is on a lectern which stands on his table. The anonymous poem occurs as a book epigram in (at least) 27 manuscripts, both with and (mostly) without miniatures. Its oldest witnesses are dated to the tenth century, see www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/2031 (December 2020). For several reasons, this epigram is the odd one out: it has five verses, whereas all the others have four; it is centuries older than those by Philes; unlike the others, it flawlessly respects the traditional length of the *dichrona*; it is copied rather carelessly (with several scribal errors) underneath the author's portrait in a different script and layout than the following poems; in terms of content, it has no direct reference to the scene depicted in the miniature. All these observations point in the direction of a different scribe, who added a poem in one of the spaces that had remained devoid of epigrams, just like the miniature and the headpiece preceding the Gospel of John. And this scribe would not have had Philes' epigrams at hand.
2. The manuscript clearly reads *προφόρω*s, which makes no sense; the correction is based on earlier manuscripts.¹⁴
3. The manuscript has *ἐνδυμίαν*, a typical scribal error (itacism). *Ἐνδημία* (sojourn) is often used for Christ's incarnation, with or without an adjective such as *σαρκικός* or *ἔνσαρκος* (see *PGL* s.v.).
4. Other manuscripts read not *σοφῶς* (wisely) but *σαφῶς* (clearly), which gives even better sense.
5. Elsewhere only known from a collection of epigrams by Philes (Miller I, 19, Esc. 33), with the title *Εἰς τὴν ὑπόθεσιν τοῦ κατ' αὐτὸν εὐαγγελίου* ("On the subject of his [Matthew's] Gospel"): this title suggests that the epigram was intended (or found) to introduce the Gospel text, as it does here, not to accompany a portrait of the evangelist.
6. Dobrynina follows the accentuation of the manuscript. Unlike the classical rules, Byzantine scribes quite frequently treat *δε* as a clitic.
7. The miniature shows Mark holding his book in his left hand and stretching out his right hand in order to dip the *kalamos* in the ink pot. The poem also serves as a miniature epigram in the Tiranensis gr. 12 (s. XIV ex.), f. 68v. Besides, it is preserved as part of Philes' collections of epigrams in a relatively high number of manuscripts: Braounou-Pietsch lists eight witnesses (XIV–XVI s.).¹⁵
8. This epigram is edited as Miller I, 370, Laur. 202., from Florence, BML, Plutei 32.19 (s. XV). Miller published the three other Philes epigrams from the El Escorial, B Escorial, Biblioteca de San Lorenzo, X.IV.20 (s. XVI).

¹⁴ See Kominis 1951: 264

¹⁵ Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 138; she does not seem to take into account the two instances where the epigram survives *in situ*. This epigram is no. 70 in her edition. See also Miller I, 21, Esc. 37 with the title "Εἰς τὸν ἅγιον Μάρκον καθεζόμενον καὶ γράφοντα" ("On Saint Mark sitting and writing").

9. For the miniature, see fig. II.5.2. The epigram was edited by Braounou-Pietsch as no. 57;¹⁶ the text in our manuscript deviates from it in minor details. Earlier edition in Miller I, 19, Esc. 30A, with the title Εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν καθήμενον καὶ γράφοντα (“On the same [the evangelist Luke] sitting and writing”).
10. For this epigram, the Moscow manuscript is the *codex unicus*.
11. The final words of the first two verses make a pun: τοῖς φόροις (taxes) resonates in προσφόρως (in a fitting way). Fitting indeed: as a tax collector, Matthew is used to keeping perfect track of lists – such as the human genealogy of Christ that opens his Gospel (the verbs in the final verse come from the administrative sphere). The same idea is to be found in the first verses of an eleventh-century epigram on the four evangelists: Ἀφείς τελώνης τὰς δεκάτας ὠνίων / πρᾶως δεκατοῦ τὴν Χριστοῦ γενεαρχίαν (“The publican has ceased taking tithe of goods, / and now gently takes tithe of the genealogy of Christ”), www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/1903.
12. The tasting refers to the fatal apple, of course. The bipartition of the epigram reflects the basic tenet of Christianity: original sin (vv. 1–2) is counterbalanced by redemption through the incarnation of the Logos (vv. 3–4). As in the final verses of the previous poem, the mention of the incarnation is the perfect introduction to the opening lines of the Gospel: Matthew traces back Jesus’ genealogy to Abraham, i.e. to the book of Genesis.
13. The title of Braounou-Pietsch’s book, *Beseelte Bilder* (“Living Images”), becomes very tangible in this epigram. Philes insists that the image of Mark is alive, which in sacred portraits is more than lifelike. As Maguire has it, this is not a question of (stylistic) realism but of (perceived) reality. According to Braounou-Pietsch, 119 out of Philes’ 472 epigrams on visual representations use the device of the “living image.”¹⁷
14. Philes also uses the image of the “lampstand of the forerunner” in an epigram on the decapitation of John the Precursor, in a similar verse: Τὴν προδρομικὴν τοῦ θεοῦ σε λυχνίαν (Miller I, 64, Esc. 150 v. 1). This recalls the characterization of the Precursor in the Gospel of John 5:35, ἐκεῖνος ἦν ὁ λύχνος (“he was the lamp”), as opposed to the light itself: Jn 1:8, οὐκ ἦν ἐκεῖνος τὸ φῶς, ἀλλ’ ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός (“he was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light”). Mark will indeed open his gospel with the story of John the Baptist, in which sin and repentance play an important role – see v. 2 of the epigram.
15. The epigram is clearly structured around the opposition between darkness (v. 1) and light (v. 4), which may include also a reminiscence of the opening passage of the Gospel of John, see 1:5, τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει (“the light shines in the darkness”), compare Jn 8:12.
16. This epigram is comparable to C. On a thematic level, both underline the quiet required for the evangelist’s writing activity. There are several verbal similarities: the

16 Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 119–20; she also discusses the common type of the sitting evangelist in miniatures, often with the suggestion of motion.

17 Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder*, 34; she refers to Maguire’s expression on 51 n. 95.

expression πρὸς τὸ γράφειν occurs in the two poems at a verse end; compare σιγῶν in v. 1 with σιωπῶν in C v. 2; the (imaginary) movement of the writing evangelist (κινεῖν) was also mentioned in C v. 3 (κινεῖται). Yet there is also an important difference. Whereas C was rather a description and an explanation to a distanced viewer, this epigram directly addresses the spectator as if he were a real participant in the depicted scene. Here the illusion of actual presence is at its highest.

17. Although the etymology of βουθυτεῖν clearly implies oxen (βοῦς), the verb can also simply mean “to sacrifice” (see LSJ). This is probably the meaning here, since Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, is not sacrificing animals but burning incense on the altar in the opening scene of Luke, to which this poem alludes. See Lk. 1:11, where the angel Gabriel interrupts him at the right side of the altar (τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου τοῦ θυμιάματος).

One should not confuse this Zacharias with the Old Testament prophet Zechariah: John’s father is also called a prophet, for instance in several titles of Philes’ poems (Esc. 131, 132, 144).

18. The calf is one of the symbols of Christ (see e.g. *PGL*, μόσχος); it is probably no coincidence that the poet has chosen this symbol right after the word βουθυτεῖν. (Moreover, we may note that the preceding folio has a miniature of a calf as a symbol of Luke.) With this reference to Christ’s sacrifice, the poet makes a daring link between the beginning and the end of the life of Jesus.

Philes alludes to the calf as a typological symbol for Christ in his poem on the Hospitality of Abraham (Miller I, 45, Esc. 103) vv. 2–3: by slaughtering (θύσας) a calf (μόσχον) as an act of hospitality (ὡς φιλόξενος, cf. Gen. 18:7–8), Abraham is said to foreshadow the lamb of God (καὶ γὰρ τὸν ἀμνὸν τοῦ θεοῦ προδεικνύεις). This is a (small) extra indication that Philes might be the poet of epigram F as well.

19. For Christ bringing sacrifices to an end, see e.g. Mt. 9:13 (= 12:7): ἔλεος θέλω καὶ οὐ θυσίαν (“I desire mercy, not sacrifice”).

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II.5.3 John (the Writer) (twelfth century)

A Metrical Colophon on John Klimax's *Ladder of Divine Ascent*

RACHELE RICCERI AND RENAAT MEESTERS

Ed.: Meesters and Ricceri 2018: 344 and 346. The edition presented here provides an updated version of the text, which takes into account the manuscripts Athos, Iveron 416 and Oxford, Christ Church gr. 80. We are grateful to Maxim Venetskov for notifying us of the existence of these occurrences.

MSS.:¹ **M:** Moscow, RNB, Synod. gr. 229 (Vlad. 192) (s. XII), f. 321r

N: Moscow, RNB, Synod. gr. 480 (Vlad. 193) (s. XII), f. 389r

R: Manchester, Rylands, Gaster 1574 (a.1282), f. 345v

O: Oxford, Christ Church gr. 80 (s. XIII/XIV), ff. 422r–v

A: Athos, Iveron 416 (Eustratiades 222) (s. XIV) f. 166r

P: Paris, BnF, Coisl. 264 (s. XIV), ff. 256v–257r

L: Athos, Megistes Lauras, B 102 (s. XI/XIV), ff. 266v–267r (these folios date to the fourteenth century)

V: Vatican, BAV, Pal. gr. 120 (a. 1322–1323), ff. 172r–v

Other Translations: Meesters and Ricceri 2018: 345, 347

Significance

The epigram is representative of metrical colophons that consist of an invariable and variable part. The first, fixed part, concerns the content of the book that it accompanies, while the second part includes details related to the production of a specific manuscript, such as the names of the scribes and the patrons. In this respect, this particular epigram can be considered as an open text, which can easily be modified and adapted to different contexts.

The Author

This epigram is the third in a cycle of four long dodecasyllabic poems dedicated to John Klimax's *Ladder of Divine Ascent*² and functions as a colophon.³ The question of the authorship of the cycle as a whole is not straightforward and requires some more information

¹ Consulted.

² PG 88: 631–1164.

³ See for an edition, transl. and commentary on the whole cycle Meesters and Ricceri 2018; Meesters 2018. Regarding the new occurrences, it has to be noted that A also preserves v. 1 of the fourth poem (f. 177v). O, which is mutilated, also preserves vv. 88–226 of the second poem (ff. 1r–4v) and vv. 1–129 of the fourth poem (ff. 453r–455v).

on the context to which this epigram belongs. Therefore, we provide here some data that can be significant in terms of framing the epigram in (at least) a chronological context.

A certain John Komnenos appears in this third poem as well as on two other occasions in the cycle. First, in the introductory text to the first poem of the cycle, which is a comparison between a garden and John Klimax's *Ladder*, it is stated that the poem has been composed *παρὰ πνεύματος Ἰωάννου Κομνηνοῦ*, "by the spirit of John Komnenos." Unfortunately, the relevant folio of the only manuscript which preserves this introductory paratext,⁴ f. 1 of M, is damaged and the full understanding of this part of the text is seriously compromised.⁵ Secondly, the cycle closes with a reference to the same John Komnenos, in Poem 4, vv. 133–34: ἄζυξ, μοναστῆς Ἰωάννης σὸς λάτρης / καὶ τῆς χοϊκῆς Κομνηνῆς ρίζης κλάδος, "I, the unmarried monk John, Your servant / and branch of the earthly Komnenian root."

Albeit the exact identity of this John Komnenos remains uncertain, the name allows us to date the poetic cycle to the twelfth century.⁶ This tentative dating is confirmed by the manuscript tradition, given that the two oldest manuscripts, M and N, were written in that century, which corresponds to the flourishing of the Komnenian era.

John Komnenos, who belongs to the powerful family of the Komnenoi and is emphatically praised for his descent in our epigram,⁷ can be identified as the sponsor who paid for the production of the original manuscript; whereas a certain John the writer, who is mentioned in v. 15, could be identified with the author and the actual scribe of the poetic cycle.

In the light of this scarcity of information, an accurate identification of the author of the whole cycle with a well-known personality is not possible. However, thanks to this poetic cycle we are aware of the existence of a well-educated member of the Komnenian lineage, who became a monk and was indeed involved in the composition of the elaborate and refined pieces of poetry that accompany the *Ladder* of John Klimax in a group of manuscripts.⁸

As far as this poem is concerned, the author should be identified with John the writer, the scribe of the original book, for the following two reasons. Firstly, the title transmitted with the text in most manuscripts states that this is an epigram composed by the scribe ("Verses of the scribe of this book, about those who ascend this ladder [of virtues]"). Secondly, the poems are written from the perspective of the scribe, who is described as a humble monk (v. 15 MNOL), whereas John Komnenos is praised in a manner befitting a patron.

4 For a broad discussion on this term see K. Demoen, Introduction, II.5 in this volume.

5 Actually, in the manuscript only "τεθέντες" is clearly legible. It might be emended in "<συν>τεθέντες" ("composed"), since there is a stain on that portion of text.

6 We are aware of the existence of some "Johns Komnenoi" involved either in monastic life or in literary production. There is a certain poet of anacreontic verses, John Komnenos of Sozopolis, whose work is edited in Boissonade 1831: 456–60. In a twelfth-century epigram a certain John Komnenos, a son of an emperor, is mentioned as a founder of a monastery (cf. *ODB* s.v. "Komnenos"). Also known is John Komnenos Synadenos (monk name Ioakeim), dated to the end of the thirteenth century. He was the patron of at least four manuscripts: Paris, BnF suppl. gr. 1262; Paris, BnF, Coisl. 89; Saint Petersburg, RNB gr. 321, Vatican, BAV gr. 456. Cf. *RGK* II.311; *VGH* 241; Cavallo 2006: 86; Devreesse 1945: 78; Treu 1966: 146.

7 Vv. 16–18 of the version transmitted in transmitted by M, N, O and L.

8 For a more elaborated discussion on the authorship of this poetic cycle see Meesters and Ricceri, 2018: 299–303.

Text and Context

The epigram is copied at the end of the text of the *Ladder of Divine Ascent* in eight manuscripts, spanning the period from the twelfth to the fourteenth century. The manuscript tradition is radically divergent. Five versions of the poem can be identified. Five manuscripts (M, N, O, L, and P) offer a nineteen-line poem, with two different endings, whereas three codices give a shorter poem: fourteen lines in R and two closely interrelated versions of sixteen verses in A and V. The first thirteen lines of the epigram do not present substantial variants⁹ but the ending, where the names of the people involved in the production of the manuscripts are mentioned, has clearly been reworked to fit the needs of each manuscript or group of manuscripts. Therefore, the epigram can be considered as an open and dynamic text, as is often the case with scribal book epigrams.

According to the transmitted title, this epigram announces the end of the *Ladder* (v. 1) from the point of view of its target audience, that is, those who put the precepts of the *Ladder* in practice. They are the main actors of the first part of the poem and are identified as mortals disposed to cope with the challenges that a spiritual journey presents (vv. 2–5). Although they are mortal beings (v. 6), thanks to the ascetic exercise provided by the reading of Klimax's work, they have abandoned their old life, are renewed and lifted up (vv. 7–10). There follows an invocation to John Klimax, a saint and author of the *Ladder*, who is asked to grant that the scribe and/or the patron ascend the ladder to Paradise (vv. 11–14). The end of the colophon is marked by the insertion of the names of the participants in the process of the creation of the poem or of the manuscripts. Therefore, R counts only 14 lines, since only the name of the patron is mentioned, whilst the other witnesses have longer finishes, which emphasize the necessity of the intercession of Klimax (M, N, O, L v. 19; A, V v. 16) in order to obtain salvation (P vv. 18–19).

In order to better understand the process of composition and the transmission of the epigram, it is helpful to adopt the terminology of Wallraff and Andrist, who stress the necessity of distinguishing between three kinds of paratexts.¹⁰ A (metrical) paratext can be, according to the two scholars, “traditional,” “editorial,” or “post-editorial.” The first two categories, the “traditional” and the “editorial,” are particularly meaningful in the case of our epigram. M, N, O and L¹¹ present the same version of the text, which can be labeled as “traditional”: the names of John the scribe and John Komnenos are preserved in all these manuscripts, as if they were respectively the actual scribe and the patron of the manuscripts, although, for obvious chronological and paleographical reasons, this is not possible. The more recent witnesses to the epigram (P, R, A, and V) modify it in order to give some specific information on the very manuscript in which it is copied. These adapted versions can be categorized as “editorial” epigrams.

⁹ An interesting exception will be discussed on p. 1404, n. 2.

¹⁰ Wallraff and Andrist 2015: 239–40; see also Meesters 2016a and K. Demoen, Introduction, II.5 in this volume.

¹¹ The analysis of the manuscript tradition of the whole poetic cycle leads to the conclusion that O and L are strongly dependent on N.

Text

Στίχοι συγγραφέντες παρὰ τοῦ μοναχοῦ Ἰωάννου περὶ τῶν ἀναβαινόντων ταύτην τὴν κλίμακα¹

- Τέλος κλίμακος οὐρανοδρόμου βίβλου,
 ἀφ' ἧς ἀποτρέχουσιν οἱ ψυχοκτόνοι,
 ἐφ' ἣν ἐπιτρέχουσιν οἱ σαρκοκτόνοι,
 ἀφ' ἧς καταβαίνουσιν οἱ νοοκτόνοι,
 5 ἐφ' ἣν ἀναβαίνουσιν οἱ παθοκτόνοι.
 Βροτοὶ μὲν οὗτοι· τὸ πλεόν δὲ καὶ νόες
 ἀποξύσαντες τῆς λεβηρίδος πάχος
 ὀπῆς στενῆς ἔσωθεν ὡς γῆρας ὄφης,
 καινοὶ φανέντες ὡς κενοὶ κενοῦ βίου,
 10 καὶ νοῖ² κατασταθέντες ὡς ἐπηρμένοι.
 Ἦνπερ δίδου σὺ σαῖς λιταῖς, Ἰωάννη,
 ὁ τήνδ' ἐγείρας ὡς λίθοις στερροῖς λόγοις,
 ὁ τήνδε πῆξας ἄγαν εὐτεχνεστάτως,
 MNOL: σοῖς Ἰωάνναις ἀναβαίνειν ὡς γράφεις
 15 τῷ τῆσδε γραφεῖ, δυσγενεῖ κακοτρόπῳ,
 τῷ τ' εὐγενεῖ τὸν βίον, ὡς δὲ καὶ γένος,
 γένους Κομνηνοῦ, σχήματος μονοτρόπου
 καὶ κλήσεως δὲ τῆς γε χαριτωνύμου·
 ἄλλως γὰρ ἀμήχανον ἔστιν ὡς λέγεις.
- P: ἀνεμποδίστως ἀναβαίνειν ὡς γράφεις
 15 τῷ τῆσδε γραφεῖ, ῥακενδύτη Νικάνδρῳ
 καὶ Κυπριανῷ τῷ Θεοῦ θηηπόλῳ,
 τῷ τήνδε πολλῷ τῷ πόθῳ κτησαμένῳ
 θησαυρὸν ὡς ἄσυλον, ὡς Θεοῦ χάριν,
 ὡς πρόξενόν γε ψυχικῆς σωτηρίας.
- V: μοναχὸν Σίμον ἀναβαίνειν ὡς γράφεις
 15 καὶ σῷ Συμέῳ, ἱερεῖ ἀναξίῳ³
 ἄλλως γὰρ ἀμήχανον ἔστιν ὡς λέγεις.
- A: μοναχὸν Σάβαν ἀναβαίνειν ὡς γράφεις
 15 καὶ σῷ Νικήτῃ, ἱερεῖ ἀναξίῳ·
 ἄλλως γὰρ ἀμήχανον ἔστιν ὡς λέγεις.
- 14 R: μοναχὸν Ἰάκωβον ἀναβαίνειν ὡς γράφεις.

Translation

Verses composed by John the monk, about those who ascend this ladder

- End of the book of the ladder which runs to Heaven,⁴
 from which those who kill their soul run away,
 towards which those who kill their flesh run,
 from which those who kill their mind descend,
 5 upon which those who kill their passions ascend.
 These are mortal; but even more so they are minds
 which slough off the thickness of the outer skin,
 from the inside of a small hole, as a snake does with its old skin.⁵
 They appear new, since they are free from an empty life,
 10 and they have been established as minds, as they have been lifted up.
 You, John, allow through your prayers
 – you who erected this ladder with words solid as stones,
 you who set it up in the most skilful way –⁶
- MNL: your Johns⁷ to ascend it, according to your writings:
 15 on the one hand, the low-born and sinner scribe of this book,
 and on the other hand, the noble one, as for his life and his descent,
 being from the family of the Komnenoi, being a monk,
 and of a name that is full of grace.⁷
 Because otherwise it is impossible to ascend according to your statements.⁸
- P: to ascend it unhindered, according to your writings,
 15 the scribe of this book, Nikander, wearer of rags,
 and Kyprian, the priest of God,⁹
 who has acquired this book with much desire
 as an inviolable treasure, as the grace of God,
 as an agent of spiritual salvation.
- V: Simon the monk to ascend the ladder, according to your writings –
 15 and also your Symeon, unworthy priest.¹⁰
 Because otherwise it is impossible to ascend according to your statements.
- A: Sabas the monk to ascend the ladder, according to your writings –
 15 and also your Niketas, unworthy priest.¹¹
 Because otherwise it is impossible to ascend according to your statements.
- 14 R: James the monk¹² to ascend the ladder, according to your writings.

Commentary

1. Seven out of the eight witnesses to this poem have the same title, with small variations, namely: Στίχοι τοῦ γράψαντος τὴν παροῦσαν βίβλον περὶ τῶν ἀναβαινόντων ταύτην τὴν τῶν ἀρετῶν κλίμακα, “Verses of the scribe of this book, about those who ascend this ladder of virtues.”¹² M, however, being one of the oldest and most trustworthy manuscripts of the poetic cycle, presents a title which provides more specific information and is therefore probably the original one. Yet, μο(ναχοῦ) has been added *supra lineam* and ἰω(άνν)ου in the margin, very possibly by the same hand. John the writer is likely to be the scribe of the original manuscript and his name is kept in M, N, and L, which were copied by different scribes.
2. The manuscript tradition diverges between καὶ νοῖ and καινοί. The choice for the best variant reading is not straightforward. Καὶ νοῖ is defensible, especially because of its position in the manuscript tradition. The three manuscripts (M, N, and P) that preserve this variant are the oldest ones and the ones that are likely to present the best text in many difficult passages of the whole cycle of poems. Moreover, the *lectio* καινοί, “new,” preserved by O, L, R, A, and V, can be the result of the influence of the previous verse, which opens with this exact word. As for the meaning, both variants make sense and may be suitable. Καὶ νοῖ recalls the definition of the human beings as “minds” of v. 6 and explains it. Καινοί, in its turn, fits well the reference to the new condition of he who has completed the ascension, as in v. 9. The biblical allusion of the two possible readings lies in Paul’s Letters, with the reference to the “new man,” who quits his old life and is re-born as a Christian (e.g. Col. 3:9–10; Rom. 6:4).
3. Ἀναξίω is a correction for ἀναξίως (“unworthily”), preserved in V. Indeed, it makes sense to have an adjective referring to Symeon the priest, given that the dative has parallels with the equivalent verses of the other versions of the poem, namely v. 15 of M, N, L, O, and P.
4. In Byzantine book epigrams, the adjective οὐρανοδρόμος (*PGL* “traversing the heavens”) is quite often used with reference to Klimax or his *Ladder*. To the best of our knowledge, nine different poems (including the present epigram), which occur in many manuscripts of the *Ladder*, depict Klimax’s *Ladder* as “running along the sky” (*LSJ* s.v.). Mostly, this adjective appears in the incipit:¹³ Τριαντάριθμος οὐρανοδρόμος κλίμαξ¹⁴ is the first verse of three different poems; Καὶ τήνδε λαμπρὰν οὐρανοδρόμον βίβλον¹⁵ opens a longer dedicatory epigram written at the end of a Klimax manu-

12 Apart from very common orthographical mistakes that appear in almost all manuscripts, only P gives a slightly different title, which runs Στίχοι περὶ τῶν ἀναβαινόντων ταύτην τὴν τῶν ἀρετῶν κλίμακα, omitting any reference to the process of writing the verses.

13 Vassilis 2005 lists nine incipits of poems that contain the adjective οὐρανοδρόμος, four of which connected to Klimax’s work (p. 90, 409, 721, 803).

14 *DBBE*, www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/2107, www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/4250, www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/4746 (accessed December 2020). A two-line version of this poem is to be found also in M, f. 320v.

15 *DBBE*, www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/2883 (accessed December 2020).

script; Αὕτη κλίμαξ πέφυκεν οὐρανοδρόμος¹⁶ is the incipit of a three-line poem that shares more than one similarity with our colophon (see n. 6); the same three verses occur at the end of another poem on Klimax's work, preserved in the manuscript Jerusalem, Patriarch. Tim. Stavr. 93.¹⁷ The dodecasyllable Κλίμαξ ἀρίστη οὐρανοδρόμου δρόμου¹⁸ is a caption in the form of a drawing of the ladder of Paradise in the manuscript Vatican, Chigi gr. R VII 47 (gr. 38). One last occurrence of the adjective οὐρανοδρόμος in the context of a book epigram on Klimax is to be found in a poem copied in the manuscript Athens, EBE 2091,¹⁹ whose fourth verse runs as follows: κλίμακα (ms. κλήμακα) τήνδε θείαν οὐρανοδρόμον.

5. The ideal readers of the *Ladder* are compared to a snake who sheds its skin passing through a small hole in its old skin, since the climbing to the top of the ladder requires a radical change of lifestyle and a big effort. The reference to the small hole in the process of renewal evokes a biblical passage, Mt. 7:13: Εἰσελθατε διὰ τῆς στενῆς πύλης, "enter through the narrow gate." An interesting intertextual parallel, with the same reference to the shed skin of a snake, is in Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, no. 24, v. 18: καὶ συνελών ἀπόξυσαι τὸ γῆρας ὡσπερ ὄφης, "contracting to slough off the old skin as a snake," a text which is approximately contemporary with the epigram.
6. Reference to John Klimax, whose ability as a literary author is praised here. The qualities of Klimax as a skillful writer are also recognized in other poems on the *Ladder*, such as an epigram preserved in Oxford, Barocci 141, f. 247, where Klimax is described as a τεχνίτης, "craftsman," "who, with his experienced, fine, mystical workmanship/his solid grasp of skill, / has reached the summit of craftsmanship."²⁰ V. 12 has a striking parallel with the third line of another book epigram on Klimax,²¹ which reads ἦν ὡς λίθοις ἡγειρας ἐν στερροῖς λόγοις, "which you erected with words solid as stones." Both verses can moreover be compared to Michael Psellos, *Orat. paneg.* 1.319: ἵνα μὴ τοῖς στερροῖς λόγοις ὡς λίθοις βληθῶ, "in order that I am not hit by words solid as stones."
7. The two Johns of v. 14, in the version of the poem offered by M, N, O, and L, are the scribe of the original manuscript and the sponsor of the poetic cycle, John Komnenos (see The Author, above).
8. On v. 18, χαριτώνυμος refers to the name 'John' and is based on the Hebrew root of the name. Cf. PGL.
9. The reference to the ascension to Paradise is made clear once more in the last verse of our epigram, in the version of M, N, O, L, A, and V. The last words of the poem, ὡς

16 DBBE, www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/4163 (accessed December 2020).

17 DBBE, www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/20751 (accessed December 2020).

18 DBBE, www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/18032 (accessed December 2020).

19 DBBE, www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/18312 (accessed December 2020).

20 See Meesters 2016b, Poem 2, vv. 9–11: "ἐκ τῆς καθ' ἕξιν μυστικῆς λεπτοουργίας / τῶ τῆς ἐπιστήμης τε καθηδρασμένῳ / εἰς ἀκρότητα τῆς τεχνουργίας φθάσας."

21 DBBE, www.dbbe.ugent.be/typ/2259 and www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/4163 (accessed December 2020). Cf. BEIÜ 4: 93–94.

λέγεις, “according to your statements,” may refer to a paraenetic text called προτροπή, “exhortation,” that follows the thirtieth and last step of the *Ladder of Divine Ascent*.²² This brief closing opens with the imperatives Ἀναβαίνετε, ἀναβαίνετε, “ascend, ascend” and confirms the exhortatory intent of Klimax’s oeuvre.

Ὡς λέγεις is equivalent to ὡς γράφεις, “according to what you write” at the end of v. 14. Therefore, we can postulate that the same infinitive ἀναβαίνειν, “to ascend” is implied in the last line as well, to complete the meaning of ἀμήχανον ἔστιν, “it is impossible.”

10. Nikander and Kyprian are mentioned, respectively, as the scribe and the patron of P. Unfortunately, we are not provided with any other information, so the possibility remains that these names were copied from an earlier manuscript.
11. V is a dated manuscript mainly written by two scribes, one of whom is a certain Stephanos, who signs a colophon on f. 184v.²³ The epigram mentions two people involved in the production of the manuscript, neither of them being noted by Alexander Turyn in his description of the manuscript. The first one is Simon, who is not explicitly designed as the scribe, as is the case with the other versions of the poem. Symeon, on the other hand, is designated as a priest and might be identified as the sponsor of the manuscript, although one would expect a more eulogistic description of the patron, rather than being called “unworthy.” The roles of Simon and Symeon, then, remain unclear. The roles of Sabas and Niketas in A, such as those of Simon and Symeon in V, are not further specified.
12. The manuscript referred to as R, preserved in Manchester, presents a subscription on ff. 376v–377, where James the monk is mentioned as the owner or the sponsor of the manuscript.²⁴ Thanks to this colophon in prose we can also identify the scribe of the poem, a certain Ioasaph, who is not openly mentioned in the verses.

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²² PG 88: 1160–61.

²³ Turyn 1964: 131.

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II.5.4 Theodore Prodromos (c.1100–c.1170)

A Laudatory Epigram on Gregory of Nazianzos

RACHELE RICCERI

Ed.: Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 187

MSS.:¹ Vatican City, BAV, gr. 305 (s. XIII), ff. 126v–127r

Paris, BnF, gr. 554 (s. XIII, but s. XV hand), ff. 1v–2r

Other Translations: Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 188

Significance

The text should be considered like a hymn, one that summarizes the distinctive features of Gregory of Nazianzos, simply known in Byzantium as the Theologian. It is written in the first person and contains a list of Gregory's features, which are first expressed by means of a list of accusatives. From v. 6 to the end of the poem, Gregory is directly addressed with vocatives, verbs in the second person, and imperatives. The epigram is an interesting example of how verses were considered to be living texts that could be re-used for different purposes.

The Author

See E. Jeffreys, I.6.7, in this volume.

Text and Context

This poem is preserved in two manuscripts. It appears in MS. Vatican, BAV, Graecus 305, one of the most important Prodromic codices, compiled in the third or fourth quarter of the thirteenth century in Constantinople by Theophylaktos Spanopoulos (*PLP* 24845).² The second witness to the poem – more relevant to our volume – is Paris, BnF, gr. 554, a manuscript dating to the thirteenth century which contains some of the *Orations* by Gregory of Nazianzos. The poem is written at the beginning of the manuscript, on ff. 1v–2, preceding sermon 1 *On Easter*.³ The epigram was copied by a fifteenth-century hand, re-using a poem composed by a well-known poet to introduce and identify the content

I am grateful to Kristoffel Demoen and Foteini Spingou for their insightful comments.

1 Consulted.

2 On the importance of this manuscript see Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 137–45.

3 On ff. 1r and 2r–v six poems on or by Gregory were copied, as a poetic anthology opening the manuscript; for an overview of these epigrams see www.dbbe.ugent.be/manuscripts/14946 (accessed December 2020).

of the manuscript, with particular reference to the author.⁴ Therefore, in the Parisian manuscript the poem can be classified as a *laudatory book epigram*,⁵ because it functions as a praise of the author and is closely related to the content of the book.⁶ The importance of this particular occurrence is twofold: it contributes to the knowledge of the work of a well-known poet and at the same time it sheds light on the reception of Theodore's poems, since it appears in a new context.

If one looks at the content, this text is a prime example of Gregory's fortune in Byzantine literature. It is a eulogizing text originally belonging to a homogeneous group of six epigrams praising saints: Paul the Apostle, Gregory of Nazianzos, Basil of Caesarea, John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nyssa, and Nicholas.⁷ A considerable number of poems testify to the immense popularity that accompanied Gregory's memory in Byzantium. These poetic compositions have been the object of editions and critical works⁸ and show recurrent *topoi*.⁹ The origin of several of these motifs is to be traced back to the works of Gregory himself, which abound with details regarding his personal life and experiences.

It is well known that the *Orations* by Gregory had a strong impact on Byzantine literature, but the influence of his poems on later poetry is equally undeniable.¹⁰ The text under consideration offers some information on Theodore Prodromos' awareness of Gregory's poetical oeuvre.¹¹ In particular, this epigram shows some structural and content-related similarities with *Carm.* 2.1.55 by Gregory himself.¹² Gregory's poem consists of twelve elegiac distichs and presents a *deprecatio* against the devil, written in the shape of a prayer.¹³ Theodore's epigram, in the same meter and number of verses, praises Gregory and has the eulogizing character that is typical of prayers. Remarkably, Theodore seems to rely on Gregory's poems when composing verses on the life of the Church father, as in the case of his tetrastichs dedicated to Gregory,¹⁴ which are based on *Carm.* 2.1.93.¹⁵

As mentioned above, regarding the metrics, the epigram is embedded in a long-established tradition of classical meters, as it is written in elegiac couplets.¹⁶ The prosody is generally respected, although the *dichrona* (alpha, iota, upsilon) are sometimes arbitrarily scanned.¹⁷

4 Sajdak 1914: 258 no. 3; Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 222.

5 Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 198.

6 Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 220.

7 Edition in Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 181–224.

8 See, for example, Sajdak 1914: 256–307; Somers 1999; Macé and Somers 2000; Crimi 2004; Demoen and Van Opstall 2010; Demoen en Somers 2016.

9 Crimi 2004: 62–63.

10 Demoen and Van Opstall 2010: 223.

11 On the influence of Gregory's poetry on Prodromos see Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, where this poem is the object of a partial comment, in order to show the relationship between the two authors (226–9).

12 Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 223; Gregory's poem is the source of the whole group of six poems to which the epigram originally belonged.

13 Ricceri 2014: 516–19.

14 Theodore wrote a series of tetrastichs on Gregory of Nazianzos, now ed. in D'Ambrosi 2008.

15 Magnelli 2010: 124 ff.

16 Elegiac couplets consist of a dactylic hexameter followed by a so-called pentameter.

17 See the variable length of the ι in Τριάς at vv. 20–21.

Text

Ἕτεροι εἰς τὸν μέγαν Γρηγόριον τὸν Θεολόγον ἠρωελεγεῖοι¹

Θευλογίης μέγα κάρτος αἰέσομαι, ἀγνὸν ἰρήα
 Γρηγόριον, Ῥώμης ποιμένα κουροτέρης,
 ῥητροσύνης κύδος ἠδὲ πυρὸς μένος ἀττικοῖο,
 πνεύοντα κρατερῆς εὐχὸς ἐπογραφίης,
 5 παντοδαπῆς σοφίης ἐπ' ἀπείρονα κύκλα κίοντα,
 τῆς νέον ἡμετέρης καὶ ποτὲ ἡμετέρης.
 Παρθενίης μέγα χαῖρ' ἐπιήρατε νυμφίε νύμφης,
 ἢ πρό μὲν ἐν Τριάδι καὶ τ' αὐλοισι νόοις,
 καὶ καθαρῆσι τρίτον ψυχαῖς ἐπιμίγνυται ἀνδρῶν,
 10 σὸν δε γέγηθε πλέον ἀμφιέπουσα λέχος.
 Χριστιανῶν λάχεος χαῖρε πρόμε, πίστιος ἔρμα,
 ὑψηχῆς Τριάδος Στέντορ ὑπερμενέος,
 πῆμ' ὄλοον μανίης ἀδινάων αἰρεσιάων,
 πῆμα Σαβελλιάο, πῆμα Μακεδονίου,
 15 πῆμα τμηξιθέου ὀλοόφρονος ἀνδρὸς Ἀρείου·
 ὃς θεότητα τάμεν, σοῖς δ' ἀπέτμαγε λόγοις.
 χαῖρε λόγων μελέδημα, λαλοῦν ἀφίδρυμα σοφίης,
 ζῶν ἄγαλμ' ἐπέων καὶ τε λογογραφίης,
 σκιρτητά, πενθῆτορ, ἀπάντεσι παντὸς ἀνάσσω·
 20 Τριάδα μὲν πνεύων, Τριάδα δ' ἐκλαλέων,
 Τριάδι δὲ ζώων, Τριάδος δ' ὑπὲρ ἦτορ ὀλέσκων,
 ἧς σὺ μὲν ἀμφὶ πόλῳ ἄρτι πάρεδρος ἔης·
 ἡμῖν δ' ὥστε μέλισσα, καλὸν μέλι κάλλιπες ὦδε,
 σοὺς τε λόγους ἐτέρους, καὶ τὸ “ἔμελλεν ἄρα.”

Translation

Other [verses] to the Great Gregory the Theologian; elegiacs

I shall sing² of the great strength of theology, the chaste minister
 Gregory, shepherd of the younger Rome,³
 brave glory⁴ of oratory,⁵ force of Attic fire,
 breathing out the pride of the powerful epic poetry,⁶
 5 going around the endless circle of our manifold wisdom,
 both new and old.
 A mighty hail to the beloved⁷ groom of the bride Virginity,⁸
 who first mingles with the Trinity, then with the immaterial minds
 and thirdly with the purest of human souls,
 10 but rejoices most taking care of your bed.
 Hail, leader of the flock of Christians, supporter of the faith,
 loud Stentor⁹ of the almighty Trinity,
 destructive bane of the madness of vehement heretics,
 bane of Sabellius, bane of Macedonius,
 15 bane of the insane man who divided God, Arius,¹⁰
 who divided the divinity, you cut him off with your orations.¹¹
 Hail, care of words, speaking image of wisdom,
 living statue¹² of epic poetry and prose.
 Leaper,¹³ mourner, leader of all in every circumstance,
 20 you breathe the Trinity, you divulge the Trinity,
 you live for the Trinity, you die in the name of the Trinity,
 you are now sitting next to her [i.e. the Trinity] in the vault of heaven as a
 coadjutor.
 And, like a bee, you left so much sweet honey to us,
 your other orations, especially the “ἔμελλεν ἄρα.”¹⁴

Commentary

1. I adopted the title of the Parisian manuscript, where the poem functions as a book epigram. However, Zagklas in his edition of the poem edition gives the title of the Vatican manuscript, where, as mentioned above, the epigram lies in the context of a cycle of six poems: “Ὀμοιοί [sc. προσφωνητήριοι] εἰς τὸν Θεολόγον Γρηγόριον. The heading used by the scribe of the Vatican manuscript underlines the function of the text as a laudatory book epigram, referring to the author.
2. The form ἀείσομαι (“I shall sing”) is used in the first verse of four Homeric Hymns and is a clear allusion to the structure and style of hymns.
3. Gregory of Nazianzos was bishop of the small orthodox community of Constantinople from 379 to 381.¹⁸ This was a brief but important period for him and marked a turning point in his personal and pastoral life. The initial enthusiasm towards this task quickly faded and Gregory was forced to resign and to go back to Nazianzos. We are provided with a remarkable amount of information on the Constantinopolitan experience by Gregory himself, who recorded memories of his church and his people in several passages of his orations and poems. The echo of this period must have been noteworthy in Byzantium as well, since Theodore mentions it at the beginning of this poem, thus considering Gregory’s role as bishop of Constantinople as one of his main features.
4. The acute accent of κύδος is needed *metri causa*. However, it is not surprising that in PG 133: 1225, where our poem is printed, is to be found κῦδος, as Gregory is here qualified as “the glory” of oratory. The context implies a positive meaning that excludes the usage of κύδος in the sense of “reproach” or “abuse.”¹⁹ This inconsistency can be explained in light of the free treatment of *dichrona*, whose quantity can be easily changed for metrical reasons.
5. The word ῥητροσύνη is a *verbum novum* meaning “rhetorics,” coined by Theodore, who employs it in several passages of his poems (Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, no. 38, v. 52; no. 42, v. 38; no. 56c, v. 12). The dactylic incipit of this noun makes the word especially appropriate for hexameters or pentameters, as is the case for all the verses mentioned.
6. The poet praises Gregory for his outstanding qualities as orator and poet. In doing this, he employs the word ἐπογραφία (“epic poetry”), which seems to be used only by Theodore Prodromos in this poem and in *Historical Poems*, no. 69, v. 7. Migne offers the variant reading “ἐπιγραφίας,” but it is reasonable to assume that this is a trivialization of the original ἐπογραφίας, since Theodore seems to allude to his knowledge of the Gregorian hexametrical production, along with the usual reference to the orations.
7. The adjective ἐπιήρατος is very rare and according to *TLG* online occurs only in *Orph.*, A. 87, to mean “beloved.”²⁰ The uncertainty caused by the unusualness of this

18 Gally 1943: 132ff.; Ruether 1969: 152ff.

19 See LSJ s.v. and the relevant comment in Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 189.

20 See *LBG* s.v.: “geliebt.”

word probably led Migne to give the Homeric form ἐπιήρανε. However, the parallel πολυήρατον, used by Theodore Prodromos in *tetrast. Greg. Naz.* 5b, v. 1, suggests that the poet consciously uses this infrequent adjective.²¹ Once again, metrical reasons may have played a role, as Prodromos could have used ἐπήρατος, which appears quite often in poetic works, but he needed one more syllable to complete the hexameter.

8. Gregory is described as the chaste groom of the bride Virginity. This image recalls Gregory's *Carm.* 2.1.45, vv. 229–76,²² where the Theologian describes a dream in which ἀγνεία (“chastity”) and σωφροσύνη (“temperance”) appear to him in order to let him choose the unmarried life.
9. Stentor is a Homeric character mentioned in *Il.* 5.785. Gregory is implicitly compared to this hero, famous for his loud voice. Stentor's strength is cited to point out Gregory's force in defending the Nicene understanding of the Trinity from heretical attacks. The position of Gregory as the champion of the Trinity²³ becomes clearer in vv. 20 and 21 of our epigram, where the word Τριάς is repeated four times and the triune nature of God is depicted as the center of Gregory's life.
10. Ll. 14 and 15 refer to some doctrinal controversies. The Sabellians, Pneumatomachoi, and Arians²⁴ are mentioned to underline how Gregory contributed to destroy the memory of those heretical sects and to promote the Trinitarian doctrine. Theodore alludes especially to Arianism, which did not accept the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son.
11. The translation of the word λόγος as “oration,” in this particular context, is justified by the specific reference to the words pronounced by Gregory to fight his enemies; that is, the reference to his orations.
12. The image of a “living statue” is not rare in the context of praising texts and in hymnic literature and is often connected to the concept of the human being as God's image.²⁵
13. The definition of Gregory as “leaper” might sound awkward but well fits the enthusiasm that Prodromos attributes to the Theologian, when it comes to the defense of the Trinitarian dogma. The noun σκιρτητής is a rare one and is mostly used with reference Dionysus (cf. *Orph. Hymn.* 45.7: ἐλθέ, μάκαρ, σκιρτητά, φέρων πολὺ γῆθος ἄπασσι and *AP IX.524.19*: σκιρτητήν, Σάτυρον, Σεμεληγενέτην, Σεμελήα) and Satyr (*Orph. Hymn.* 11.4–5: ἐλθέ, μάκαρ, σκιρτητά, περίδρομε, σύνθρονε Ὠραις).²⁶

21 Magnelli 2010: 130.

22 For an analysis of the Prodromic echoes of this passage see Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 191; D'Ambrosi 2008: 176–7.

23 Beeley 2008.

24 See, respectively, *ODB* II 1391; III 1688; I 167.

25 Some relevant parallels are Clemens of Alexandria, *Protr.* 4.59.2 (ἡμεῖς ἔσμεν οἱ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ θεοῦ περιφέροντες ἐν τῷ ζῶντι καὶ κινουμένῳ τοῦτ' ἄγαλματι, τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ), Michael Psellos, *Poems* 17.14 (τὸ ζῶν ἄγαλμα, with reference to Maria Sciairena), John Mauroπους, *Canones III* 1.123 (ἐμπνουν φρονήσεως ἄγαλμα/ζῶσα καὶ λαλοῦσα δικαιοσύνης εἰκῶν), *AHG Canones Januarii* 11.22.9 (“Ἄγαλμα καὶ ζῶσα εἰκῶν).

26 Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 193.

14. The last words of the poem are a quotation. "Ἐμελλεν ἄρα is the incipit of Gregory's famous *Oration* 43, the funeral oration for Basil.²⁷ This citation testifies to the fortune of this panegyric: among the Gregorian works, it is the only one to be explicitly mentioned in this poem, as it stands out from the others for its popularity. The incipit was clearly recognizable, since Theodore assumes that his reader would grasp the allusion. The popularity of the initial words of the oration is clear when one looks at other Byzantine poems, such as an epigram entitled Ἐπὶ ἀναγνώσει τοῦ Ἐμελλεν ἄρα.²⁸

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²⁷ Ed. Bernardi 1992: 116: "Ἐμελλεν ἄρα πολλὰς ἡμῖν ὑποθέσεις τῶν λόγων ἀεὶ προθεῖς ὁ μέγας Βασίλειος.

²⁸ For the text of the epigram, see Spingou, *Poetry for the Komnenoi*, B15; Tserevelakis 2009–10: 280; more parallels are to be found in Zagklas, *Neglected Poems*, 194–95.

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II.5.5 Constantine Manasses (c.1130–87)

A Dedicatory Epigram to the Sebastokratorissa Eirene

MARIA TOMADAKI

Ed.: O. Lampsidis, *Constantini Manassis Breviarum Chronicum*, CFHB 36.1 (Athens, 1996), 4

MSS.:¹ For a complete list of the fifteen in total manuscripts see Lampsidis 1996: 4

Other Translations: None

Significance

This is a representative example of a patron-related book epigram composed by the author of the main text. It was intended to function as a dedicatory epigram to the commissioner of a literary work.

The Author

See I. Nilsson and C. Messis, II.2.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

Manasses composed the following book epigram for dedicating his *Synopsis Chronike*, a world chronicle written in political verses, to his commissioner, the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene.² Eirene (c.1110–53) was the wife of Manuel I Komnenos' brother Andronikos and one of the most active patronesses of literary and artistic works during the Komnenian period.³ In this epigram, Manasses offers his chronicle to Eirene and praises both her and her husband, the *sebastokrator* Andronikos (c.1108–42).⁴ The *Synopsis* is defined as the fruit of Manasses' labor and as a gift to Eirene (v. 1). Interestingly, in one of the *Synopsis*' manuscripts, ms. Vienna, ÖNB, phil. gr. 149, f. 10, the epigram is accompanied

I am grateful to Prof. Kristoffel Demoen and Dr. Foteini Spingou for their helpful comments.

- 1 Seven of the epigram's manuscripts have been consulted, those recorded in the *Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams (DBBE)*, see www.dbbe.ugent.be/types/3954 (accessed December 2020).
- 2 Lampsidis has convincingly argued that Manasses himself is the poet of the epigram, since it accompanies the *Synopsis* in many manuscripts and has common vocabulary with it; see Lampsidis 1984: 184 and Lampsidis 1996: xvii.
- 3 On the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene see Jeffreys 2011/12: 177–94; Rhoby 2009: 305–36; Jeffreys 1994: 40–68; Lampsidis 1984: 91–105; Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, 362–79.
- 4 Andronikos was the second son of the emperor John II Komnenos; on *sebastokrator* Andronikos see Varzos, *Γενεαλογία* no. 76, p. 357–79.

by a drawing depicting Manasses offering a book to Eirene (fig. II.5.5). Between the two main figures in the composition, the final verses of an astrological poem can be observed (vv. 585–593).⁵ This poem resembles a dedicatory epigram in respect to its vocabulary and themes. For this reason, Odysseas Lampsidis attributed it to Manasses instead of Theodore Prodromos, to whom it had been previously ascribed by its editor.⁶ It seems that the same *sebastokratorissa* Eirene also commissioned Manasses to compose this long didactic poem on astrology.

The dedicatory epigram follows or precedes the *Synopsis* in the manuscripts⁷ and was probably composed around 1145, after the completion of the *Synopsis* and before Eirene's death in 1153.⁸ As indicated by the *Synopsis* (vv. 14–17), Manasses received some reward from Eirene for composing these verses, but the details are not specified.⁹

In an attempt to praise his patroness and her family, Manasses uses an epic style, that is distinguished by a series of encomiastic compound epithets attested in Homer (e.g. “καρτερόχειρος,” “ἔϋμελίης”), the poetry of Late Antiquity (e.g. “ὀλβιόδωρος”) or in Byzantine texts (e.g. “πορφυροπαῖς,” “Αὔσονάναξ”).¹⁰ Furthermore, the use of hexameters instead of decapentasyllables¹¹ results in an “epic” laudation for Eirene, and a demonstration of the author's ability to compose verses in both meters.¹²

As far as genre is concerned, one may compare this epigram with the dedicatory verses in Theodore Prodromos' novel *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* to an anonymous emperor and the iambic preface of Euthymios Zigabenos' *Dogmatike Panoplia* dedicated to Alexios Komnenos.¹³ It is interesting to note that all these poems were composed by the author of the main text and refer to his commissioner with an elevated encomiastic tone. In addition, both the epigrams on the *Panoplia* and the *Synopsis* follow the usual pattern of inscriptional dedicatory epigrams, as they include a presentation/praise of the patron at the beginning and a wish at the end.¹⁴ An important difference between Manasses' book

5 See DBBE: www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/20097 (accessed December 2020).

6 See Lampsidis 1984: 92–93. For the edition of the astrological poem see Miller 1872: 8–39. For a new edition and a commentary on these verses, which can be regarded as an independent dedicatory book epigram see BEIÜ 4.

7 According to Hörandner, in only two of the manuscripts is the epigram written before the *Synopsis*: see Hörandner 2007: 332.

8 There is a lot of discussion about the date of the epigram, since it determines the date of the *Synopsis*' composition; see Treadgold 2013: 399; Lampsidis 1984: 104–05; Lampsidis 1996: xviii–xx; Lampsidis 1988: 105–11; Rhoby 2009: 324.

9 Cf. Jeffreys 2011/12: 181–82; Karpozelos, *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί και Χρονογράφοι*, vol. 3, p. 535. Cf. also the encomiastic epithet ὀλβιόδωρος (v. 2), which stresses Eirene's generosity.

10 For the reminiscences of late antique poetry see De Stefani 2014: 389.

11 One should not forget that the *Synopsis* was composed in decapentasyllables.

12 As De Stefani has already pointed out, Manasses' hexameters contain some “Byzantine features,” such as errors in prosody, caesura after the third foot (v. 5), etc.; see De Stefani 2014: 389.

13 On Prodromos' dedicatory verses see Agapitos 2000: 175–76. For Zigabenos' poem see www.dbbe.ugent.be/occurrences/18120 (accessed December 2020); cf. Hörandner 2007: 332.

14 For the structure of the inscriptional dedicatory epigrams see Rhoby 2010: 316. On the structure, purpose, and common vocabulary of the dedicatory book epigrams see Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 313–22. Since the book epigrams were considered as poems “inscribed” on manuscripts, they have many similarities with the inscriptional epigrams. For instance, they are often written in the same script as the inscription-

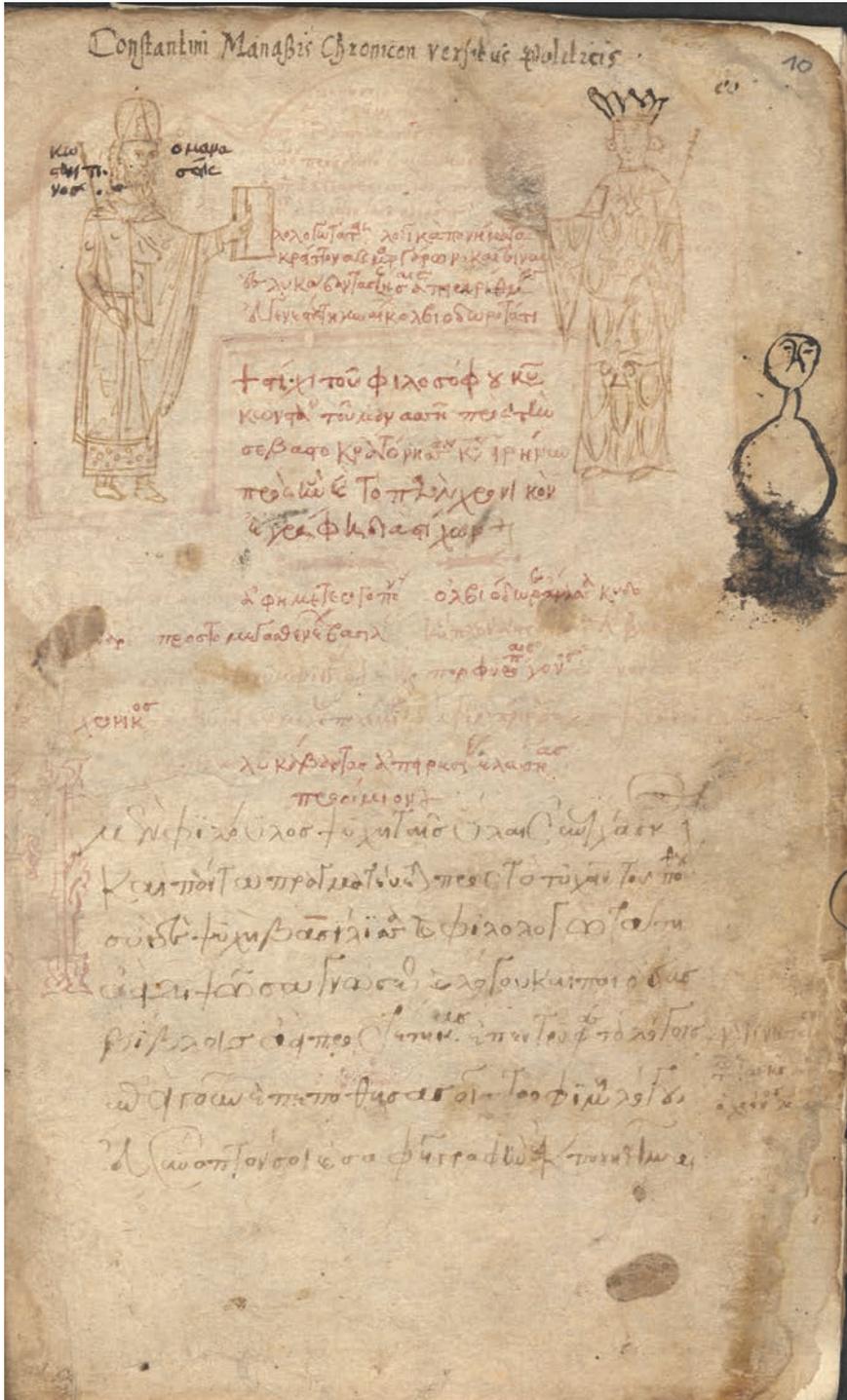


Fig. II.5.5 MS. Vienna, ÖNB, Phil. Gr. 149, f. 10
© ÖNB

epigrams and those of the other book epigrams is that the epigram for Eirene entirely avoids referring to the content of the main text; its scope is merely encomiastic.

Apart from its “inscriptional” dedicatory use in the *Synopsis*, the epigram probably had an additional function: since the *Synopsis* was possibly read aloud by its author to the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene in the so-called *theatra* of the Komnenian salons, one may assume that the epigram was also intended for an oral presentation.¹⁵ However, this is not certain, since the poem does not include any elements hinting at such a performance.¹⁶

al epigrams, the so-called *epigraphische Auszeichnungsmajuskel* see Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 80–83; Rhoby 2015: 22–35.

15 See Treadgold 2013: 401; on the potential of Byzantine epigrams to switch contexts and functions see Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 117–24.

16 Only the use of the second person of the poem could be regarded as an indication of an oral performance in front of Eirene.

Text

[Στίχοι ἠρώοι πρὸς τὴν σεβαστοκρατόρισσαν κυρὰν Εἰρήνην]¹

Δέχνησο τοῖον δῶρον ἄφ' ἡμέτεροιο πόνοιο,²
 ὀλβιόδωρε ἄνασσα, κυδίστη, ἀριστοτόκεια,
 νυὲ χαριτοπρόσωπε μεγασθενέων βασιλῆων,
 ἦν πλέον ἀστράπτουσαν ἐϋβλεφάροιο σελήνης
 5 εἰς γάμον ὄλβιον ἤρατο νυμφιδίοις ἐπὶ λέκτροις
 πορφυρόπαις γόνος Αὐσονάνακτος καρτερόχειρος,
 Ἄνδρόνικος μεγάλθυμος, ἐϋμμελῆς πολεμιστής,
 ᾧ γέρα πρῶτα σεβαστοκρατορίας νεῖμ' ὁ φυτεύσας.
 εἰς τοῖνυν λυκάβαντας ἀπειρεσίους ἐλάσειας.

Translation

[Heroic verses (addressed) to the *sebastokratorissa*, the lady Eirene]

Accept this gift of my labor
 bliss-bestowing empress,³ most honored, mother of the best children,⁴
 daughter-in-law⁵ of powerful emperors, a gracious face,
 shining further than the moon with its beautiful eyelids,⁶
 5 you were carried to a blessed marriage upon the bridal bed
 by the son of purple, the offspring of the strong-handed emperor of the
 Romans, the great-hearted Andronikos, the warrior armed with a great ashen
 spear,⁷ to whom the planter gave the first honour of *sebastokrator*.⁸
 May you (continue to) live for countless years.

Commentary

1. The title of the epigram varies in the manuscripts. For this reason, Lampsidis reconstructed it based on these several variants and enclosed it in square brackets in order to indicate that this title is not an original text.
2. Here the epic form of genitive is used with the characteristic ending in -οιο (ἡμέτεροιο πόνοιο). This form is common in the Homeric epics for the nouns, pronouns, and adjectives of the second declension; cf. the word ἐϋβλεφάροιο (v. 4).
3. Eirene is called ἄνασσα, despite the fact that she was not an empress. Officially she was addressed as *sebastokratorissa*, a title she acquired thanks to her husband, the *sebastokrator* Andronikos. Of equal significance is the title “βασιλίσσα,” which was addressed to Eirene by Manasses and other important poets at her service, such as Theodore Prodromos and John Tzetzes.¹⁷ According to Hill, the informal use of this term was acceptable for the wives of the *sebastokrators* during the reign of John II Komnenos (r.1118–43).¹⁸

¹⁷ See Varzos, Γενεαλογία no. 76, p. 365; Rhoby 2009: 326.

¹⁸ Hill 1999: 114.

4. The epithet “ἀριστοτόκεια” occurs in Theocritus (*Idyll* 23, 74) and is here used to represent Eirene as a mother, who bore the best children.¹⁹ Eirene and Andronikos had five children. Their eldest son, John, was a strong candidate for the imperial throne and after 1148 a rival of the emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r.1143–80). This was most probably the reason for Eirene’s disgrace during the years 1142–52.²⁰
5. Manasses addresses Eirene with the Homeric word νυῆ (“daughter-in-law”) for indicating her close affinity with the emperor John II Komnenos. However, perhaps her relation to Manuel I Komnenos is also implied here, since this characterization refers to more than one emperor (βασιλήων). If this is true, the word νυὸς comprises also the meaning of “sister-in-law;”²¹ cf. the term νύμφη (“sister-in-law”),²² which is mentioned in the *Synopsis*’ title in several manuscripts for defining Eirene’s affinity to the emperor Manuel.²³
6. To praise further his patroness, Manasses compares her with the shining moon. This is a *topos* in Byzantine poetry and is related especially to empresses and women of aristocratic origin.²⁴ The same motif and the rare epithet χαριτοπρόσωπος (“gracious face”) in v. 3 also refer to Eirene’s beauty, since she is frequently praised for her physical appearance, and especially for the whiteness of her skin. According to Michael and Elisabeth Jeffreys, the light skin of Eirene may support their idea that she was a diplomatic bride of Norman origin.²⁵ In addition, the phrase ἐὺβλεφάροιο σελήνη (v. 4) alludes to the *Synopsis*’ verse 141: τὸ δὲ σελήνης βλέφαρον ἐπύρσευε τὴν νύκτα (“The eyelid of the moon lights up the night”).
7. A series of Homeric epithets and other elaborate words are employed by Manasses (e.g. μεγάθυμος, ἐὺμμελής, πορφυροπαῖς) in order to portray Andronikos as a hero of imperial origin and of particular courage. Similar military virtues are attributed to Andronikos by Michael Italikos in his monody composed after the sebastokrator’s death.²⁶ One may also compare the rare Byzantine word πορφυροπαῖς (“Kinder der Porphyra”)²⁷ with the characterization of Andronikos as πορφυροβλαστὸς (“purpurboren”)²⁸ by Theodore Prodromos.²⁹
8. According to Alexander Kazhdan, the high rank of *sebastokrator* was given by the Komnenian emperors to their brothers or sons.³⁰ This is implied in v. 8, where

19 Cf. LSJ and Lampe s.v. “ἀριστότοκος.”

20 Jeffreys 2011/12: 178.

21 Cf. Lampsidis 1984: 104; Rhoby 2009: 324.

22 Cf. LSJ s.v. “νύμφη” 3.

23 See, for instance, the title of the *Synopsis* in MSS London, British Library, Arundel 523, f. 3r (s. XIV) and Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, gr. 254, f. 1v (s. XV) in *DBBE*.

24 See indicatively Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems* no. 55, 3, ed. Hörandner, 459; cf. Tinnefeld 1985: 231–35.

25 See Jeffreys 1994: 57.

26 See Gautier 1972: 130; cf. Varzos, *Γενεαλογία* no. 76, p. 358.

27 See *LBG* s.v.

28 See *LBG* s.v.

29 Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 44, 13, ed. Hörandner, p. 406.

30 See *ODB* s.v.

Manasses mentions that Andronikos received this rank from his father. The participle φυτεύσας (“planter”) carries here the meaning of “father” just as in ancient Greek drama.³¹

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³¹ See LSJ s.v. “φυτεύω” 2.

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II.5.6 Unknown (Twelfth Century)

Athens, Benaki Museum, Vitr. 34.3

ANNEMARIE WEYL CARR

Ed.: The poem is published by Constantinides and Browning 1993 no.10, 87–90, with earlier bibliography; Carr 1987: 186; Carr 1982: 68; Cutler and Carr 1976: 313–14

Monument/Artefact: MS. Athens, Benaki museum, Vitr. 34.3 (s. XII), scribal colophon, ff. 174v–175r; second half of the twelfth century

Other Translations: Cutler and Carr 1976: 316

Significance

The poem exemplifies two faces of Byzantine aesthetics, one delighting in material splendor, the other conceding the pre-eminence of immaterial, intellectual value. Ambivalence about the relation of material experience to intellectual insight is recurrent in Byzantium, as seen in the very basic insistence that the veneration shown an icon is directed not to the material image but to the one imaged. But as here, ambivalence only heightened beauty's appeal.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

As twelfth-century Cyprus adopted the cultural patterns of the Byzantine capital, the metrical epigram settled not only into mural painting, but also into books. Several remarkably florid poetic scribal colophons appear in manuscripts attributed to Cyprus in this period.¹ Two are in illuminated books.² The books' Cypriot origin has been challenged, but they are codicologically very similar, have patrons whose official posts required their residence on the island, and share – in their colophons – a distinctive penchant for elaborate, compound words. Thus, they represent the same book culture, most plausibly that of the island. The colophon in one of them, the illuminated psalter, Athens, Benaki Museum, Vitr. 34.3, turns to reflect upon the beauty of the book with its

1 Constantinides 1993: 319–80.

2 They are the Tetraevangelion of 1156 in the Schøyen Collection, Oslo (olim Andros, Mone tes Hagias 32) and Athens, Benaki Museum, Vitr. 34.3; on the question of their attribution see Constantinides and Browning 1993: Cat. 9, p. 84–87 and Cat. 10, p. 87–90; Carr 1987: 12–20 and Cat. X; 184–87 and Cat. 2.

gold and colors, and so invites us to explore the scribe's assessment of the illumination.³ Both the psalter's scribe and its patron, a monk who served as the economic overseer of the holdings of the Patriarch of Jerusalem on Cyprus, are named Barnabas. They are most probably the same person.⁴ It is not impossible that he supplied the paintings, too. They are remarkably copious: his manuscript is the only Byzantine psalter in which literally every psalm is prefaced by a miniature.

The colophon falls into two portions of nine lines each, with one ambivalent line in the middle that repeats the name Barnabas. The first nine lines exult in the beauty of the psalter, and above all in its radiance, recurrently associated in Byzantium with beauty.⁵ Gold is radiant, but "and shining" can also imply colors, as brightness is used in Byzantium to characterize both color and reflectivity.⁶ In the poem's second group of nine lines, its tone shifts, and the author looks beyond "material fantasy" to focus on the words, themselves. "*Fantasia*" can mean ostentation or display, but the concern here is probably not sumptuary – though we shall see that there were objections on Cyprus to ostentatious display.⁷ Rather, "*fantasia*" implies imagery. "Material fantasy" means man-made, painted images. They are here contrasted with the truer richness that the psalms elicit intellectually in the mind.

3 On the manuscript's extraordinarily extensive imagery, see Cutler and Carr 1976: 281–323; Lappa-Zizeka and M. Rizo-Kouroupou, 1991 nr. 33, p. 56–57, 364–65.

4 See n. 8.

5 See in particular Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon*; Pentcheva 2006.

6 James 1996, esp. 99–100.

7 For Neophytos the Recluse see A.W. Carr, I.2.5 in this volume.

Text

+ Στίχοι εἰς τὸν ψαλτήριον καὶ εἰς τὸν μοναχὸν Βαρνάβαν καὶ μέγα οἰκονόμον:

Ἄνῆρ μέγιστος καὶ μοναχὸς Βαρνάβας,
οἰκονόμος μέγιστος ἡγιασμένος
κτήμασι τυγχάνουσιν ἐν νήσῳ Κύπρω:
τοῦ πατριάρχου τῆς Σιών τῆς αγίας
5 ὑπερβολικὸν τὸν πόθον κεκτημένος
τῶν δαυϊτικῶν καὶ ψυχοτρόφων λόγων
ψαλτήριον κάλλιστον ὠραϊσμένον
καὶ χρυσολαμπρόμορφον ἡγλαισμένον
ἔγραψεν, ἱστόρησεν εὐσεβοφρόνως·
ἐξ ἀρετῶν γὰρ λαμπρότητος Βαρνάβας
ψυχὴν καθαρθεὶς καὶ πτερωθεὶς τὰς φρένας
εἰς ὕψος ἀνέδραμε τῶν νοημάτων
τοῦ ψαλματωδοῦ καὶ προφητικωτάτου·
5 ὄθεν, παριδῶν ὑλικὴν φαντασίαν
γέγραφε λαμπρῶς ψαλμικὰς ὕμνωδίας.
ὡς ἀξίως τάξιτο τοῦτον δεσπότης
καὶ συναριθμήσοιτο μέτροις ἀγίων
ὡς προκρίναντα τῶν χαμερπῶν πραγμάτων
10 ψυχῆς καθαρότητα καὶ νοὸς κράτος.

175ν

Translation

Verses on the Psalter and on Barnabas, monk and great oikonomos

A very great man and monk, Barnabas,
 a saintly, very great oikonomos
 for the estates of the patriarch of Holy Sion
 on the island of Cyprus,
 5 having acquired an overwhelming craving
 for the soul-nourishing, Davidic words,
 wrote and illustrated in a pious spirit
 the most beautiful psalter,
 adorned and shining with a golden appearance.
 For, most radiant with virtues, Barnabas,¹ 175r
 his soul purified and his mind given wings,
 ascended to the height of the psalmist's
 and mighty prophet's thoughts.
 5 Whence, seeing beyond material imagery,
 he has brilliantly written the psalmodic hymns.
 May the Lord assess him worthily and rank him among the saints,
 as one who preferred over earthbound deeds
 a pure soul and a firm mind.

Commentary

1. Constantinides reads this line as referring to the scribe, a Barnabas who may or may not be Barnabas the patron. This line, at the very middle of the poem, could belong either to the first or to the second verse. Constantinides reads it with the first, and it is true that the manuscript itself includes this line on folio 174v, opening 175r with the line just after it. To render his reading, one might best translate it: "A very great man and monk, Barnabas, a saintly (and) very great oikonomos for the estates of the patriarch of Holy Sion on the island of Cyprus, having acquired an overwhelming craving for the soul-nourishing, Davidic words, [the scribe] Barnabas, radiant with virtues, in a pious spirit, wrote and illustrated the most beautiful psalter, adorned and shining with a golden appearance."

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II.6 Inscribing: Later Byzantine Epigraphic Culture

Introduction

IDA TOTH

Careful consideration of epigraphic habits stands to enrich our knowledge of Later Byzantium as a period, when inscriptions acquired a wide variety of roles, conveying both verbal and non-verbal messages, defining space, and symbolizing ideology, authority, and status. Much of this material was the legacy of a thriving literary culture, while some of it served practical ends such as prompting actions, stipulating norms, and reinforcing political, social, and religious tenets. Beyond their significance as texts, inscriptions could assume an apotropaic character, and could also be used to decorative ends.

Moreover, later Byzantine epigraphic evidence bears trustworthy witness to the learning and tastes of the patrons, authors, and craftsmen involved in the processes of commissioning, composing, and executing inscribed texts.¹ It is likely to have been received by a wide spectrum of publics, consisting not only of readers, but also of audiences who were aware of the importance of epigraphic display, even when they were unable to make out every detail of its textual content. It appears that Byzantine inscriptions, like many other kinds of writings, were commonly read out to, or were interpreted by, the members of extended (and not necessarily fully literate) communities. It is equally vital to stress that the meaning of inscriptions was not expressed by words alone, but also by the visual features and placement of writing, as well as through accompanying images and symbols, and, finally, by means of diverse artistic techniques and media that were employed in their execution.²

Benefaction and Patronage

The Later Byzantine period was especially prolific in donor inscriptions. Public texts registering acts of patronage – whether laid in mosaic, cut in stone, or painted in fresco; monumental or portable; prose or verse; with or without corresponding images – tended to communicate the identity of their commissioner(s) and the motivations behind the benefactions.³ They could simply express prayers or invocations, but their elaborate

1 On the authorship of some twelfth-century epigrams on objects of art, and the relationship between the donor, the poet, and the artist see Spingou 2014; Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*.

2 For a case study examining these issues see Toth 2020; on the placement of text, see: Hostettler 2020; on material and non-verbal aspects of epigraphy see Eastmond 2015. For some evidence of the complementary relationship between the inscription, image, artistic medium, and placement see also J. Johns, II.6.3 and A. W. Carr, II.6.9 in this volume.

3 On Later Byzantine donor inscriptions see Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*; Rhoby 2010; Spingou, *Words and Artworks*; Gerstel, *Rural Lives*; Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*.

versions could disclose specific information regarding patrons and their social standing, achievements, intentions, resources, as well as recording the precise dates of their munificence.⁴ Donor inscriptions could also reference their own contractual nature, and request salvation and divine grace as remuneration for pious deeds.⁵ Epigraphic records of imperial patronage often feature formulaic declarations of the basic tenets of Byzantine imperial ideology.⁶ Generally, secular donor epigraphy survives very sparsely. Extant are inscriptions marking boundaries, documenting high status gift-giving, and raising prestigious structures such as palaces, city gates, citadels, towers, walls, and bridges.⁷ In spite of its scarcity, such epigraphic material is particularly useful, because it can be contextualized more precisely: for example, it could elucidate diplomatic relations, military history, and trends in the cultural and intellectual life of contemporary Byzantium.⁸

The proliferation of inscriptions set in the context of churches and monasteries is the most prevalent trait of the overall epigraphic habit in the Later Byzantine period. Surviving evidence suggests that the practice of displaying official donation documents on the walls of churches was established by the Middle Byzantine period.⁹ Religious buildings were furthermore furnished with elaborate iconographic programs, and with equally abundant accompanying inscriptional material.¹⁰ These buildings also housed a large number of ecclesiastical accoutrements such as liturgical vessels, books, processional crosses, icons, silks, reliquaries, etc. Although very few of these objects survive, and even fewer can be found in their original context, their range can be gauged from extant documentary evidence.¹¹ Their typology is also fairly well attested due to the survival of some exquisite pieces in Western Europe, where they arrived either as gifts or, as was more often the case, as the spoils of war following the events of 1204.¹² The majority of these objects tend to use stock inscriptional material, such as simple invocations, dedicatory formulae, or patrons' names. They also feature religious texts such as *nomina sacra* and eucharistic prayers, which additionally indicate their liturgical function. Such vessels can display donors' portraits, although these appear very rarely.¹³ Some carry

4 For an example of an elaborate donor inscription see I. Toth, II.6.10 in this volume.

5 See, e.g., A. W. Carr, I.6.4 in this volume.

6 Melvani 2020.

7 Rhoby 2016; Toth 2015: 216–17; see also P. Van Deun, II.6.1 in this volume.

8 E.g. For inscriptional evidence for the rebellion of George Maniakes in 1042 see Jacob 2007; inscriptions on Byzantine imperial gifts such as crowns and silks see Hilsdale 2008; Muthesius 1997. For inscriptions on the astrolabe from Brescia testifying to an interest in astrology and Arabic culture in general see Rhoby 2010 no. Me52, 223–24; Guillou 1996 no. 13, 14–15.

9 Kalopissi-Verti 2003a.

10 They included a wide range of standard devotional texts, from simple captions to elaborate liturgical formulae, see Gerstel 1994; Gerstel 2005; Nelson 2007; Ševčenko 2015; Pallis 2016; Pallis 2020.

11 Spieser *et al.* 2003; M. Parani, Introduction, II.1 in this volume.

12 Schreiner 2004; Klein 2004; Prinzing 2005; Tinnefeld 2005; Bauer 2010. For several examples of Byzantine diplomatic gifts sent to Western polities see I. Toth, I.6.3 and L. Safran, II.6.4 in this volume; for the Byzantine collection in the Treasury of St. Marco in Venice see Hahnloser 1971.

13 For a processional cross with a donor portrait see Cotsonis 1994: 29 and pl. 14b.

inscriptional evidence of prolonged use and of patronage by more than one donor.¹⁴ Overall, these artefacts and their texts represent reliable witnesses of continuity though also, on occasion, of changes in religious practices, whose purposes they served.¹⁵

Inscriptional Verses

Epigrammatic poetry was one of the most prolific categories of Later Byzantine inscriptional traditions.¹⁶ This was a time marked by exceptionally strong self-awareness among donors, who increasingly commissioned epigrams to immortalize their own philanthropic activities. Epigrammatic poetry also appears on, and around, tombs, and, indeed, in obituaries carved or painted in the interior of churches and funerary chapels. Many artefacts feature specially commissioned poems, usually naming their patrons and donors, who bequeathed these objects to the foundations or individuals of their choice. Poems that survive in their original epigraphic settings as well as in extant manuscript collections allow us to confidently claim that inscribed verses, much as inscriptions in general, were commonly displayed in public, such that they may be used as genuine testimonies of an advanced epigraphic culture in this period.

Commemorative Epigraphy

A considerable number of Later Byzantine religious foundations benefitted from imperial, aristocratic, and local (often communal) patronage.¹⁷ This, in turn, instigated the building of funerary chapels with elaborate commemorative content usually representing the patrons in supplication to holy intercessors, and iconographic themes such as the *Deesis* and *Anastasis*.¹⁸ Inscriptions celebrating the lives of benefactors (commonly referred to as *ktitores*) also imply that some kind of reiterated prayer was being requested, and probably took place, in privately funded ecclesiastical institutions.¹⁹ Compelling evidence for this custom can be found in connection to the twelfth-century epideictic poem honoring John II Komnenos (r.1118–43) and his wife Eirene.²⁰ The epigram no longer survives

14 For a ninth-/tenth-century cross with eleventh- and thirteenth-century donor inscriptions see Cotsonis 1994: 29, 32, pl. 12 a–b.

15 E.g. the inscriptions on the reliquaries of St. Demetrios testify that the cult included the holy oil or *myron* which had begun to flow in the eponymous cathedral in Thessaloniki only in the middle Byzantine period: Kalavrezou 1997: 77–78.

16 For the corpus of new, revised, or reprinted editions, see Rhoby, 2009, 2010, 2014; see also: Rhoby 2010; Paul 2012; Spingou, *Words and Artworks*; Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*; Hostetler 2016; F. Spingou, II.4 in this volume.

17 On the documentary evidence of monastic foundations see Morris 1985; Thomas 1988: 149ff.; on local (rural, collective) patronage see Gerstel, *Rural Lives*; see also A.W. Carr, II.6.7 and II.6.8 in this volume.

18 On later Byzantine funerary iconography and epigraphy see Pazaras 1988; Mango 1995; Papamastorakis 1996/97; Weissbrod 2003; Rhoby 2011; Xenaki 2016; McCabe 2020; see also F. Spingou, Introduction, II.7 in this volume.

19 E.g. for the use of the inscriptional formula “pray for us” in donor inscriptions from the Mani, see Kalopissi-Verti 2003b: 340, 342–43.

20 For the edition of the text see Vassis 2013: 213–18.

in situ, but it was still visible in the sixteenth century, when the *Protonotarios* of the Great Church in Constantinople, Theodosios Zygomalas, read it on one of the walls of the Pantokrator Monastery, and then reported his findings in a letter to his friend, the German *philhellene* Martin Crusius.²¹ The poem has been independently transmitted in several manuscripts, which clarify its purpose as having been to perpetuate the memory of the imperial couple for their joint patronage of this religious foundation (dated between 1139 and 1143). These sources confirm that the verses were originally inscribed, and they also state that the poem was performed annually on August 4 to commemorate the day of the consecration of the monastic complex.²²

The Voice of the Artisan

The trend of signing one's work was strong in the late Komnenian and Palaiologan times, when artisans increasingly inscribed their names as written records of their activities. Perhaps not by coincidence, these ever-more frequent instances of self-expression were directly proportional to the impressively wide range of artistic media and techniques that were used in manufacturing Later Byzantine artefacts and their inscriptions. The noticeable epigraphic presence of artists most likely signified their improved social status, but it was probably also intended to recommend them to potential patrons as the makers of outstanding and widely recognized artwork.²³ This kind of inscriptional record is plentiful. The epigraphic evidence from the Mani, for example, offers some illuminating insights.²⁴ It preserves the names of stonemasons, who executed the majority of inscriptions commissioned by the patrons from the local monastic, ecclesiastical, and secular communities. Some of the stonemasons went so far as to inscribe themselves among donors, and thus left little doubt about the prominent position that they themselves had in society. A further two pieces of epigraphic evidence shed a somewhat different light on the question of artistic self-expression: one dates back to the very end of the eleventh century (or possibly the beginning of the twelfth), and connects the name of John Tohabi with a total of six icons, whose elaborate inscriptions make use of both the Greek and the Georgian language.²⁵ Challengingly, their vocabulary does not allow us to ascertain the exact level of Tohabi's involvement in the execution of the icons, and of the accompanying inscriptional material. The same vagueness of expression poses similar questions in the case of another artist, Stephen, and his role in the making of the two eleventh-century icons, of Elijah and Moses, for the St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai.²⁶ He, like Tohabi, leaves inscriptions in two languages although, in this instance, Stephen's invocation in Greek is repeated almost *verbatim* in Arabic. The use of multilingual signatures suggests a

21 Cf. Rhoby 2009: 305 and nn. 1900–1992.

22 Rhoby 2009: 305–07.

23 Kalopissi-Verti 1994; Todić 2001; Kalopissi-Verti 2006; Špadijer 2006; Drpić 2013; Lidova 2017.

24 Kalopissi-Verti 2003b: 339–46.

25 Edition, translation, and commentary Rhoby 2009: 50–57 nos. Ik4–7; see also Lidova 2009.

26 Nelson and Collins 2006 nos. 28, 29, 190–193; Rhoby 2009 nos. Ik2–3.

certain sense of pride in one's own identity. However, multilingualism is not restricted to the epigraphic display of craftsmen signatures. Rather, it is a feature typical of the inscriptional traditions of the later medieval period as a whole, when the use of Greek, Arabic, Armenian, Slavonic, Hebrew, and Latin reflected dynamic cultural, religious economic, and political exchanges between competing polities, of which Byzantium was only one, as they co-existed in the eastern Mediterranean and beyond.²⁷ The unique quadrilingual epigraph, dating to the reign of Roger II, provides an outstanding example of a way in which an inscription could be employed to mark a “deliberate and studied multiculturalism,” and a taste for exotic variety cultivated in the twelfth century in Norman Sicily.²⁸

Viewing Inscriptions

Inscriptions communicated meaning beyond their verbal content. In Later Byzantium, just as earlier, epigraphic material could be executed in a markedly elaborate and decorative manner. Although the script remained largely majuscule, it made abundant use of ligatures, abbreviations, writing marks, and some minuscule letters, even at the expense of general legibility and visibility.²⁹ Elaborate visual appearance was frequently accompanied by the use of graphic signs and images, which could elucidate the textual content, and could thus reach a wider spectrum of recipients. These notions are not independent from the idea of epigraphy: a focus on non-verbal evidence such as placement, embellishment, and graphicacy helps establish a more balanced view of epigraphic material.³⁰ Such an approach also serves as a strong reminder that in order for any reading of inscribed texts to be sound and accurate, it must take into consideration inscriptions as physical objects whose materiality carries meaning in its own right.

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²⁷ See, e.g., I. Toth, I.6.3; L. Safran, II.6.4 and II.6.5; L. Mahony, II.6.6; I. Špadijer, II.6.11 in this volume.

²⁸ J. Johns, II.6.3 in this volume.

²⁹ Evidence suggests that from the eleventh century onwards minuscule letters, accents, and abbreviations feature prominently in a wide range of inscriptional material, irrespective of the level of formality and quality of execution: Mango 1991: 242–49; Rhoby 2015.

³⁰ Eastmond 2015; see also Hostetler 2020; Rhoby 2020; Rhoby 2017; Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*; Toth 2015: 220–22.

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II.6.1 Probably Nicholas–Nektarios of Otranto (c.1155/60–February 9, 1235)

Verses Written on Behalf of a Palace

PETER VAN DEUN

Ed.: M. Gigante, *Poeti bizantini di terra d'Otranto nel secolo XIII*, Byzantina et Neo-Hellenica Neapolitana 7 (Naples, 1979), 2nd rev. ed., 84 (poem no. XXV)

MS.:¹ Vienna, ÖNB, Philologicus Graecus 310, f. 40v (*codex unicus*)

Other Translations: M. Gigante, as above, 90 (Italian)

Significance

For art history, this poem seems to be of little interest, unless it was used as a verse inscription, which is rather probable. This text bears more questions than answers; so it is unclear what is meant in the title by *παλάτιον*; is this an exaggerated reference to the luxurious house mentioned in vv. 7–9?

The Author

It is doubtful whether Nicholas of Otranto is indeed the author of the poems XXIV and XXV,² even though in the manuscript these two poems have been attributed to a certain Νικόλαος Ὑδρουντινός.

The well-known Nicholas was born in the Apulian city of Otranto (*Hydruntum*), between c.1155 and 1160. Upon taking monastic vows, he was named Nektarios. In 1219/1220, he became abbot of the monastery of St. Nicholas in Casole, near Otranto, where he passed away on February 9, 1235. He was a very important diplomat (with visits to Constantinople and Nicaea) and a famous and distinguished scholar with wide interests: his writings include many polemical treatises against the Latins (concerning the azymes and the *Filioque*), a Dialog against the Jews, an astrological text on divination, letters, and verse compositions. He wrote almost exclusively in Greek, but also translated several liturgical texts into Latin (and vice versa).³

Text and Context

Ten regular dodecasyllables, with accentuation on the penultimate syllable of each verse and caesura after the fifth or the seventh syllable. All ten verses form one single sentence. Unfortunately, f. 40v is in poor condition and therefore very difficult to read.

1 Consulted.

2 Gigante 1979: 41.

3 See A. Kazhdan, *ODB*, s.v. “Nicholas of Otranto,” with further bibliography.

Text

Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ὡς ἐκ μέρους τοῦ παλατίου αὐτοῦ

Οὐκ ἀνέμων βία με συντρίβει τόσον
 οὔτ' ἀστραπῆς ὁ κτύπος ἢ βροχῆς χύσις,
 ὅσον θυμοβλαβῆς τε τήκει με φθόνος
 φαρμακοπνεύστων βασκάνων Ὑδρουντίων,
 5 οἵτινες οὐ παύουσιν ὀφθαλμῶν κόραις,
 ὡς πετροπομποῖς ὀργάνοις, κατατρίβειν
 τὸν εὐτυχῆ με καὶ περιφήμον δόμον
 τὸν συνανυψωθέντα χρημάτων βάρει,
 κεκτημένων τε χερσὶ ταῖς Ἰωάννου,
 10 οὗ τοῖς βροτοῖς ἀφθαρτον ἔσται τὸ κλέος.

Translation

[Poem] of the same author as from a part of his palace¹

Not the violence of the winds afflicts me so much
 nor the clash of lightning, nor massive rainfall
 as does the consuming effect of the heartbreaking² jealousy
 of the poisonous³ and envious citizens of Otranto;⁴
 5 who with the pupils of their eyes do not stop
 as if they were stone throwing⁵ machines,
 squandering my wealth and my very famous house,
 raised⁶ thanks to the abundant resources
 acquired by the hands of John;⁷
 10 eternal will be his fame among mortals.⁸

Commentary

1. This title is found in the margin of the manuscript.
2. θυμοβλαβῆς: this word is an hapax legomenon.
3. φαρμακόπνευστος: a very rare word (our poem is the only attestation recorded in the *TLG*).
4. βασκάνων Ὑδρουντίων: Gigante notes here “non sine dubio scripsi”;⁴ I checked the manuscript and in fact the end of this verse is very difficult to read. Ὑδροῦς is the Greek name for Otranto.
5. πετροπομπός: a rather rare word (some ten attestations in the *TLG*).
6. συνανυψόω: forty-six attestations recorded in the *TLG*.
7. It is difficult to identify this John with certainty; he may have been John, the metropolitan of Serres, who is mentioned in poem XXIII, v. 9.⁵

4 Gigante 1979: 84.

5 Cf. Gigante 1979: 97.

8. οὐ τοῖς βροτοῖς ἀφθαρτον ἔσται τὸ κλέος: a similar verse was written by another poet of the Otranto region, the imperial *notarios* John Grassos, friend and disciple of Nicholas of Otranto: *Carmen IX*, 14 (ὄς ἐν βροτοῖς ἀφθιτον ἔσχε τὸ κλέος).⁶
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6 Ed. Gigante 1979: 109.

II.6.2 Author Unknown (end of the eleventh/beginning of the twelfth century)

Epigram on a Deesis Mosaic

SOPHIA KALOPISSI-VERTI

Ed.: *BEIÜ* 1, 381–85 (no. M1)

Monument/Artefact: Inscription at the Monastery of Vatopedi, Mount Athos (fig. II.6.2)

Other Translations: A. Rhoby, “The Structure of Inscriptional Dedicatory Epigrams in Byzantium,” in *La poesia tardoantica e medievale: IV Convegno internazionale di studi*, Perugia 15–17 novembre 2007, Atti in onore di Antonino Isola per il suo 700 genetliaco, eds. C. Burini De Lorenzi and M. De Gaetano (Alessandria, 2010), 327 (English); *BEIÜ* 1, 381–82; T. Steppan, “Die Mosaiken des Athosklosters Vatopaidi: Stilkritische und ikonographische Überlegungen,” *CahArch* 42 (1994), 100 (German); A. Rhoby, “Zur Rezeption eines byzantinischen Epigramms im Athos-Kloster Vatopaidi,” in *Junge Römer – Neue Griechen. Eine byzantinische Melange aus Wien: Beiträge von Absolventinnen und Absolventen des Instituts für Byzantinistik und Neograzistik der Universität Wien, in Dankbarkeit gewidmet ihren Lehrern Wolfram Hörandner, Johannes Koder, Otto Kresten und Werner Seibt als Festgabe zum 65. Geburtstag*, eds. M. Popović and J. Preiser-Kapeller (Vienna, 2008), 206



Fig. II.6.2 Deesis panel and metrical inscription on the lunette of the entrance to the inner narthex, Vatopedi Monastery, Mt. Athos (c.1100)

© Vatopedi Monastery

(German); A. Paul, “Beobachtungen zu Ἐκφράσεις in Epigrammen auf Objekten: Lassen wir Epigramme sprechen!,” in *Die Kulturhistorische Bedeutung byzantinischer Epigramme: Akten des internationalen Workshop (Wien, 1.–2. Dezember 2006)*, eds. W. Hörandner and A. Rhoby, Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung XIV (Vienna, 2008), 65–66 (German); *Actes de Vatopédi I*, 45 (French)

Significance

Both the epigram and the representation to which it refers have been preserved *in situ* and intact allowing an insight into the complementary relationship and interaction between text and imagery. The epigram, spoken by the monk Sophronios, describes a mosaic which pictorially renders Abbot Ioannikios’ supplication to Christ for salvation through the mediation of the Virgin and John the Forerunner. The *Deesis* composition, limited to the three holy persons mentioned in the epigram, is placed on the lunette of the entrance leading to the inner narthex where the founders’ tomb is located. Thus, the complementary interrelationship between epigram and mosaic and their placement in the church space contribute to conveying soteriological messages.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

The epigram is formally and contextually in an immediate relation with the mosaic panel depicting the *Deesis*.¹ Placed on the lunette above the door leading from the outer narthex (*lite*) to the inner narthex (*mesonyktikon*) of the *katholikon*,² the *Deesis* composition is framed by the metrical inscription also written in mosaic and following the semi-circle of the lunette. A decorative band with quatrefoil motifs separates the text from the image.

The epigram has been published several times since the late nineteenth century.³ It is written in black letters against a golden mosaic background and comprises three lines each of which contains three verses. There is a cross at the beginning while rosettes are placed at the end of each line; the verses are divided by dots. The script is clear and solemn with no spelling mistakes. Capital letters are used with one exception in the word *καὶ* in the first verse. Accents and spirits are indicated. There are no superposed letters nor ligatures. The epigram consists of nine dodecasyllable verses with the systematic use

1 On the *Deesis* composition of Vatopedi see Steppan 1994: 94–122; Tsigaridas 1994, I: 320–22, II, pls. XXXI17, 185, 5–7, 186, 8–10; Tsigaridas 1996: 224–30, figs. 184–87; Tavlakis 2009: 40.

2 On the architectural type and the names of the different parts of the *katholikon* see Mamaloukos 1996, I: 166–75; Mamaloukos 2001: 31–102.

3 Smyrnakes 1903: 435–36; Millet *et al.* 1904: 15 no. 47; Steppan 1994: 94; Tsigaridas 1994: 321; Tsigaridas 1996: 226; Mamaloukos 2001: 256–57 no. 31, drawing 81; Rhoby 2008: 206; Paul 2008: 65–66; Rhoby 2010: 327. For a complete list of the publications of the epigram see *BEIÜ* 1: 382.

of a caesura after the fifth syllable and only once after the seventh (in v. 6). Vv. 1–3 describe the sumptuousness of the mosaic panel, which replaced a previous, deteriorated composition.⁴ The expression referring to the renovation of an old ruined building or decoration is a commonplace in inscriptions.⁵ Nevertheless, the Vatopedi epigram might in fact reflect the necessity of replacing the original mural painting on the west facade of the *katholikon*, built at the end of the tenth/beginning of the eleventh century, which was possibly worn away due to exposure to weather conditions until the outer narthex was constructed sometime later during the first half of the eleventh century.⁶ Vv. 4–8 refer to the donor, Abbot Ioannikios, and his supplication to the Word (Christ) for salvation through the intercession of the Virgin and John the Forerunner. Thus, the depicted composition of the *Deesis* is fully described in an allusive way. V. 9 mentions the monk Sophronios, the speaker of the epigram, who probably completed the work, which was evidently interrupted by the donor's death.

The mosaic panel on the lunette includes the three main persons of a *Deesis* composition (*Trimorphon*), with Christ enthroned in the middle between the mediating figures of the Virgin and John.⁷ Clad in a brownish *chiton* and a dark blue *himation* with golden highlights, Christ (Ι(ΗΣΟΥ)Σ Χ(ΡΙΣΤΟ)Σ) is seated on a backless throne resting his feet on a *suppedaneum* decorated with a rhomboid pattern. He blesses with His right hand and holds an open Gospel book in the left. He is flanked by the standing figures of the Virgin Mary (ΜΗ(ΤΗ)Ρ Θ(ΕΟ)Υ) on his right, dressed in a dark blue *maphorion*, and John the Forerunner (Α(ΓΙΟ)Σ ΙΩ(ΑΝΝΗ)Σ Ο ΠΡ(ΟΔΡΟ)ΜΟ)Σ) on his left, clad in a light brown *chiton* and a dark green *himation*. Both turn towards Christ in a gesture of supplication.

The inscription on the Gospel book, written in 16 lines and in alternating black and red accented capital letters, reads: ΕΓΩ ΕΙ/ΜΙ ΤΟ ΦΩΣ/ΤΟΥ ΚΟΣ/ΜΟΥ Η Α/ΛΗΘΕΙΑ/Η ΖΩΗ/Η ΑΝΑΣ/ΤΑΣΙΣ/Η ΟΔΟΣ/Ο ΠΟΙΜΗΝ/Η ΘΥΡΑ/ΔΙ ΕΜΟΥ/ΕΑΝ ΤΙΣ/ΕΙΣΕΛΘ/Η ΣΩΘΗΣΕ/ΤΑΙ: I am the light of the world, the truth, the life, the resurrection, the shepherd, the way, the door through which if one enters one shall be saved. The spelling is accurate with only one exception in line 13 (ΕΑΝ ΤΗΣ/ΕΙΣΕΛΘΗ). The text is an unusual and sophisticated compilation of different passages from John's Gospel (8.12, 10.9, 10.11, 11.25, 14.6) demonstrating the ecclesiastical learning of the commissioner and the messages he wished to display.

Stylistically the *Deesis* composition shares those features of austerity and restriction to the essential, of linearity and the flat rendering of figures that characterize the great mosaic ensembles of the eleventh century. The figure of the Virgin seems to continue the stylistic tendency of the Nea Moni on Chios (mid eleventh century),⁸ while the figures of

4 Paul 2008: 65–66, considers these verses as an *ekphrasis* within the epigram.

5 *BEIÜ* 1: 383–84.

6 Steppan 1994: 106; Mamaloukos 2001: 52, 205–06.

7 Of the rich bibliography on the *Deesis* only a limited number is indicatively mentioned: Walter 1980; Walter 1970; Walter 1968; Andaloro 1970: 85–153; Cutler 1987: 145–54; Kazamia-Tsernou, 2003.

8 Mouriki 1985.

Christ and John demonstrate a more painterly modeling, which becomes evident towards the end of the century. The Vatopedi panel bears similarities with mosaic works of the late eleventh or early twelfth century, such as the mosaics from the Old Metropolis of Serres (late eleventh century)⁹ and the two mosaic icons of the Virgin Hodegetria and John the Baptist, now kept at the Patriarchate of Constantinople (c.1100).¹⁰ The Vatopedi *Deesis* is also close to the two monumental mosaic icons of St. George and St. Demetrios at the Xenophontos monastery/Athos (1079). It has been argued that these icons were commissioned in Constantinople for Symeon, Abbot of the Xenophontos monastery, who had played an intermediary role in the conflict between Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates and the rebel Basilakios in 1078.¹¹ In sum, the high quality and stylistic evidence of the Vatopedi *Deesis* mosaic point to a Constantinopolitan provenance for the mosaicists' workshop and to a date towards the end of the eleventh/beginning of the twelfth century.

But what is the relation between the *Deesis* mosaic and the accompanying epigram? On the one hand, the epigram describes the image precisely, both its material (mosaic) and its content, since there is an explicit reference to the three persons of the scene (Logos–Christ, the Virgin, and John the Forerunner). On the other hand, it functions complementarily by giving further information – that is, the name and capacity of the donor, who is not depicted in the panel, as well as his supplication for salvation which is a commonplace in Byzantine dedicatory inscriptions.¹² Finally, it records the name of another monk who seems to have succeeded the donor in completing the unfinished mosaic.

The fact that the donor is not depicted in the panel but only mentioned in the epigram downplays the personal aspects of the icon and lends to the *Deesis* image of the entrance lunette a corporate character. Thus, thanks to Ioannikios' donation, every monk or faithful person entering the *katholikon* shares the prayer and hope for salvation.

Epigram and image as well as architectural space intermingle in conveying the same eschatological–soteriological message.¹³ This message is accentuated by the content of the epigram (v. 7 “to whom may you grant your kingdom”), by the inscription on the Gospel book held by Christ (Jn. 10:9: the door; Jn. 11:25: the resurrection), as well as by the subject of the mosaic itself – the *Deesis* – which alludes to the Last Judgment usually depicted in the narthex. Spatially, the door with the representation of the *Deesis* on the lunette above the lintel framed by the epigram leads to the inner narthex, the *mesonyktikon*, where the tomb of the *ktetores*, i.e., the donors, is placed in an *arcosolium* against the south wall.¹⁴

The luxurious material and high quality of the *Deesis* panel accompanied by the metrical inscription, impeccable in meter and spelling, as well as the intentional choice of the evangelical passages on Christ's Gospel book and the harmonious combination of image

⁹ Kalavrezou 2013: 219–26, who (p. 221) dates the mosaic from the end of the eleventh century.

¹⁰ Demus 1991: 39–44 nos. 7, 8, pls. VIII, IX. For a thorough stylistic analysis see Stepan 1994: 95–100; Tsigaridas 1994: 321–22; Tsigaridas 1996: 226–27.

¹¹ Tavlakis 2009: 40; Tavlakis 1998: 49–59.

¹² Rhoby 2010: 319–22.

¹³ For interpretative discussions on the interrelationship between inscribed texts and pictorial evidence within the church space see Maguire, *Image and Imagination*, 13–14; Savage 2008.

¹⁴ Pazaras 1994; Pazaras 1996.

and text, point to a learned donor. Moreover, they reflect an aristocratic taste corresponding with the noble origin of the monastery's founders. According to legend, the monastery, first mentioned in a document of the year 985, was founded by three aristocrats from Adrianople, urged by Athanasios, the founder of the monastery of Megiste Laura (963).¹⁵ The imposing *katholikon*, a cross-in-square church of the Athonite type, and the inner narthex (*mesonyktikon*) were built, according to architectural evidence, in the late tenth/beginning of the eleventh century; soon after, during the first half of the eleventh century, the outer narthex (*lite*) and the side chapels were added.¹⁶ The monastery maintained its links to the high aristocracy throughout the eleventh century,¹⁷ while limited imperial donations and tax exemptions started under Konstantinos IX Monomachos (r.1042–55).¹⁸

The *Deesis* composition is placed among the most significant eleventh-century mosaic ensembles in Byzantium, most of which have been connected to Constantinopolitan workshops. The personal relation of the donor, Abbot Ioannikios, with Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118), if the identifications are correct (see p. 1445, n. 2), offer an insight into the links of the Vatopedi monastery with the capital at the end of the eleventh/beginning of the twelfth century and the possibilities of commissioning a Constantinopolitan workshop for the execution of the *Deesis* mosaic. Moreover, imperial interest in the monastery is demonstrated by the two chrysobulls issued in 1080 and 1082 by Emperors Nikephoros III Botaneiates (r.1078–81) and Alexios I Komnenos.¹⁹

The epigram served as a prototype for post-Byzantine inscriptions in the *katholikon* and outside the monastic complex of Vatopedi.²⁰

Regarding the dating of the inscription, the proposed identification of Abbot Ioannikios leads to a date at the end of the eleventh/beginning of the twelfth century. This is consistent with the architectural history of the *katholikon* and in harmony with the stylistic evidence of the *Deesis* mosaic panel and the palaeographic testimony of the epigram.

15 On the early history of the monastery see Papachrysanthou 2004: 235–37; Oikonomides 1996: 44–47; *Actes de Vatopédi* I: 5–14.

16 On the history of the building see Mamaloukos 2001.

17 *Actes de Vatopédi* I: 13.

18 Oikonomides 1996: 46–47.

19 *Actes de Vatopédi* I: 109–18 nos. 10 and 11.

20 Rhoby 2008: 207–09.

Text

Τὰ πρὶν ἀκαλλῆ καὶ ῥυέντα τῷ χρόνῳ
 ψηφῖσι χρυσαῖς καὶ λαμπρῶς βεβαμμέναις
 φαιδρῶς ἀγλαῶς κατεκοσμήθη λίαν,
 σπουδῇ πόνῳ τε καὶ πόθῳ διαπύρῳ
 5 τοῦ ποιμενάρχου τῆσδε τῆς μονῆς, Λόγε,
 Ἰωαννικίου τε τοῦ τρισολβίου
 ᾧ καὶ παρέξοις σὴν βασιλείαν χάριν
 ταῖς ἱκεσίαις Πανάγνου καὶ Προδρόμου·
 ταῦτα μοναχὸς Σωφρόνιος νῦν λέγει.

Translation

What was once unsightly and decayed by time¹
 has (now) been adorned in a very shiny and splendid way
 with golden and brilliantly colored tesserae
 by the diligence, pains, and ardent desire
 5 of the shepherd² of this monastery, O Word,³
 the thrice-blessed Ioannikios
 to whom may you grant your kingdom
 through the intercessions of the All-pure and the Forerunner.³
 These things Monk Sophronios now states.⁴

Commentary

1. The epigram alludes to a previous decoration, by then decayed, which possibly adorned the lunette when the *katholikon* was first built at the end of the tenth/beginning of the eleventh century.
2. Ioannikios, the monastery's shepherd, i.e. abbot. He has been identified with an abbot of the same name who participated in a delegation of Athonite monks to Emperor Alexios I Komnenos during the patriarchate of Nicholas III Grammatikos (1084–1111) on the occasion of a controversy with the Wallachians, most likely in the year 1094.²¹ Moreover, a monk Ioannikios, possibly the same person, is mentioned in the *Alexiad* accompanying Alexios I during his campaign against the rebel Basilakios in 1078.²²
3. The Word (Christ), the Holy Virgin, and John the Forerunner refer to the three holy figures which are depicted in the mosaic panel of the *Deesis* placed under the epigram.
4. On monk Sophronios, the person who speaks, see recently Zarras 2019.

21 Meyer 1894: 165; Millet *et al.* 1904: 15, no. 47; *BEIÜ* 1: 383–83.

22 Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad*, I, viii, 2, p. 30, I, ix, 3, p. 33; see also Morris 1995: 100.

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II.6.3 Authors unknown (August 1148–May 1149)

The Quadrilingual Epitaph of Anna, the Mother of Grisandus, a Priest of the Cappella Palatina, Palermo

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Ed.: J. Johns. Other editions: J. Johns, “Lapidi sepolcrali in memoria di Anna e Drogo, genitori di Grisanto, chierico del re Ruggero,” in *Nobiles Officinae: perle, filigrane e trame di seta dal Palazzo Reale di Palermo*, ed. M. Andaloro (Catania, 2006), vol. 1, 519–23 (Eng. transl. 775–78; Judaeo-Arabic and Arabic translit. but not transcrib.; corrects some errors, but perpetuates or introduces others); A. Guillou, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques médiévales d’Italie*, Collection de l’École française de Rome; 222 (Rome, 1996), 218–20 (best edition of Greek); B. Lagumina, “Nota sulla iscrizione quadrilingue esistente nel Museo Nazionale di Palermo,” *Archivio Storico Siciliano*, n.s. 15 (1890), 108–10 (corrects Judaeo-Arabic); M. Amari, *Le Epigrafi Arabiche di Sicilia, trascritte, tradotte e illustrate: Parte seconda. Iscrizioni sepolcrali*, Documenti per servire alla storia di Sicilia: Terza serie: Epigrafia 1.1 (Palermo, 1879), 80–94, pl. 9, fig. 2 (first scholarly edition of all four texts, but with many errors: Judaeo-Arabic, Greek, and Latin by G. Ugdulena, Arabic by Amari with B. Lagumina). M. Amari, *Le Epigrafi Arabiche di Sicilia, trascritte, tradotte e illustrate*, ed. Francesco Gabrieli, Edizione nazionale delle opere di Michele Amari: 1st Series, Arabistica; 2 (Palermo, 1971), 201–12 (after M. Amari 1879, as above, but no figure; corrections by B. Lagumina, as above, are noted); É. Combe *et al.*, eds., *Répertoire chronologique d’épigraphie arabe*, 21 vols to date (Cairo, 1937) 8, 249–50 (Arabic only, after M. Amari, as above, 1879); S. Morso, *Descrizione di Palermo Antico* (Palermo, 1827), 113–26, pls. 8–9 (outdated editio princeps)

Monument/Artefact: Palermo, Castello della Zisa (see fig. II.6.3), displayed in the temporary exhibition unofficially sometimes called the Museo d’Arte Islamica, on loan from the Galleria regionale della Sicilia di Palazzo Abatellis di Palermo, inv. no. G.E. 19304

Other Translations: B. Zeitler, “‘Urbs felix dotata populo trilingui’: Some Thoughts about a Twelfth-Century Funerary Memorial from Palermo,” *Medieval Encounters* 2 (1996), 125–32 (English); A. Nef, *Conquérir et gouverner la Sicile islamique aux XIe et XIIe siècles*, Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d’Athènes et de Rome 346 (Rome, 2011), 107 (French); W. Krönig, “Der viersprachige Grabstein von 1148 in Palermo,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 52 (1989), 551–54 (German)

a funerary chapel for Anna in the Greek church of San Michele *de Chufra* (Arabic *ḥufra*, “pit”) or *de Indulciis* (Arabic *al-Andalusiyin*, “the Spaniards”), now San Michele Arcangelo, which lay about 600 meters southeast of the cathedral, outside the Cassaro (Arabic *al-Qaṣr*) or inner city, through the Porta Bulsudemi (Arabic *Bāb al-Sūdān*, “Gate of the Blacks”), on the far side of the seasonal torrent called Kemonia (Χεμμουνία, “winter stream”).⁴ The chapel was completed in April 1149, and dedicated to St. Anna, the mother of the Virgin and namesake of Grisandus’ own mother.⁵ In the first hour of the evening of Friday May 20, 1149,⁶ Grisandus had Anna’s remains translated from the cathedral to the chapel of St. Anna in San Michele, where her grave was marked both by this quadrilingual inscription and by the lost epitaph in Latin verse.⁷ Finally, on December 5, 1153, Drogo, Grisandus’ father, died; he was buried next to Anna, and his grave was marked by a trilingual memorial, in Greek, Latin, and Arabic.⁸

Grisandus’ name is given variously as *Akrisant* (Judaeo-Arabic), and, in both Anna’s and Drogo’s epitaphs, as *Grisandus* (Latin), Γριζάντος and Γριζάντος *Grizantos* (Greek), and *Akrizant* and *Akrizant* (Arabic). His name almost certainly derives from Greek Χρύσανθος *Chrysanthos*, itself from Greek χρυσανθές *chrysanthes*, meaning “chrysanthemum,”⁹ but, if so, it is odd that the Greek text should call him Γριζάντος *Grizantos*, a transliteration into Greek of his Latin name *Grisandus*. Anna herself seems to have been a Greek. The church of San Michele in which she was finally buried belonged to a group of Greek churches and monasteries clustered around Santa Maria della Grotta, on the site of the modern Casa Professa and Biblioteca Communale, that constituted the chief center of Greek Christianity in Palermo throughout the Norman period.¹⁰ Moreover, were Anna to have been a Greek, it would explain why the translation of her remains was accompanied “by Greek and Latin prayers.”¹¹ Drogo, his father, bears a name that derives from a Continental Germanic root and he thus seems to have been of French descent. The name that Drogo gave to his son, therefore, may well reflect not the influence of a Greek mother but his father’s devotion to St. Chrysanthus, whose relics were given by Pope Sergius IV to Fulk Nerra, count of Anjou, in 1011, and then by Fulk to his foundation and final resting place, the abbey of the Holy Sepulchre at Beaulieu-lès-Loches (Indre-et-Loire) known as *Belli Locus*.¹² Were Grisandus to have been named after the Saint-Crysanthe of Beaulieu, that might explain why the author of the Greek texts of his parents’ epitaphs did not recognise his name as originally being Greek.

4 Morso 1827: 107–36; Bonacasa Carra 2000: 41–45; von Falkenhausen 2014: 218–20; Rocco 1970.

5 Palazzo Abatellis, in store. Krönig 1989, fig. 3; Zeitler 1996, fig. 3; Johns 2006a: 519 and VIII, 7a fig. 1, 775–76.

6 Friday began at sunset on the previous day, Thursday, May 19.

7 Morso 1827: 114–15; Johns 2006a: 522, 777.

8 Palazzo Abatellis, in store. Amari 1879: 94–96, pl. 9, fig. 1; Krönig 1989, fig. 2; Zeitler 1996, fig. 2; Guillou 1996: 224–25; Johns 2006a: 522–23 and VIII.7c, fig. 1; 777. In inscription III, line 2, Guillou points out that αἰθῖμος (for ἀοιθῖμος), a common royal honorific in Byzantine chronicles, is the correct reading of the word which Salvatore Morso and all subsequent commentators misread as Γουλιέλμος, “[King] William.”

9 Caracausi 1993, 2: 465.

10 Morso 1827: 107–36; von Falkenhausen 2014: 218–20.

11 Inscription III, line 7, see p. 1454–55.

12 Bacharach 1993: 125.

Text and Context

The epitaph is inscribed into a slab of grey marble, 40 cm wide by 32 cm high by approximately 5 cm thick, decorated with panels of *opus sectile* in porphyry, green porphyry (*lapis lacedaemonius*), white *stracotto*, and glass tesserae in gold, red, and yellow. The two upper corners of the slab have been truncated to produce an irregular hexagon with one vertical line of symmetry, such as might have fitted into one end of a sarcophagus or cenotaph. A series of straight lines divide the surface into five main panels in sunken relief, with several smaller panels that are filled with *opus sectile* decoration. The square central panel inscribes a circle, into which is sunken a cross patonce, filled with *opus sectile*; between its arms are arranged the four pairs of letters of the Christogram $\overline{\text{TC}} \overline{\text{XC}} \overline{\text{NI}} \overline{\text{KA}}$ for, Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Νικά, “Jesus Christ conquers.” The elongated rectangular panels above and below the central circle bear inscriptions, respectively, in Judaeo-Arabic and Arabic; the rectangular panels to the left and right of the circle, respectively, Latin and Greek. The condition of the inscribed texts is generally good; only the last line of the Arabic text has suffered significant damage.

Arabic, Greek, and Latin were all used as administrative languages by the Norman rulers of Sicily from as early as 1072 until the reign of Frederick II, and many bilingual texts survive (Greek–Arabic, Greek–Latin, and Latin–Arabic) on coins, documents, and inscriptions. Trilingual texts are relatively rare, and only three trilingual inscriptions are known. The most famous belonged to a water-clock made for King Roger II in March 1142, and is now displayed outside the Cappella Palatina in the Palazzo Reale in Palermo.¹³ Less well known is a fragmentary trilingual inscription commemorating the construction of a public building by the crypto-Muslim royal eunuch Peter.¹⁴ A third trilingual inscription was erected by Grisandus in memory of his father, Drogo.¹⁵

Bilingual and trilingual texts were effectively a royal monopoly and no other public text from Norman Sicily employs four scripts. Each represents one of the four religious communities of Norman Sicily. The topmost panel uses Judaeo-Arabic, a form of so-called “Middle Arabic” written in Hebrew characters, to represent the Jews. The left-hand panel is written in Latin, the written and liturgical language of the Norman kings and the ruling elite. To the right, is Greek, representing the indigenously Greek Christians of Sicily. And, at the foot, comes an Arabic text representing the Muslims who, at the time that this inscription was carved, still constituted the most numerous of the religious communities of the island.

In each of the four texts, the year is recorded according to the era particular to the community that it represents: the Judaeo-Arabic, by the year from the creation according to the calculation attributed to Rabbi Jose ben Halafta in the second century; the Latin, by the *anno Domini*; the Greek, by the year from the creation derived from the Septuagint, the “creation era of Constantinople” used by the Byzantine empire since the tenth

¹³ Johns 2006b.

¹⁴ Johns 2006c. The present author is preparing a new and definitive edition, which will demonstrate beyond doubt that it is indeed a trilingual inscription (*pace* Amari 1879: 47–49, who is followed by Nef 2011: 335–36).

¹⁵ See n. 8, above.

century; and the Arabic, by the year of the *hijra*, the journey of the Prophet Muḥammad and his followers from Mecca to Medina in 622. The Latin also gives the indictional year, following the practice of the Norman administration. The Julian calendar is used for the day and the month in all the texts, except for the Latin which, unusually for Latin texts in Norman Sicily, uses the kalends of the ancient Roman calendar, presumably as a display of classical erudition. The Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic refer to, respectively, “the first hour of the evening” and “the first hour” of Friday, showing that the Muslim and Jewish communities, at least, began the day at sunset so that, in this case, Friday began at sunset on the preceding Thursday, the latter being May 19, 1149 according to the Julian calendar.

For each of the three religions, this day fell on or close to a major festival that was somehow associated with the idea of conversion or renewal of the community’s covenant with God. May 20, 1149 fell on ‘Āshūrā, 10th Muḥarram in the Islamic calendar, when Sunnī Muslims commemorate the disembarkation of men and beasts from the Ark (Qur’ān 11:47–49; 23:28–32). On the same day, Shī’a Muslims (and some Sunnis) mourn the death of the Prophet’s grandson, al-Ḥusayn; in the Maghrib, their mourning rites were grafted onto ancient customs associated with the death of the agrarian year at harvest time. In the Jewish calendar the day was 11th Sivan which, although not itself a festival, fell just four or five days after the feast of Shevuot, the Jewish Pentecost. Shevuot commemorated the revelation of the Torah to Moses, an event which, since at least the eighth century, the rabbis had interpreted as the mass conversion of the Israelites. It was therefore customary to read the Book of Ruth, the Moabite woman who converted to Judaism and became King David’s grandmother. On the same day, King David’s death was commemorated. In the Christian calendar, this was the Friday before the Pentecost, when the Apostles began the conversion of the *Phylai* and the *Glossai*, “the People and the Tongues,” including the Jews and the Arabs (Acts 2). The Pentecost is depicted in mosaic in the vault of the north transept of the Cappella Palatina, dateable to the late 1140s or early 1150s, where the *Phylai* and the *Glossai* are depicted as Jews, an explicit reference to the conversion of the Jews that has been linked to the report that King Roger “towards the end of his life, allowing worldly affairs to be neglected and postponed, labored in every conceivable way to convert Jews and Muslims to the faith of Christ.”¹⁶

The current consensus amongst scholars seems to be that the modest size of this inscription, and its out-of-the-way location in the chapel of St. Anna, inside the church of San Michele, in a suburb of Palermo, indicates that it was erected by Grisandus primarily as a personal gesture of love and respect for his mother, rather than as part of the royal program of multicultural art and architecture.¹⁷ This ignores the fact that many of the multilingual documents and inscriptions published by the Norman kings were illegible or inconspicuous to the vast majority of their subjects.¹⁸ The royal priest Grisandus

16 Kitzinger 1949: 277–79; Romuald of Salerno, *Chronicon*, 427.

17 Zeitler 1996: 139.

18 Johns 2015: 135–43.

twice broke what was in effect the royal monopoly upon multilingual public texts, and in this one case even went one better by adding a fourth, Judaeo-Arabic text in Hebrew characters. Like the royal eunuch Peter with his trilingual inscription, and like the royal officer William Malconvenant with his “Arabic” signature,¹⁹ Grisandus was clearly eager to proclaim his own adherence to the royal policy of multiculturalism. Clearly, only he and a small group of court intellectuals and close colleagues and friends would have understood the significance of the coincidence of ‘Ashūrā, Pentecost, and Shevuot. But it is unlikely to have mattered to him that very few would have actually read his quadrilingual inscription. Even an illiterate viewer would have understood, or could have been told, that the four scripts represented the four religious communities of the kingdom. The same illiterate viewer would have recognized that the combination of exotic materials from which the inscription was made – *opus sectile* of marble, porphyry, green porphyry, *stracotto*, and mosaic – was exactly that employed in royal churches and palaces. Whether or not the viewer could access its literary content, the materials and scripts of Anna’s memorial, and its patron, the royal priest Grisandus, all proclaimed it to be a royal object. Nor does it seem to have mattered to Grisandus that very few Palermitans would even have seen his quadrilingual memorial. It was enough that he himself, and presumably his royal master and his leading ministers and servants, knew of its existence and its unique contribution to the royal program of multiculturalism.

¹⁹ Peter the eunuch see p. 1459, n. 14. For William Malconvenant see Johns and Jamil 2004: 184–86.

Text

Inscription I: Judaeo-Arabic

Transcription

יום אלגמעה אלעצ(ר) / אלעשרין מן שהר אוסה מן סנה ארכע (sic) אלאף ותסע מאיה ותמאניה
 / נת באלגאמע אלעטם : תם נקלהא ולדהא באלצללב (sic) אלי הדה אלכנסיה צנת /
 מיכאיל יום אלגמעה אול סאעה אלעשרין מן מאיה סנה ארכע אלאף ותסע מאיה / ותסעה ובנא עלי
 קברהא הדה אלכנסיה וסמא אלכנסיה צנת אנה עלי אסם אם / אלסידה מרים ואלדה אלמסיה פרחם
 אללא (sic) מן קרא ודעלהא (sic) בלרחמא (sic) : אמינ אמינ +

Transliteration

+ *tuwuffiyat Annah ummu l-qissisi Akrisant qissisi l-maliki l-mu'azzami šā- +/ ħibi Ītāliyata
 wa-n.k.abarta (sic) wa-Qalawriyata wa-Šiqilliyata wa-Ifriqiyata yawmma l-jum'ati al-ʿašra/
 l-ʿishrīna min shahri Awsata min sanati arbaʿi [sic] ālāfin wa-tisʿimiʿatin wa-thamāniyatin
 (sic) : wa-dufi-/nat bi-l-jāmiʿi l-aʿzami: thumma naqala-hā waladu-hā bi-l-š.lābi (sic) ilā
 hādhihi l-kinisīyati Šant/Mikāyil yawmma l-jum'ati awwala sāʿati l-ʿishrīna min Māyuh sa-
 nata arbaʿi (sic) ālāfin wa-tisʿimiʿatin/wa-tisʿin wa-banā ʿalā qabri-hā hādhihi l-kinisīyata
 wa-sammā l-kinisīyata Šant Annah ʿalā ismi ummi/l-sayyidati Maryama wālidati l-Masiḥi
 fa-rahīma llā (sic) man qaraʿa wa-daʿala-hā (sic) bi-l-rahmā (sic) āmin āmin+*

Inscription II: Latin

Transcription

+ XIII K(a)l(endas) Sept(embris) +/obiit Anna mat(er) Gr(i-) /sand(i) et sepulta fuit/
 in maiori ec(c)l(es)ia s(anc)te Ma-/rie ann(o) MCXLVIII ind(ictione) XI/et in XIII K(a)
 l(endas) Iunii tran(s)lata/est in hac cappella qua(m)/fil(ius) ei(us) D(omin)o et sibi edifi-
 ca-/vit an(no) MCXLVIII ind(ictione) XII

Inscription III: Greek

Transcription

+ Ἐκημήθη ἡ ἐν μακα- +/ρία τῆ λήξη ἡ Ἄννα ἐν μηνῆ/Αὐγούστ(ω) κ̄· καὶ ἐτάφη ἐν τῇ/καθο-
 λικῇ κ(αἰ) μεγάλ(η) ἐκκλησίᾳ/ἔτη,Ϛχϛ̄ + Καὶ ἐν τ(ῶ),Ϛχϛ̄. Μαίω κ̄ /ἀνέστη ὁ υ(ἰὸς) αὐτ(ῆς)
 Γριζάντ(ος), παρῆλαβ(εν)/κληρί(ο)ν γρικ(ῶς) κ(αἰ) λατιν(ικῶς) μ(ε)τ(ὰ) λιτ(ανείας) κ(αἰ)
 ἀνεκό-/μισε(ν) αὐτ(ῆν) ἐκ(εῖ)θ(εν), ἔβαλ(εν) αὐτ(ῆν) ἐν τὸς τ(οῦ) τόπ(ου) (οῦ)/... ἐπάν(ω)
 αὐτ(ῆς) τὸ εὐκτίρ(ιον) τ(οῦ)το· καὶ ἐπὶ αὐτ(ῆ) κατ(εύξασθε).

Translation

Inscription I: Judaeo-Arabic¹

+ Anna, mother of the priest Akrisant, the priest of the glorified king, the lo-/rd² of Italy, *Langobardia*,³ Calabria, Sicily, and *Ifriqiya*,³ died on the evening of Friday,/the twentieth day of the month of August in the year four-thousand-nine-hundred-and-eight, and was bu- /ried in the great cathedral.⁴ Then, her son moved her with crosses [?]⁵ to this church⁶ of/St. Michael in the first hour of Friday the twentieth of May of the year four-thousand-nine-hundred-/and nine. And he built this chapel over her tomb. And he named the chapel St. Anna after the name of the mother/of the Lady Maryam, the mother of the Messiah. May God have mercy on he who reads [this] and prays for mercy for her [Anna]. Amen.⁷ Amen.⁺

Inscription II: Latin⁸

+ On the 13th [day before] the calends of September⁹ +/Anna, the mother of Gri-.sandus, died and was buried in the/ + in the great church of St. Ma-/ry, in the year 1148, in the 11th indiction,/ and on the 13th [day before] the calends of June¹⁰ she was moved,/to this chapel which/her son built for the Lord and for her/in the year 1148 (sic!), in the 12th indiction.

Inscription III: Greek¹¹

+ Anna, of blessed memory, fell asleep/on the 20th of the month/ of August in the year 6656¹² and she was buried in the/ great and catholic church./ + And, on 20th May 6657,¹³/ her son *Grizantos* lifted her up, received her/with Greek and Latin prayers,¹⁴ and removed her/from there. He laid her down in the place where/ [he built] this chapel¹⁵ over her. Pray for her [?].

Inscription IV: Arabic

Transcription

توفيت انه ام القسيس اكريزنت قسيس الحضرة المالكة الملكية العالية العلية المعظمة السنية القديسية + / البهية
 المعتزة بالله المقتره بقدرته المنصورة بقوته مالكة ايطالية وانكبرذة وقلورية وصفلية وافريقية معزة امام / رومية
 الناصرة للملة النصرانية سرمد الله مملكتها + يوم الجمعة العصر العشرين من اوسه سنة ثلاث واربعين /
 وخمسماية ودفنت بالجامع الاعظم ثم نقلها ولدها بالمستجيد الى هذه الكنسية صنت مخايله يوم الجمعة اول ساعة
 العشا / [الع]شرين مائه سنة اربع واربعين وخمسماية وبنا على قبرها هذه الكنسية وسما الكنيسة صنت انه عن
 اسم ام [السيدة مر]يم / [والدة المسيح فرحم الله من قرأ و]دعا لها بالرحمة امين امين امين +

Transliteration

+ tuwuffiyat Annah ummu l-qissisi Akrīzant qissīsi l-ḥaḍrati l-mālīkiyati l-malakīya-
 ti l-‘āliyyati l-‘aliyyati l-mu‘aẓẓamati l-sanīyati l-qiddīsīyati/l-bahīyati l-mu‘tazzati bi-llāhi
 l-muqtadirati bi-qudrati-hi l-manṣūrati bi-qūwati-hi mālikati Itāliyata wa-nkabardhata
 wa-Qalawriyata wa-samrada wa-Ifriqiyata mu‘izzati imāmi/Rūmiyata l-nāshirati li-l-mil-
 lati l-naṣrānīyati šammada llāhu mamlakata-hā + yawma l-jum‘ati l-‘aṣra l-‘ishrīna min
 Awsata sanata thalāthin wa-arba‘īna/wa-khamsimiyatin (sic) wa-dufnat bi-l-jāmi‘i
 l-a‘zami thumma naqala-hā waladu-hā bi-l-mustajīdi ilā hādhihi l-kinisīyati Ṣant Mikhāy-
 ilah yawma l-jum‘ati awwala sā‘ati l-‘ashā’i/[l-‘]ishrīna Māyuh sanata arba‘in wa-arba‘īna
 wa-khamsimiyatin (sic) wa-banā ‘alā qabri-hā hādhihi l-kinisīyata wa-sammā l-kinisīyata
 Ṣant Annah ‘ani smi ummi [l-sayyidati Mar]yama/[wālidati l-Masīḥi fa-rahīma llāhu man
 qara‘a wa-]da‘ā la-hā bi-l-rahmati āmin āmin āmin +

Inscription IV: Arabic¹⁶

+ Anna, the mother of the priest *Akrizant*, the priest of the ruling presence, the most royal, the high, the most high, the glorified, the splendid, the most holy,/the magnificent, the strengthened by God, the made powerful by His power, the supported by His strength, the one who rules Italy, *Langobardia*, Calabria, Sicily, and *Ifriqīya*, the defender of the Pope/of Rome, the protector of the Christian community – may God preserve its rule!¹⁷ – died on the evening of Friday the twentieth of August in the year five-hundred and forty-three/and was buried in the great cathedral.¹⁸ Then her son moved her with in the best possible manner (?)¹⁹ of St. Michael in the first hour of the evening of Friday/the twentieth of May in the year five-hundred and forty-four. And he built over her tomb this chapel²⁰ of St. Anna in honour of the name of the mother [of the Lady Ma]ry/[the mother of the Messiah. May God have mercy upon he who reads] and prays for mercy for her. Amen. Amen. Amen.²¹

Commentary

1. The Hebrew characters are carefully and clearly written, without short vowels or points. The language is generally correct (except for the numerals, and the string of orthographic irregularities in line 7), and the text is largely modeled upon the Arabic.
2. At the end of l. 1 and start of l. 2, Lagumina's reading *ṣā-/ḥib* "ignore di" is preferred to *ghāl ... /ḥaqq* "Guglielmo/sovrano," as was read by Gregorio Ugdulena for Amari. This emendation removes the possibility that the inscription might refer to King William I.²⁰
3. In l. 2, the word transliterated *n.k.abarta*, like *Ankabardha* in the Arabic (Inscription IV, l. 2), derives from *Langobardia*, derived from Greek Λαγουβαρδία and variants, the Byzantine name for the territories controlled by the Lombards in southern Italy. The list of territories includes *Ifriqiya*, the lands of the central Maghrib ruled by the Zīrids and the Ḥammādids, conquered by Sicily in 1146–48.²¹
4. In l. 4, *al-jāmi' al-a'zam*, "the great congregational [church]," is a calque, attested elsewhere in the Arabic of Norman Sicily,²² upon the Muslim Arabic *al-masjid al-jāmi'*, "the congregational mosque"; a synagogue, too, may be a *jāmi'*.²³
5. In l. 4, the reading *bi-l-ṣ.lāb* is absolutely clear; what it means is not. Ugdulena implausibly proposed to Amari that the word *al-ṣalīb*, "the cross," had been transformed by vowel shift (*imāla*) into *al-ṣ.lāb* and that the phrase meant "[preceded] by the cross"; Amari himself read *bi-l-ṣilāb*, the plural of the adjective *ṣulb*, "hard, firm, rigid, stiff, etc.," and translated *solemnemente*, "solemnly"; the present author unjustifiably proposed to read the terminal letter as *taveh (tā)*, giving *bi-l-ṣalāt*, "with intercessory prayer."²⁴ Yet another alternative is that the mason might have carved *tsadi (ṣād)* in place of *samekh (sīn)*, a common substitution in both Middle Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic, intending *bi-l-silāb*, "with mourning clothes." None of these is wholly convincing. In the absence of any persuasive alternative, on a Christian epitaph which refers to a Christian funerary procession, where the Judaeo-Arabic and Arabic texts both include multiple symbols of the cross, it is impossible to allay the suspicion that the word *ṣ.lāb* must somehow refer to the cross. If so, having rejected Ugdulena's original proposal, the word may be read as an irregular and as yet otherwise unattested plural of *ṣalīb* (regular pl. *ṣulbān*), "the cross,"²⁵ so that *bi-l-s.lāb* may tentatively be translated "with crosses."

20 For the Arabic titles of the Norman kings see Johns 2002: 268–74; note that the penultimate bullet-point on p.271, which refers to this inscription, must now be corrected as follows: "Roger II (1149): *al-ḥaḍra ... sarmada llāhu mamlakata-ḥā*, 'the presence ... may God perpetuate its rule!'"

21 See Johns 1987.

22 E.g. Cusa 1982: 40: *al-jāmi' al-muqaddas šant Māriya*, "the holy cathedral of Santa Maria."

23 Caracausi 1983: 97.

24 Amari 1879: 84 (Ugdulena), 90 (Amari); Johns 2006: 520, 776.

25 In support of that proposal, an irregular plural of precisely this form – *al-r.hāb*, in place of regular *al-ruhbān*, where it can only mean "the monks" – occurs twice in a twelfth-century Sicilian Arabic deed of sale: see Cusa 1982: 505.

6. Also in l. 4, for *kinisīya*, “church,” a common Sicilian variant of standard *kanīsa*, which also recurs thrice in the Arabic (ll. 4 and 5).²⁶
7. In l. 7, the odd series of three orthographic irregularities – *Allā* for *Allah*, *da‘ala-hā* for *da‘ā la-hā* and *rahmā* for *rahma* – suggests that, having reached the end of the text, the carver relaxed into the colloquial register.
8. The Latin text is written entirely in capitals, with relatively few, standard abbreviations. The complete absence of any reference to Grisandus’ royal master sets the Latin and the Greek texts apart from the two written in Arabic.
9. That is August 20, 1148.
10. That is May 20 in the following year, 1149 CE, Indiction 12. In l. 9, the mason has carved MCXLVIII (1148) in error.
11. The Greek text is written entirely in capitals, and the words are accented. Guillou comments that “The language is very gauche, but uses very Byzantine expressions.”²⁷
12. 1148 CE.
13. 1149 CE.
14. In ll. 6–7, the phrase *παρέλαβεν/κληρίον γρικῶς καὶ λατινικῶς μετὰ λιτανείας*, “received her/with Greek and Latin prayers,” has been read in many different ways; Guillou’s reading (“il l’a accueillie comme un doux héritage en récitant des prières en grec et en latin”) has been adapted here, which respects the text and avoids over-speculative conclusions. *Γρικῶς* (reading *γρηκῶς*), and *βάλλω*, meaning “to lay something down,” both reflect local usage.²⁸
15. Ugdulena “conjectured” that the first word of l. 9 might be *(οἰ)κο(δόμησεν)*, “he built.” A verb is certainly expected here, but only the letters *-κο-* can be read on the line, and not the preceding and succeeding superscript contractions. Guillou noted and apparently rejected the conjecture, but nonetheless translated “où il a fait cet oratoire au-dessus d’elle.” *Εὐκτίριον ὑκτίριον* (for *εὐκτήριον*), in Byzantine canon law, is an oratory where the office may be sung but the mass may not be celebrated.
16. The Arabic text is written in a rather cramped cursive script, with vertical letters and most points but without vowels, wholly without calligraphic pretension, which resembles an everyday book-hand.
17. “May God perpetuate its rule” translates *sarmada llāhu mamlakata-hā*, in which the reading of the verb as *sarmada* is revised and read correctly for the first time. The royal titles in ll. 1–3 are drawn directly from the formulary of King Roger’s Arabic chancery.²⁹
18. See Commentary, n. 4, on the Judaeo-Arabic for *al-jāmi‘ al-a‘zam*.

26 See Caracausi 1983: 185–87.

27 Guillou 1996: 219.

28 See Rohlfs 1974, s.v.

29 See n. 20, p. 350. For the verb *sarmada*, apparently coined from the noun *sarmad* (cf. Qur’ān 28.71–72: *al-layl sarmad*, “the continuous night”); see Dozy 1881, 1: 650a, “faire perpétuellement une chose,” citing the phrase *yusarmidu al-ṣawm*, “he perpetuates the fast,” used by the early fourteenth-century Moroccan historian Ibn Abī Zar’ al-Fāsī 1843: 189, l. 22 and 191, l. 15.

19. *Bi-l-mustajīd*, a phrase based on the active participle of *istajāda*, “to think something excellent,” is here tentatively translated “in the best possible manner.” Alternatively, the phrase could be construed as “seeking grace,” presumably of God.³⁰ It is worth noting that Amari equated *bi-l-ṣilāb* in the Judaeo-Arabic (see Comment 5, p. 350) with this phrase, and translated both by the same word *solemnmente*, “solemnly.”
20. For *al-kinisīya*, in ll. 4 and 5, see the Commentary, n. 6, on the Judaeo-Arabic.
21. The concluding formula, *fa-raḥīma llāhu man qaraʾa wa-daʾā la-hā bi-l-raḥmati āmīn* (line 6), is drawn from the standard Islamic epitaph.

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³⁰ *Tāj al-arūs*, 1965: s.v. J.W.D X.

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II.6.4 Unknown (1184/85)

An Inscription from the Synagogue at Gravina (Apulia)

LINDA SAFRAN

Ed.: D. Nardone, “Episodi relativi ad una cacciata di ebrei dimoranti in Gravina di Puglia alla fine del XII secolo,” *La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno*, October 9, 1938, 3; D. Nardone, “Episodi relativi ad una cacciata di ebrei dimoranti in Gravina di Puglia alla fine del XII secolo,” *La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno*, November 8, 1938, 3; U. Cassuto, “איטליה, כתובות מבית הכנסת של יהודי גראווינה,” [Inscription from the Synagogue of the Jews of Gravina], *Italia* 1 (1945), 5–7; C. Colafemmina, “Un’ iscrizione sinagogale di Gravina del XII secolo,” *Archivio Storico Pugliese* 29 (1976), 177–81; D. Cassuto, “Costruzioni rituali ebraiche nell’Alto Medioevo,” in *Gli Ebrei nell’Alto Medioevo, Settimane di Studio del Centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo* 26 (Spoleto, 1980), vol. 2, 1017–57 (1037, 1048 n. 69); C. Colafemmina, *Ebrei e cristiani novelli in Puglia: le comunità minori* (Bari, 1991), 11–16; C. Colafemmina, “La cultura nelle giudecche e nelle sinagoghe,” in *Centri di produzione della cultura nel Mezzogiorno normanno-svevo*, Atti delle dodicesime giornate normanno-sveve, Bari, 17–20 ottobre 1995, ed. G. Musca (Bari, 1997), 89–118 (111); C. Colafemmina, “Le testimonianze epigrafiche e archeologiche come fonte storica,” *Materia giudaica* 9 (2004), 37–52 (40); L. Safran, “Cultures textuelles publiques: une étude de cas dans le sud de l’Italie,” *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 52/3 (2009), 245–63 (251–52) = L. Safran, “Public Textual Cultures: A Case Study in Southern Italy,” in *Textual Cultures of Medieval Italy*, ed. W. Robins (Toronto, 2011), 115–44 (120); L. Safran, *The Medieval Salento: Art and Identity in Southern Italy*, Middle Ages series (Philadelphia, 2014), no. 50, 277–78; G. Lacerenza, *Ketav, Sefer, Miktav: La cultura ebraica scritta tra Basilicata e Puglia*, Collana CeRDEM, Studi sull’Ebraismo nel Mediterraneo 2, ed. M. Mascolo (Bari, 2014), no. II.34, 228

MS.:¹ Bari, Biblioteca Nazionale “Sagarriga Visconti Volpi,” fondo D’Addosio, MS 11/37 (s. ?XVIII)

Other Translations: L. Safran, “Public Textual Cultures,” as above; L. Safran, *The Medieval Salento*, as above (English); L. Safran, “Cultures textuelles,” as above (French, 252); G. Lacerenza, as above; U. Cassuto, “Episodi relativi,” as above; C. Colafemmina, all four as above (Italian); U. Cassuto, “Inscription,” as above (Hebrew)

¹ Not consulted. For the manuscript’s dating see Text and Context.

Significance

The description indicates that the synagogue prayer hall was paved, had seats, and was preceded by a courtyard. These features are known from ancient and late antique synagogues across the Mediterranean region, including a fifth-century example at Bova Marina in Calabria, and in the fifteenth century the synagogue at Palermo is described in very similar terms. Some local rock-cut churches retain their original benches around the perimeter, so this feature crossed confessional lines; it was widespread in other regions as well. Similarly, donations made for the benefit of the soul of a loved one were common among all the local faiths and are well known from Byzantine inscriptions.

Text and Context

This copy of a lost synagogue inscription is the oldest proof of a Jewish community in medieval Gravina, although other sites nearby, notably Venosa, Matera, and Bari, preserve much older evidence in the form of funerary stelae and, at Venosa, catacomb inscriptions. The Gravina inscription is lost, but a copy (29.7 x 20.6 cm), perhaps of the eighteenth century, survives in Bari, Biblioteca Nazionale “Sagarriga Visconti Volpi,” fondo D’Addosio, MS 11/37. The single page was discovered among the documents of a Bari notary, Giuseppe D’Addosio (d. 1846), and whoever made the copy evidently had access to a well-preserved original. The inscription is upside-down on the page (the word *Gravina* on the verso faces the other way), so either the transcriber did not know Hebrew or the epitaph was upside-down, in secondary use, when it was recorded.²

The original text commemorated the pious donation of synagogue improvements by a grieving father on behalf of his dead son, Moshe. It is unclear whether the first letters of the second line, בר, BR, represent *bar*, “son of,” or an abbreviated form of *b[en] r[abbi]*, “son of master” Moses.³ In the twelfth century “Rabbi” was still a generic honorific, not a professional description. Such communal benefices as paving and providing seats were worthy acts, as they are also recorded in the marble plaque that commemorates a synagogue at Trani in 1246/47 (see II.6.5 in this volume). Partial refurbishment must have been a constant necessity if the proscription on new synagogue construction, first recorded in the early fifth-century Theodosian Code (N. Th. 3.1), was still in force.

The presence of benches around the perimeter of the prayer hall is known from the earliest excavated synagogues (e.g. Masada), and such benches can still be seen in some rock-cut churches in Apulia. A courtyard adjacent to the prayer space also derives from ancient Jewish practice and is attested across the Mediterranean, in both inscriptions and archaeological excavations, beginning in the first century CE and continuing in southern Italy to the fifteenth century (e.g. Palermo). Courtyards were often furnished with a water source for ritual hand-washing, and there was probably a ritual bath nearby, as well

² Lacerenza 2014 no. II.59, p. 262.

³ Proposed by Lacerenza 2014.

as spaces for community functions and housing for visitors.⁴ The synagogue itself had to serve a minimum of ten men, the quorum required by Jewish law. Although the site of the medieval Gravina synagogue is unknown, its location would not have been peripheral. Abundant regional evidence reveals that the locus of Jewish communal activity was always in the heart of town, often very near the cathedral.

The Gravina text resembles the many Greek inscriptions in southern Italy that commemorate an individual's contribution to local religious and social life, in the form of churches, chapels, hospitals, and even a place of asylum. It is also like them in that the donation was made on behalf of the soul of a beloved family member (albeit not for the remission of sins, as in Christian texts). It differs from these in being couched in the first-person plural: *haqanu*, we have carved, "we" being the congregation who benefited from the donations of Baruch. The closest analogy is the inscription on a window frame of the former synagogue at Bari, now a private home, which says that in a certain year "this window was made as an offering of the people" (it goes on to credit the craftsman, using the "by the hand of" formula used in Greek texts).⁵ In Late Antiquity, contributions made to synagogues were recorded on their mosaic floors, but in the Middle Ages donations were commemorated on stone plaques.

Were Baruch and his congregation Byzantine (Romaniote) Jews, or did they follow the "Italian" rite of the Jews of Rome? It is possible that they were Romaniote Jews who spoke Greek, but this would be much more likely if Gravina were farther south in Apulia. There the Byzantines maintained a presence even after the Longobard conquests of the sixth century and before the Byzantine reconquest in the ninth. Nevertheless, Jewish culture around the Mediterranean shared significant commonalities, not least the use of Hebrew as the language of prayer regardless of the local vernacular, and the differences between Italian-rite and Romaniote Jews in the twelfth century did not extend to architecture.

4 Cassuto 1980: 1050.

5 Lacerenza 2014 no. II.59, p. 260, 262.

Text⁶

מכתב' זה חקקנו לברוך
 בר משה שרצף הכנסת
 החצר ברצפת אבנים
 ואיצטבאות סביב לנפש
 בנו משה הנאסף בן שמנה
 עשרה שנה להזכירו בשבת
 ביום טוב ותשלם הרצפה
 בשנת ר"תקמ"ה נפשו צ
 רור[ה בצרור החיים אמן]

Translation

This inscription we have carved for Baruch, son of Moses,² who has paved the synagogue [and] the courtyard with a pavement of stones³ and built benches⁴ around [the synagogue] for the soul of his son, Moses,⁵ who died at the age of eighteen years, so that he will be remembered on the Sabbath [and] festival days. The pavement was completed in the year 4945.⁶ May his soul be bound [in the bundle of life.⁷ Amen.].

Commentary

1. The Hebrew word for “inscription,” the first word in the text, is *miktav*.
2. Nothing is known about either individual. Both are biblical names attested in Hebrew inscriptions elsewhere in the region: Baruch in Brindisi, Moses (Heb. Moshe) in Brindisi and, repeatedly, in Bari. Jewish men named Baruch (“blessed”) likely took the equivalent civic name Benedict.
3. The pavement material is unknown, as no original synagogue floors are preserved in Italy after the fifth-century mosaic floor at Bova Marina (Calabria).
4. The word used for “benches,” *itztabaot*, derives from the Greek *stibadion* and was already in use in Hebrew texts in Late Antiquity.
5. The deceased Moses was likely named after his paternal grandfather.
6. ר"תקמ"ה – the dots indicate that the letters are to be read as numbers – yields the year 945. The millennium number is often omitted in medieval Hebrew inscriptions, so the year is actually 4945 (the Hebrew year zero, the creation of the world, is thought to have occurred in 3761 BCE). 4945 is more conventionally written as תתקמ"ה, which is equivalent to the Gregorian year 1184/85 because Hebrew years, like Byzantine ones, began in the fall. Cassuto and Cassuto read the date as 1139/40 and 1036/37, respectively, perhaps because of the poor quality of the text copies that they saw. The two initial letters appear to be identical, so it is less likely that they represent דרתקמה, with an initial *dalet*, yielding the date 4745 or 984/85.

⁶ Adapted from Lacerenza 2014.

7. The reference to the “bundle of life” or “bundle of the living” comes from 1 Sam. 25:29 and was used earlier in the region in Hebrew epitaphs from Venosa, Matera, and Brindisi. It appears in abbreviated form (*TNTsBH*) in a 1450 epitaph preserved in Trani.

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II.6.5 Unknown (1246/47)

An Inscription from the Great Synagogue at Trani

LINDA SAFRAN

Ed.: G. I. Ascoli, *Iscrizioni inedite o mal note, greche, latine, ebraiche, di antichi sepolcri giudei nel Napoletano* (Turin, 1880; repr., Sala Bolognese, 1978) no. 40, 84–86; U. Cassuto, “Iscrizioni ebraiche a Trani,” *Rivista degli studi orientali* 13.2 (1932), 172–80 (178–80); D. Cassuto, “Costruzioni rituali ebraiche nell’Alto Medioevo,” in *Gli Ebrei nell’Alto Medioevo*, Settimane di Studio del Centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo 26 (Spoleto, 1980), 2, 1017–57 (1033–34); C. Colafemmina, “La cultura nelle giudecche e nelle sinagoghe,” in *Centri di produzione della cultura nel Mezzogiorno normanno-svevo*, Atti delle dodicesime giornate normanno-sveve, Bari, 17–20 ottobre 1995, ed. G. Musca (Bari, 1997), 89–118 (113–15); C. Colafemmina, “Le testimonianze epigrafiche e archeologiche come fonte storica,” *Materia giudaica* 9.1–2 (2004), 37–52 (40–41); C. Colafemmina, in *Sinagoga Museo Sant’Anna: Guida al Museo*, eds. C. Colafemmina and G. Gramegna (Cassano del Murge, 2009), 104–05; M. Perani, “Una rilettura dell’epigrafe ebraica del 1246/47 per la dedicazione della sinagoga *Scola Grande* di Trani,” in C. Colafemmina, *Ebrei a Trani, fonti documentarie: Andria, Barletta, Bisceglie, Corato, Molfetta, Trani*, Collana CeRDEM, Studi sull’Ebraismo nel Mediterraneo 1, ed. M. Mascolo (Bari, 2013), 23–32; L. Safran, *The Medieval Salento: Art and Identity in Southern Italy*, Middle Ages series (Philadelphia, 2014) no. 147, 328–29; G. Lacerenza, *Ketav, Sefer, Miktav: La cultura ebraica scritta tra Basilicata e Puglia*, Collana CeRDEM, Studi sull’Ebraismo nel Mediterraneo 2, ed. M. Mascolo (Bari, 2014), no. II.60, 262–63

Monument/Artefact: Trani, Scola Grande (now Sinagoga Museo Sant’Anna), figs.

II.6.5.a–c

Other Translations: L. Safran, *The Medieval Salento*, as above (English); C.

Colafemmina, *Sinagoga*, as above (in Italian and English); U. Cassuto, “Costruzioni,” as above; C. Colafemmina, “Le testimonianze,” as above; M. Perani, as above; G. Lacerenza, as above (Italian)

Significance

Whereas the Scola Nova in Trani resembles other European medieval synagogues, the domed Scola Grande evokes Byzantine architecture, even though its inspiration was probably Apulian Romanesque. In the community’s public record of gratitude to a generous donor, the dome is identified as the first feature of note. The list of Natan’s contributions – if that was indeed the damaged name – indicates that he was a man of



Fig. II.6.5a Trani, Scola Grande (now Sinagoga Museo Sant'Anna), view of south wall with dome and (later?) bell tower
© L. Safran



Fig. II.6.5b Trani, Scola Grande (now Sinagoga Museo Sant'Anna), view of dome
© L. Safran



Fig. II.6.5c Trani, Scola Grande (now Sinagoga Museo Sant'Anna), probable entrance on east wall near north corner
© L. Safran

considerable means. Under Frederick II the Jews of Trani held monopolies on silk and moneylending, although Natan may have earned his money from other trades. Unlike the synagogue donations at Gravina in honor of the donor's dead son, this inscription promotes Natan's own piety in the eyes of God.

Text and Context

Trani is unique in southern Italy for the preservation of its medieval Jewish neighborhood (*Giudecca*) and the survival of two of its four synagogues. One, the twelfth-century Scola Nova ("New Synagogue"), was transformed in the thirteenth century, under Angevin rule, into a church dedicated to Mary (Santa Maria della Scola Nova); in 2005 it was returned to the Jewish community, and occasional services are held there today. The

other extant synagogue was originally the Scola Grande (“Great Synagogue”) but was successively repurposed as the churches of Santi Quirico e Giovita, San Chirico, and then Sant’Anna. Since 2009, deconsecrated and restored, it has housed the Jewish holdings of the Diocesan Museum of the Archdiocese of Trani-Barletta-Bisceglie. The marble dedicatory plaque under discussion here (25 cm x 39.6 cm) was displayed in this building in 1246/47 and is once again installed in its original home.

In the inscription, written in rhymed prose, a particular sub-set of the Jewish community at Trani commemorates a major donor, identified recently as “Natan.” As in the Gravina synagogue inscription, this benefactor provided a new pavement and benches; in addition, he was responsible for the “elevated and majestic cupola,” a window, and new doors. Were these renovations to an existing building, or did the Jewish community of Trani take advantage of Frederick II’s more relaxed behavior toward the Hohenstaufen kingdom’s Jews to build an entirely new structure?

The synagogue was rectangular in plan with a projecting apse on the west side that has revealed traces of seats, perhaps the ones designated for the chanters in the commemorative inscription. The most imposing of Natan’s donations is still extant: four piers support an imposing hemispherical dome on a drum, pierced by four windows, that is cylindrical on the interior and octagonal on the outside. Which of the other single-light or two-light windows was part of Natan’s donation is not known, but the oculus on the east façade is certainly later. The window of a synagogue at Bari, “an offering of the people,” bears the date 1313/14 and the name of its carver. The original floor level of the Trani synagogue was revealed in recent excavations, but in what way its pavement was “well-ordered” cannot be determined.

At the north end of the east wall, a small doorway is surmounted on the exterior by a gabled blind arch. This may be a clue to the appearance of the monumental cupboard for the Torah scrolls, the *aron ha-kodesh*, that would originally have been on the interior east wall of the synagogue, facing Jerusalem.¹ Comparison with the extant example in the Scola Nova suggests that the *aron* would have been reached by a short flight of steps. The wooden doors that may have protected the scrolls could conceivably be the “doors for the closing” mentioned in the inscription.

The Jewish sage Isaiah of Trani the Elder lived near the Scola Grande (d. c.1250). Although he was educated among the Ashkenazi Jews of northern Europe, in his religious activity Isaiah was part of the Byzantine world: he was the great legal authority for Romaniote Jewry (“Romania” was the medieval Jewish name for Byzantium). He responded to religious queries from across the eastern half of the Mediterranean and traveled widely, adjudicating disagreements among Jews in the Balkans, Greece, Crete, and Israel. As late as 1367/68 a Hebrew book written in Constantinople (“Qushta”) still referred to Isaiah as “the determiner.”²

1 Colafemmina and Gramegna 2009: 115–17; Gramegna 2012: 77.

2 Ta-Shma 1984: 409–16.

Text³

בשנת חמשת אלפים ושבע ליצירה
 נבנת זאת הבירה על יד מ' נתן נעים
 החבורה, בכיפה גבוהה והדורה, וחלון
 פתוח לאורה, ושערים חדשים לסגירה
 ורצפה למעלה סדורה ואצטבאות
 לישיבת עורכי שירה, להיות צדקתו
 שמורה, לפני שוכן בשמי שפרה.

Translation

In the year 5007 since the Creation¹ this sanctuary was built by [the excellent² Natan³], an amiable man of the community,⁴ with a lofty and majestic cupola and a window open to the light, with new doors for closing, and with a well-ordered upper pavement with seats where those who chant the liturgy⁵ can sit, so that his piety will be preserved before Him who inhabits the resplendent heavens.

Commentary

1. The method of dating by years from Creation is typical of medieval Hebrew synagogue inscriptions (and also of Latin texts). By contrast, the few inscribed Hebrew epitaphs in southern Italy that include a date to supplement the age of the deceased reckon by years since the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem (70 CE, but widely misdated to 68 CE in medieval Jewish sources).
2. Perani sees two dots above the נ in line 2, an abbreviation that can be resolved as *mar*, mister; *maleh*, the excellent; or *ma'alato*, his excellency.⁴ The specific term intended is unknown, but its honorific sense is clear if one agrees that dots were indeed represented.
3. The name “Natan” was read for the first time by Perani,⁵ but the absence of a patronymic or a place of origin is unusual. All earlier translators resolved this damaged section of the text by seeing a communal group as the synagogue donors, rather than an individual.⁶
4. A *darshan* (preacher, homilist) named Natan is reported in Trani by the noted traveler Benjamin of Tudela, who visited about 1170. The Natan of the synagogue inscription cannot be the same man, but given Jewish onomastic patterns, he may have been a descendant.
5. “Those who chant the liturgy” may refer to *paytanim*, composers of liturgical poetry; those who lead the congregation in prayer; or the worshippers themselves. The second option is the most likely.

³ Adapted from Perani 2013.

⁴ Perani 2013, 29.

⁵ Perani 2013, 23–27 for previous readings.

⁶ E.g. Safran 2014: 328: “built by a congenial minyan of friends.”

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II.6.6 Ephraim (?), Dates unknown

The Dedicatory Mosaic in the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem¹

LISA MAHONEY

Ed.: H. Vincent and F.-M. Abel, *Bethléem: Le sanctuaire de la Nativité* (Paris, 1914), 157–58 (Latin); A. Cutler, “Ephraim, Mosaicist of Bethlehem: The Evidence from Jerusalem,” *Jewish Art* 12–13 (1986–1987), 179–80 (Greek). Other editions: R. Röhricht, “Le pèlerinage du moine augustin Jacques de Verone (1335),” *Revue de l’orient latin* 3 (1895), 220 (Latin); C. Couderc, “Journal de voyage à Jérusalem de Louis de Rouchechouart, évêque de Saintes (1461),” *Revue de l’orient latin* 1 (1893), 260 (Latin); F. Quaresmius, *Historica, Theologica et Moralis Terrae Sanctae Elucidatio* (Antwerp, 1639; repub. Venice, 1880–81), II, 506 (Latin and Greek); C. Ciampini, *De sacris aedificiis a Constantino Magno constructis: Synopsis historica* (Rome, 1693), 160 (Latin and Greek); M. de Vogüé, *Les églises de la Terre Sainte* (Paris, 1860), 99 (Latin and Greek)

Monument/Artefact: Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem²

Other Translations: R. W. Hamilton, *The Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem: A Guide* (Jerusalem, 1947), 55–56 (English); J. Folda, *The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, 1098–1187* (Cambridge, 1995), 347 and 350 (English; the translation of the Greek text is from Cutler); Cutler 1986–87: 179 (English of the Greek text only); O. M. Dalton in W. Harvey *et al.*, *The Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem*, ed. R. W. Schultz (London, 1910), 43 (English of the Greek text only); Vincent and Abel 1914, 157–58 (French)

Significance

This text is one of precious few to date and identify by title and name the figures involved in the decoration of a church that lay within the purview of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. In so doing, it testifies to the cooperation of a Frankish bishop, a Frankish king, and a Byzantine emperor in the commission of art during the twelfth century and to a reliance within the Latin Kingdom on local artisans for distinguished commissions.

The Author

Identifying the “author” of the mosaic dedication of the Church of the Nativity is not straightforward. It is not straightforward because conceptions of authorship do not map neatly onto conceptions of artistic production, wherein conceivers, designers, and

¹ In the twelfth century, the period of concern here, the church was dedicated to Mary.

² The best picture of this dedication is found in Kühnel 1988, fig. 2.

makers are independent or interrelated agents. Still, if we understand “author” to be analogous with “creator,” and if we are circumspect in our reading of this text, certain clues regarding the construction of the mosaic program as a whole emerge. These clues, it is reasonable to presume, apply likewise to the dedication itself.

Within the Church of the Nativity text, the king of Jerusalem, the emperor of Byzantium, and the bishop of Bethlehem are named partly in order to date the new decorative program. The Latin, however, includes pointed epithets – Amalric is a “generous friend,” Manuel a “generous giver,” and Ralph “generous” – and these epithets have been thought to underscore the financial and material contributions of each to its commission. Contributions of this kind often translated into involvement in the very planning of a work. Yet, there can be no doubt that its master was Ephraim, the “painter/designer and mosaicist” (in Greek) whose “hand” had “made” (in Latin) the tessellated program.³ The name “Ephraim” is either Greek or Syrian and, accordingly, points to the important role played by locals in artistic commissions within the Latin Kingdom. It also points to a creative context that was distinguished not only by ethnic and cultural diversity, but also confessional diversity.⁴ Elsewhere within the mosaic program the names of additional artists appear that are likewise distinctly local, making the Church of the Nativity an especially rich locus for the study of twelfth-century workshop practices.⁵

Text and Context

The Latin and Greek mosaic dedication in the Church of the Nativity is fragmentary today. All but the last letters of four of five lines of the Latin are gone, and the remaining four of five lines of the Greek are incomplete. The earliest extant record of the Latin text survives in James of Verona’s pilgrimage account (1335), that of the Greek in Francesco Quaresmius’s history (1639). These transcriptions, and those that followed, suggest that the dedication’s location high upon the southern wall of the apse has always made it difficult to read, a condition certainly accentuated by the text’s reliance on abbreviations. Dealing with an alternately imperfect and second-hand text results in transcription and translation uncertainties. While these pertain largely to minor issues of wording, they also pertain to the year given in the inscription. That said, the date of the mosaic dedication and, thus, the decorative program as a whole is generally agreed to be 1169.⁶

3 Cutler 1986–87: 183. This role for Ephraim has been suggested by others; see, e.g., Hamilton 1947: 57.

4 Kühnel (1984: 512) has suggested that Ephraim was Syro-Palestinian; Hunt (1991: 75–76, 85) that Ephraim was an Orthodox Palestinian monk; Cutler (1986–87: 182) and Folda (1995: 572 n. 67) that he was Greek. The identity of Ephraim, however, has been a part of the conversation for a very long time (see Hamilton 1947: 57).

5 On this, see esp. Kühnel 1987: 148–49; Hunt 1991. In the nave, the name “Basil” appears in Latin, Syriac, and Greek (if BC is an abbreviation for “Basilios”). In the east end, near the south transept apse, the letters “ZAN” were recorded by Quaresmius (1639: II, 507) and have been taken by Hunt 1991: 74 to be the remains of the name of this area’s artist.

6 For the resolution see, Cutler 1986–87: 179–81; for the issues involved, see Vincent and Abel 1914: 158. An alternative view is presented by Pringle 1993: 139, 147 and 154. Kühnel (1988: 5) suggests that the dedication might only date the work in the apse.

This date places the decoration of the Church of the Nativity within an interesting period in the Latin Kingdom. Six years earlier, King Baldwin III (r.1143–63) had died without issue. It was to his brother Amalric that the throne passed, albeit not without incident.⁷ Whatever propagandistic pressures this placed on the king, a yet more pressing political concern came from Egypt, the possession of which was thought to be the key to state security. Egypt had a prosperous and strategically located port in Alexandria, but there was also a looming threat of its union with Syria and the ambitious Nur ad-Din.⁸ This threat applied to the entire region and seems, as a result, to have brought together Amalric and Manuel, the emperor of Byzantium. It was an alliance marked by marriages, most recently that of Amalric to Manuel's nephew's daughter, and by the joining of armies and resources.⁹ It was arguably also an alliance marked by the joint care of the Church of the Nativity that was so carefully announced in its mosaic dedication. Despite such efforts, Egypt was not to be controlled by Christian forces. Early in 1169, a man named Salah ad-Din took the throne; not long after, his armies began acquiring Christian holdings in the Levant at an alarming rate. The years around the dedication of the mosaic program in the Church of the Nativity also witnessed ecumenical efforts on the part of Manuel's Greek Orthodox and Amalric's Latin Christian representatives. It is within this additional theological context that the creation of the church's decorative program has also been placed, with hopes for theological union driving the pictorial and textual content of the apse, which contained a robust life of Jesus, and of the nave, which included summaries of church councils.¹⁰ Indeed, the appearance of Latin, Greek, and even Syriac upon these walls seems to have anticipated a multi-confessional audience.

⁷ Mayer 1992: 121–35; Baldwin 1969: 528–61.

⁸ Baldwin 1969.

⁹ In addition to Mayer and Baldwin, see Magdalino, *Manuel*, 66–76.

¹⁰ Hunt (1991) provides the fullest discussion of the ways in which these particular aspects of this historical moment affected the decoration of this church, but others have also done so; see, e.g., Kühnel 1987: 137.

Text*Latin*¹

Rex Amalricus custos virtutis amicus largus honestatis comes hostis et impietatis/
 justicie cultor pietatis criminis ultor quintus regnabat et Grecis imperitabat/
 Emmanuelque dator largus pius imperitator presul vivebat hic ecclesiamque regebat/
 pontificis dignus Radulphus honore benignus cum manus his Effrem fertur fecisse
 suavem ...

*Greek*²

Ἐτελειώθη τὸ παρὸν ἔργον διὰ χειρὸς Ἐφραίμ μοναχοῦ ἱστοριογράφου καὶ μουσιάτορος/
 ἐπὶ τῆς βασιλείας Μανουήλ μεγάλου βασιλέως πορφυρογεννήτου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ/
 καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς ἡμέρας τοῦ μεγάλου ῥηγὸς Ἱεροσολύμων κυροῦ (Ἄμμορι)/
 καὶ τοῦ τῆς ἀγίας Βηθλεὲμ ἀγιωτάτου ἐπισκόπου κυροῦ Ραουήλ ἐν ἔτει ξχοζ´ ἰνδικτιῶνος
 β...

Translation*Latin*

King Amalric, guardian of virtue, generous friend, companion of honor, and impiety's
 foe,³

patron of justice [and] piety, avenger of wrong, was fifth on the throne. And over the
 Greeks ruled/⁴

Manuel as well, generous giver, pious ruler. Here was living [as] prelate and ruling [as]
 governor of the church/⁵

generous Ralph, worthy of the honor of the bishopric, when the hand of Ephraim, it is
 said, made for them the gracious ...⁶

Greek

The present work was finished by the hand of Ephraim the monk, painter and mosaicist,⁷
 in the reign of the great emperor Manuel Porphyrogennetos Komnenos/⁸

and in the days of the great king of Jerusalem, lord Amalric,⁹

and of the most holy bishop of holy Bethlehem, the lord Ralph, in the year 6677, second
 indiction ...¹⁰

Commentary

1. The Latin transcription is supplied by Vincent and Abel, who resolved discrepancies between the earliest textual records (of de Verone, de Rouchechouart, Quaresmius, and Ciampini) by attending not only to sense but also to the requirements of meter.¹¹ The original dedication was in majuscule, without word separation, and certainly contained abbreviations that its first transcribers unpacked without mention. What remains is as follows: [...]IS/[...]BAT/[...]BAT/[...]EM.

The English of the Latin text is based on Hamilton, who resolved certain translation difficulties. I have made small changes in order to provide a more literal translation.¹²

¹¹ Vincent and Abel 1914.

¹² Hamilton 1947: 57 (with adaptations).

2. The Greek here is based on Cutler, who discovered a twelfth-century manuscript that seems to include the full text of the Church of the Nativity's mosaic dedication on its flyleaf.¹³ It has been modified to harmonize with what remains of the inscription itself. The text of this flyleaf has been taken to resolve important questions related to the date and the abbreviation M_{λ}^x (for $\mu\nu\alpha\chi\omicron\upsilon$). As with the Latin text, the original dedication was in majuscule, without word separation, and full of abbreviations. With the help of a reconstruction in Harvey *et al.*,¹⁴ what remains can be established as follows (it has not been possible to retain contraction lines, which appear above the rho and alpha in ΕΦΡΑΪΜ and above the lambda and epsilon in ΒΗΘΛΕ'ΕΜ):

ΕΤΕΛΗΨΘΗΤΟΠΑΡΟΝΕΡΓΟΝΔΙΑΧ(ΕΙ)ΡΟΣΕΦΡΑΪΜ(ΟΝΑΧΟΥ)ΗC(ΤΟ)
 Ρ[. . .]/'ΕΠ'Ι(ΤΗ)CΒΑCΙΛΕΪΑCΜΑ[. . .]ΟΥ'ΗΛΜΕΓΑΛ(ΟΥ)ΒΑCΙΛ'Ε(Ψ)
 ΣΤΟΡΦΥΡΟΓΕΝ[. . .]/ΚΑΙΕΠ'ΙΤΑC[. . .]ΜΕΡΑC(ΤΟΥ)ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥΡΗΓ'ΟCΙΕΡΟCΟ-
 ΛΥΜ/ΚΑ'ΙΤΟΥ[. . .]ΑΓΙΑC ΒΗΘΛΕ'ΕΜΑΓΙ Ψ ΤΑ(ΤΟΥ)ΕΠΙCΚΟΠ(ΟΥ)[. . .]Π(ΟΥ)
 [..]

The English of the Greek text is from Cutler (1986–87: 179, with adaptations). Again, I have made small changes in order to provide a more literal translation.

3. “King Amalric” is Amalric I, king of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem from 1163 to 1174.
4. The use of “fifth” [quintus] here is accurate. Although Amalric was the sixth ruler of the Latin Kingdom, he was its fifth king. The first ruler, Godfrey of Bouillion, never took the title “king.”
5. “Manuel” is Manuel I Komnenos, emperor of the Byzantine Empire from 1143 to 1180. Attempts have been made to quantify the difference between Amalric as “amicus largus” and Manuel as “dator largus,” with varying results. Folda understands both rulers to be presented as the new program's major patrons, in contradistinction to Ralph who is simply “benignus” later,¹⁵ while Hunt understands Manuel to be its main patron.¹⁶
6. “Ralph” is the bishop of Bethlehem (d. 1174). Ephraim is not known. The ablative “honore” is coming off of “dignus,” which should be read together with the genitive “pontificis,” thus “worthy of the honor of the bishopric.” Translations of this line quite rightly take “benignus” to refer to Ralph, modifying his name with the adjective and thereby simplifying the reading. Dalton (in Harvey *et al.* 1910: 44) suggests that the strange “fertur fecisse” was used for reasons of meter. The Latin text is cut off at “suavem,” which is translated here as “gracious.” This single word is often transcribed “tu autem,” which accords with all of the earliest extant textual records. Vincent and Abel, the transcription authorities followed here, declare this reading metrically “unsustainable.”¹⁷ For those working with this version of the text, it is generally agreed that “suavem” modified something like “picturam.”

13 Cutler 1986–87: 179 (with adaptations).

14 Harvey *et al.* 1910, fig. 27.

15 Folda 1995: 350 and 571 n. 64.

16 Hunt 1991: 73–74.

17 Vincent and Abel 1914: 158.

7. For Ephraim, see n. 6 above. Later in the same article that published the transcription and translation of the Greek text, Cutler equates “ἱστοριογράφου” with “designer.”¹⁸ The sense of this word is indeed question worthy. Others have translated it more literally as “historiographer.”¹⁹ Cutler also points out that the coupling of “ἱστοριογράφου” with “μουσιάτορος” is without precedent.²⁰ The phrase “the present work has been finished by” is not found in any contemporary Byzantine contexts. It is understood to reflect western artistic conventions that the Franks had introduced in the area.²¹
8. For Manuel, see n. 4 above. The term “πορφυρογενήτου” literally means “born in purple,” and was an honorific imperial title that had been in use for centuries.
9. For Amalric, see n. 2 above. The term “ῥηγός” must be an onomatopoeic rendering of the Latin “rex.” In the text transcribed by Cutler, the author him- or herself seems to have placed parentheses around “Amalric.” In this part of the world, bilingual texts are not unprecedented. Extant examples reveal a tendency to abide by dedicatory expectations according to language, and so frustrate any anticipated equivalence.²² That said, it is worth noting that more lines are dedicated to Amalric in both Latin and Greek.
10. For Ralph, see line note 6 above. The year 6677 is an Anno Mundi date that is equivalent to 1169 CE.

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18 Cutler 1986–87: 183.

19 Tzaferis 1981: 900; Dalton in Harvey *et al.* 1910: 43.

20 Cutler 1986–87: 183.

21 Folda 1995: 351.

22 See Pringle 1982; Cutler 1986–87: 182.

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*A new edition and translation of the inscriptions was published by Erich Lamberz while this volume was in the final stages of publication. See: E. Lamberz, "Appendix. The Bilingual Inscription in the Bema and the Conciliar Inscriptions in the Nave," in *The Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem*, eds. B. and G. Kühnel (Regensburg, 2019), 145–65, esp. p. 149–51.

II.6.7 Unknown (1280)

Inscriptions in the Church of the Panagia, Moutoullas (Cyprus)

ANNEMARIE WEYL CARR

Ed.: I. Donor Inscription: S. K. Perdikes, *Ο ναός της Παναγίας στον Μουτουλλά* (Nicosia, 2009) 49; A. Papageorghiou, “Βυζαντινή επιγραφική,” 113; D. Mouriki, “The Wall Paintings of the Church of the Panagia at Moutoullas, Cyprus,” in *Byzanz und der Westen: Studien zur Kunst des europäischen Mittelalters*, ed. I Hutter (Vienna, 1984), 172; A. Papageorghiou, “Ἰδιάζουσα βυζαντινὰ τοιχογραφία τοῦ 13^{ου} αἰῶνος ἐν Κύπρῳ,” in *Πρακτικὰ τοῦ πρώτου διεθνοῦς κυπρολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου (Λευκωσία, 14–19 Ἀπριλίου 1969): Τόμος Β΄, Μεσαιωνικὸν τμήμα*, series ed. T. Papadopoulos, vol. ed. Venediktos Englezakes (Nicosia, 1972/73), 48–49; Stylianos and Stylianos, “Donors Dedicatory Inscriptions,” 58

II. Scroll of the Mother of God: *BEIŪ* 1, no. 230, 334 with German transl. and earlier bibliography; S.K. Perdikes, as above, 20; M. Djordjević and M. Marković, *Zograf* 28 (2000–01), 23; D. Mouriki, as above, 190, fig. LXXIV, 7

Monument/Artefact: Inscriptions in the church of Panagia, Moutoullas, Cyprus (figs. II.6.7a–b)

Other Translations:

I. Donor Inscription: Stylianos and Stylianos, *Painted Churches*, 324 (English); D. Mouriki, as above, 172 (English); Buckler and Buckler, “Dated Wall-Paintings,” 6, 57 (English)

II. Scroll of the Mother of God: Rhoby, *BEIŪ* 1, 334 (German)

Significance

As the only securely dated cycle of paintings in thirteenth-century Cyprus, Moutoullas is the peg on which scholars’ grasp of this complex period and its chronology hangs. Especially significant is the conjunction of local patrons with iconographic and stylistic features characteristic of the Christian art of the Syrian mainland, thus signaling the impact upon local taste of Cyprus’ incorporation into the cluster of Crusader states. The inscriptions, however, remain faithful to Cypriot tradition.

The Author

Unknown.



Fig. II.6.7a Moutoullas, Church of the Panagia: portrait and donor inscription of John Moutoullas and Eirene, bema, east wall, north side

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Text and Context

The tiny church of the Mother of God perches on a ledge above the village of Moutoullas in the Marathasa Valley on the north side of the Troodos mountains.¹ It was founded as a private chapel in 1280 by John of Moutoullas and his wife Eirene, who are portrayed together on the north wall of the bema accompanied by dedicatory inscriptions and holding between them a schematic model of the church. Their portrayal bearing a church model

¹ Perdikes 2009; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 323–30; Mouriki 1984: 171–213.



Fig. II.6.7b Moutoullas, Church of the Panagia: Mother of God Eleousa bearing dialog with her Son, naos, north bema pier
© A. W. Carr

evokes the long-ago mural of 1105/06 in Asinou, in which Nikephoros Ischyrios offered his church and his prayers to the Mother of God. The kinship serves, like their private sponsorship of the building, their choice of the Virgin as its patron, and their inclusion of both poetic and dedicatory inscriptions, to align their church with earlier elite dedications, above all Asinou and Lagoudera. How conscious and intended this alignment was emerges from the iconography of the mural program, which places *dodekaorton* scenes above a sanctoral cycle that culminates at the east end as it had at Lagoudera and probably before that at Asinou,² with a large image of the Mother of God at the east end of the

² On the likely imagery at Asinou in 1105/06 see Carr 2012a: 236–39, 247–50.

south wall and, flanking the bema entrance, the Mother of God Eleousa bearing the scroll with her dialog with her son, and the frontal Christ, here called Eleemon.³ The iconographic kinship with the earlier programs stands out despite the adjustments imposed by the building's novel architectural type: it is the earliest dated instance of the gabled, wooden-roofed church type that soon became widespread in the Troodos.⁴ Where the earlier churches had placed their *dodekaorton* scenes in the vaults, these had to run along the walls at Moutoullas, forming a narrative band at the top above the deeper register of saints on the lower walls.

What makes the continuity with earlier programs startling is its presentation in an unfamiliar, abstract style that is not readily recognized as elite. As Athanasios Papageorghiou and Doula Mouriki demonstrated in ground-breaking articles, the style – and significant features also of the iconography in the sanctoral cycle here – reflect the Crusader-era art of the East Christians in Syria, Palestine, and Egypt.⁵ Further study soon made it evident that the Marathasa Valley was a productive center of icon painting in this style, now known as the Marathasa style, and that it enjoyed extensive patronage.⁶ The murals at the Panagia church offer the only secure date associated with it. The style's success in Cyprus must have been associated with both the Frankish implantation on the island, and the influx of East Christian refugees that accompanied it. Marathasa was a royal fief, and attracted Frankish visitation with its ample water and good hunting. How local Greeks understood the style and its messages is not entirely clear. John and Eirene seem to have regarded it as compatible with the elite status to which they laid claim through their portrait with the church model, their evocation of the imagery of Asinou and Lagoudera, and their inclusion of at least one poetic inscription. But “elite” must also have shifted over the thirteenth century as Byzantium receded in the wake of 1191 and 1204, and royalty replaced empire.

The inscriptions at Moutoullas appear in what had by the thirteenth century become their standard places: with the donor portrait, and with the Mother of God. The placement of the donor portrait inside the bema, an area proscribed to women in Orthodox practice, is unusual, but has contemporary parallels in both Greece and Cyprus.⁷ Two inscriptions accompany it. One, in majuscule letters in a framed rectangle above them, records the building of the church at their expense and dates its completion to June 30 1280. John's name has been overwritten: as Athanasios Papageorghiou conjectured convincingly, he was initially recorded as from Gerakies, a village near Moutoullas, but an effort was made to change it to read Moutoullas.⁸ The inscription is purely documentary in content, though below it, in the space between the two heads, a prayer is appended.

3 Reproduced in color in Perdikes 2009: 20–22.

4 Papageorghiou 1975: 47–48.

5 Mouriki 1972/73: 205–13; Papageorghiou 1972/3.

6 See Carr 2012b: 65–86; Spanou 2009: 56–65; Gerasimou 2007: 208–31.

7 See Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 34–35 where a donor couple appear in apse of the church of St. Kyriaki in Marathos in the Mani of c.1300; Bacci 2014: 242–43, figs. 10, 41 for a donor family in the apse of the Carmelite church and a kneeling female donor in the apse conch of the Armenian church in Famagusta.

8 Papageorghiou 1972/73: 50–51.

Framing the inscription, as noted by Gerstel, gives it an iconic quality, allowing its significance to be grasped even without reading its words.⁹

The other inscription, a poetic one, is on the scroll of the Virgin Eleousa. The text is well known. It adopts the expanded, five-line version of the poem, seen for the first surviving time either here or in the roughly contemporary image of the Mother of God on the bema pier in St. Herakleidios, *katholikon* of the monastery of St. John Lampadistes in Kalopanagiotis. It appears only marginally later in the Olympiotissa church in Elasson, Thessaly, Greece, and in Sveti Nikita, Banjane (North Macedonia), however, and so is unlikely to have originated on Cyprus.¹⁰ Andreas Rhoby points out that the scansion of this version of the poem is imperfect, suggesting lower quality.¹¹

⁹ Gerstel, *Rural Lives*, 49.

¹⁰ *BEIÜ*, 1: p. 335; Djordjević and Marković 2000–01: 23–24.

¹¹ *BEIÜ* 1: p. 334.

Texts

I Inscription I: Donor Inscription

[Ἀνοικο]δομ[ήθη ὁ θεῖος καὶ πᾶν]σεπτος ναὸ[ς τῆς ὑπεραγίας] δεσποίνης ἡμ[ῶν Θεοτόκου
διὰ] συνδρομῆς καὶ πολ[λοῦ] πόθου Ἰω(άννου) τοῦ Γερακούλλα καὶ τῆς συνβίου αὐτοῦ
Εἰρήνης μηνί Ἰουλίῳ εἰς τ(ά) Λ ἔτους ,υψπη´ .

δέ(ησις) τοῦ δούλου τοῦ Θε(εο)ῦ Ἰω(άννου) τοῦ Μουτου(λ)ᾶ τοῦ κτίτωρος καὶ τῆ(ς)
συμβίου αὐτοῦ Εἰρήνης.

II Inscription II: Dialogue of Mary and Her Son

Δέξαι δέησιν τῆς σῆς μητρός σου, Λόγε

Τί, μητερ αἰτεῖς; Τῶν βροτῶν σωτηρίαν.

Παρῶργισάν μ[ε]. Συμπάθησον, υἱ]έ μου.

[Ἄλλ' οὐ]κ ἐπιστρέφουσι. Καὶ σῶσον χάριν.

5 Ἔξουσιν [λύτρον]. Εὐχαριστῶ <σοι>, Λόγε.

Translation

I Inscription I: Donor Inscription¹

This divine and all-holy church of Our All-holy Lady the Theotokos was rebuilt through the support and great desire of John of Gerakoullas and his wife, Eirene. In the month of June, 30, in the year 6788.²

Intercession of the servant of God, John of Moutoullas, the founder [of the church] and of his wife, Eirene.

II Inscription II: Dialogue of Mary and Her Son³

Receive the prayer of your mother, O Word.

What, mother, do you ask? Salvation of mortals.

They anger me. Have sympathy, my son.

But they do not repent. And save them in grace.

5 They will be redeemed. I thank you, O Word.

Commentary

1. The dedicatory inscription abandons the interactive, petitionary character of the earlier, self-consciously refined Komnenian examples, and remains baldly documentary.¹² Nothing makes it into a performative interchange between donor and recipient, and the depicted donors, too, are static. In word and stance, they feel far from the aristocratic ease with courtly performance. Only secondarily is a prayer added. The conspicuously larger scale of its last words, “and his wife, Eirene,” is interesting,

¹² In color in Perdikes 2009: 48, 50 (unnumbered images); Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, fig. 192 (only the prayer); Hein *et al.* 1996, fig. 94.

suggesting Eirene's prominence in funding the church or completing it after John's death.¹³

2. 1280 CE.
3. Though abandoned here in the donor portrait, the dialogic loquacity that Cypriot painters had inherited from Komnenian art remains vivid in the cycle's sacred scenes: the words of Gabriel and Mary appear in the Annunciation, an angel at the Nativity hushes the piping shepherd, Jesus summons Lazarus from the grave,¹⁴ and the Virgin at the bema opening speaks her intercessory dialog with Christ.¹⁵ The great popularity of the latter figure reflects this enthusiasm for seeing the images speak, but it responds to something larger, for here Mary's will dominates that of her Son, indicative of her growing power in devotional practice.

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13 On the considerable importance of women, especially widows, as sponsors of icons, murals, and churches, see Gerstel, *Rural Lives*, 101.

14 Perdikes 2009: 16–17, 23–24, 26–27.

15 In color in Perdikes 2009: 20 (unnumbered image); Hein et al. 1996, fig. 95.

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Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*.

Stylianou and Stylianou “Donors and Dedicatory Inscriptions.”

II.6.8 Unknown (first third of the twelfth century)

Inscriptions from Trikomo

Church of the Panagia Theotokos

ANNEMARIE WEYL CARR

The translation of the dedicatory inscriptions reprints the previous translation by Nancy Patterson Ševčenko with the kind permission of the author

Ed.: I. Dedicatory Inscription: *BEIŮ* 1, no. 260, 378, with German transl. and list of previous editions and translations; see also Papageorghiou *Christian Art*, 431; *idem*, “Βυζαντινή ἐπιγραφική,” 108

II. Apse Inscription: *BEIŮ* 1, 377, with a list with previous editions and translations in n. 1589

III. Dome Inscription: *BEIŮ* 1, no. 259, 376–77, with German transl. and list of previous editions and translations); see also Papageorghiou, 1999: 150

Monument/Artefact: Inscriptions in the church of the Panagia, Trikomo, Cyprus. Dedicatory and Apse inscriptions in fig. II.6.8a; Dome Inscription in fig. II.6.8b



Fig. II.6.8a Trikomo, Church of the Panagia: Mother of God and inscriptions, apse conch

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Fig. II.6.8b Trikomo, Church of the Panagia: Christ with Deesis and Angels, dome
© A. W. Carr

Other Translations: I. Dedicatory Inscription: N. P. Ševčenko, “The Metrical Inscriptions in the Murals of the Panagia Phorbiotissa,” in *Asinou Across Time*, 77; H. Maguire, “*Abaton and Oikonomia: St. Neophytos and the Iconography of the Presentation of the Virgin*,” in Ševčenko and Moss 1999: 104 (English); A. W. Carr and L. Morrocco, *A Byzantine Masterpiece Recovered: The Thirteenth-Century Murals of Lysi, Cyprus* (Austin, Tex., 1991), 47 (paraphrase in English)

II. Apse Inscription: A. W. Carr and L. Morrocco, as above, 47 (English)

III. Dome Inscription: H. Maguire, as above, 104 (English); Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 488 (paraphrase in English)

Significance

The artistic kinship of Trikomo’s frescoes to those of 1105/06 at Asinou serves to date the church to the early twelfth century, and their inclusion of poetic inscriptions reflects the same Komnenian aesthetic. In contrast to Asinou, however, which was an elite, private foundation, Trikomo may have been a village church, a contrast perhaps seen in its iconographic program, which offers a far more peremptory contrast between the intercessory grace of the Mother of God and the judgmental fierceness of her Son.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

The Panagia Theotokos in Trikomo was, and had long functioned as, the main church of its village when the Turkish invasion of 1974 abruptly suspended its role as a Christian house of worship.¹ Details of its foundation are scant. The similarity of its paintings to those of 1105/06 at Asinou shows that the church must have been built quite early in the twelfth century, most probably within its first quarter.² It was built as a small, domed hall church, a type seen often in Komnenian Cyprus. In scale, it resembles Asinou; it was frescoed by a painter or team closely akin to the Asinou Master;³ and it bears in its apse a metrical invocation identical to the one painted in Asinou's apse conch. These kinships might seem to imply its creation for a similar purpose, as the family church of a local archon or as the *katholikon* of a small monastery. But the apse inscription – though in the first person – was left without the founder's name expected in a family chapel, and no evidence of a monastery on the site, archaeological or documentary, has ever emerged. Thus, it may have been a village church from the beginning.⁴ As such, it would significantly broaden the social range of the audience for the new Komnenian style reaching Cyprus in the years around 1100. Most early twelfth-century churches had been elite foundations: either monastic *katholika* or aristocratic family churches.

Trikomo's murals are noted for their rich iconography of the Mother of God, and for the fierce precocity of its dome imagery. Metrical inscriptions enhance both. The dedicatory inscription at the base of the apse conch has been commented on already for its close kinship to one in the apse conch at Asinou,⁵ and the suggestion made – given the attribution of Trikomo to the Asinou Master's shop – that the text may have been supplied not by the patron, but by the painter. Its final syllables, missing in both monuments, have been variously completed: with τῆς κολάσεως by Athanasios Papageorghiou; with τοῦ βίου βλάβης by Andreas Rhoby.⁶ In contrast to Asinou, where the original apse conch no longer survives, the conch at Trikomo retains its original image, allowing epigram and image to be read together.⁷ The apse displays the full-length, frontal, orant figure of the Mother of God with a medallion bust of Christ Emmanuel on her breast. Her posture of prayer, facing toward both the congregation and the figure of Christ in the dome above it,

1 On the church see Papageorghiou, *Christian Art*, 429–40; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 486–91; Carr and Morrocco 1991: 61 n. 63; Winfield 1972: 285–91; Papageorghiou, *Masterpieces*, 23.

2 Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 486.

3 Winfield 1972: 285–91.

4 Papacostas 1999: 1, 81–82.

5 See A.W. Carr, I.2.6 in this volume.

6 See Papageorghiou, “Βυζαντινή” ἐπιγραφική, 108; *BEIÜ* 1: no. 260 (p. 378).

7 See color image in Hein *et al.* 1996, fig. 168; black-and-white in Carr and Morrocco 1991, figs. 15; 4; Papageorghiou, *Masterpieces*, pl. XXII.

invites viewers to align her figure with the poem's words, and to read it as a visualization of their plea for intercession in the face of divine judgment. It is likely that the same figure accompanied the poem at Asinou.⁸ As will emerge in the discussion of the epigram in Trikomo's dome, the figure's bond with intercession in the face of judgment is particularly compelling there.

There is, however, a second poetic epigram associated with the Virgin in the apse at Trikomo. This is within the conch itself, flanking her figure. It engages a different theme of Mariolatry: the imponderable mystery of her pregnancy with God. The epigram is awkward, errantly spelled, and not paralleled elsewhere, though Mary is addressed in a number of hymns as *φῶς ἡ τεκοῦσα*.⁹ The couplet's emphasis is less on the fact of Mary as the bearer of God than on the sheer depth of its wonder, unfathomable even to her. This message is so different in tone and content from the dedicatory inscription that it poses significant questions about the meaning given to the image. A couplet later added to the image at Asinou may be informative about the divergent epigrams at Trikomo. That couplet referred to Christ as a judge and so linked the image to the narthex program's Last Judgment. But its dominant subject is his mother and her bearing him, which it treats in terms of imponderability. "How" is its first and strongest word: "O how is He who holds together all judgments held as a babe in a virgin's arms?" As at Trikomo, the message of the figure lay in some fundamental way in its sheer, imponderable mystery.

The epigram at Trikomo that has attracted the most attention is that in the dome. With the Pantokrator, the Hetoimasia bearing the Instruments of the Passion and flanked by the Mother of God and John Prodromos, and the surging host of angels, Trikomo's dome introduces a combination of elements that occurs only in Cyprus.¹⁰ Dome programs throughout the Empire evolved in the twelfth century, often incorporating elements seen at Trikomo,¹¹ but the juxtaposition here of Prepared Throne, Deesis, and bent, imploring angels has an intercessional insistence that is distinctive and eschatological in force, lending a dimension of divine judgment to the Pantokrator at the center. He is a figure of raw power. This is enunciated explicitly in the inscription surrounding him. It is a statement of truly exceptional ferocity, and though the iconography of the dome would recur often over the centuries, the inscription was, to my knowledge, never re-used.

⁸ See A. W. Carr, I.2.6 in this volume.

⁹ See Follieri 1966: 29–30.

¹⁰ See color reproductions of the dome in Papageorgiou 1999, pl. 7; Hein *et al.* 1996, fig. 170; Carr and Morrocco 1991, pl. 15; and in black and white in Papamastorakis 2001: 76; Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, fig. 294; Gkioles 1990, fig. 22; Velmans 1984, fig. 6, 7; Hadermann-Misguich 1972, fig. 4.

¹¹ See Carr and Morrocco 1991: 47–54; Gkioles 1990: 94–96; Velmans 1984: 137–62; Grigoriadou 1972: 38–41; Hadermann-Misguich 1972: 47–48.

Texts

I. Dedicatory Inscription

Ἦ παντάνασσα καὶ πάντων ὑπερτέρα,
 Δέσποινα ἀγνή καὶ μήτηρ τοῦ Κυρίου,
 ἴδε τὸν πόθον τῆς ταλαίνης ψυχῆς μου
 καὶ γενοῦ μοι μεσῆτις ἐν ὥρᾳ δίκης
 5 ὅπως ἐκφύγω μέρος τ ...

II. Apse Inscription

Χαῖρε ἢ τεκοῦσα τὸ φῶς καὶ μὴ γνοῦσα τὸ πῶς.

III. Dome Inscription

Ὁ παντεπόπτῆς ἐξ ἀπόπτου τοῦ τόπου
 τοὺς εἰσιόντας πάντας ἐνθάδε βλέπει,
 ψυχὰς ἐρευνᾷ καὶ κίνησιν καρδίας·
 βροτοί, πτοεῖσθε [τὸν] κριτ[ὴν τὸν] τῆς δίκ[ης].

Translations

I. Dedicatory Inscription¹

O Pantanassa, and all-surpassing
 chaste lady and mother of the Lord,
 see the desire of my miserable soul
 and become my intercessor in the hour of judgment
 that I may be spared the lot of ...
 5

II. Apse Inscription²

Hail, bearer of light, and not knowing how.

III. Dome Inscription

He who oversees all things from the far place
 sees all who enter here;
 he examines their souls and the motions of their hearts.
 Mortals, be terrified of the Judge of the Judgment.

Commentary

1. The inscription's close kinship with one at Asinou suggests that it came with the painters, who may not have been dependent on the patron to supply inscriptions, but may have had their own repertoire. Equally important is the opportunity it offers of seeing it in conjunction with an image – plausibly the same as at Asinou. It shows us how images could be associable with but far from exhausted by the content of the inscriptions accompanying them; transl. Ševčenko 2012: 77, re-used with kind permission.
2. If clumsy, the couplet is of forceful brevity. By asking rather than answering the question of how the Virgin's pregnancy with God can be comprehended, it requires

interpreters to go beyond equating the image it accompanies with either the dedicatory inscription alone, or a specific theological doctrine, and instead to leave space for mystery in their reading.

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II.6.9 Unknown (1317 CE)

Inscriptions from Dali: Church of St. Demetrianos Andridiotes

ANNEMARIE WEYL CARR

Ed.: I. Dedicatory Inscription: Papageorghiou, “Βυζαντινὴ ἐπιγραφικὴ,” 114; Stylianou and Stylianou, “Donors and Dedicatory Inscriptions,” 103; Buckler and Buckler, “Dated Wall-Paintings,” 57–58

II. Petitionary Poem: *BEIÜ* 1: no. 220, 316–17 with list of earlier editions and translations; A. Papageorghiou, as above, 114; A. Stylianou and J. A. Stylianou, as above, 104; W. H. Buckler and G. Buckler, as above, 57–58

Monument/Artefact: Inscriptions in the church of St. Demetrianos Andridiotes, Dali, Cyprus (fig. II.6.9)

Other Translations: I. Dedicatory Inscription: Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 425; A. Stylianou and J. A. Stylianou, as above, 103; W. H. Buckler and G. Buckler, as above, 57–58 (English)

II. Petitionary Poem: Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 425; Stylianou and Stylianou, “Donors and Dedicatory Inscriptions,” 104; W. H. Buckler and G. Buckler, as above, 57–58 (English). *BEIÜ* 1: no. 220, 316–17 (German)

Significance

The addition of a metrical poem of petition to the donor’s portrait is notable.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

The church of St. Demetrianos Andridiotes is in the Mesaoria, just outside the village of Dali and west of the ancient site of Idalion. It is an impeccable dome hall church, well built with good stone and beautiful proportions. It is dedicated, as Andreas Rhoby emphasizes, not to the ninth-century bishop of that name, but to a Cypriot soldier martyr known as Demetrianos Andridiotes.¹ The church’s interior preserves remnants of several fresco campaigns, of which the best known occupies the western wall. Over the western door, between scenes from the Passion, is a donor portrait with three accompanying

¹ *BEIÜ* 1: 315; on the church see Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, 425–27.



Fig. II.6.9 Dali, St. Demetrios Andridiotis: portrait and donor inscription of Michael Katzouroubes and his wife, naos, west wall
© A. W. Carr

inscriptions recording the patronage and the ardent piety of one Michael Katzouroubes, his wife and children, in the year 1317.² Identifying Michael as the restorer of the building, they leave ambivalent his role in actually building the church, which may have pre-dated his intervention in 1317. Nonetheless, texts and image together conjure precisely the kind of discriminating donor that the building suggests, with a keen awareness of cultural tradition.

² Reproduced in color in Stylianou and Stylianou, *Painted Churches*, fig. 256; Papanikolaou-Bakirtze and Iakovou 1997: 99. On St. Demetrios Andridiotis, see Perdiki 2016, vol. 1: 414–17.

His wife behind him, Michael stands at the center of the portrait, presenting his church to Christ, who bends from an arc of heaven to receive it. As in the somewhat earlier image of John and Eirene in the Panagia church in Moutoullas, the motif of the offered church evokes Nikephoros Ischyrios' portrait of 1105/06 at Asinou.³ But it does so more clearly and eloquently here, the parallel underscored by the expectant profile of the offering donor, and his placement over the door.⁴ As in Moutoullas, the portrait is accompanied by a separately framed, non-metrical statement of patronage in majuscule letters – in this case in the lintel of the door below – and by an intercessory invocation within the portrait itself,⁵ which reads: Δέ(ησις) τοῦ δούλου τοῦ Θε(εο)ῦ Μιχ(αήλ) τοῦ Κατζουρούμπου κ(αί) τῆς συμβίου καὶ τῶν τ(έ)κνων αὐτοῦ, ἀμήν.⁶

Contrasting with Moutoullas, however, and distinguishing Michael among other donors of the Lusignan era, is the inclusion of a passionate, metrical plea for salvation below the invocation. That literate Greeks of the Lusignan era were discriminating readers and collectors of epigrams is evidenced by the examples that punctuate the pages of Vat. Palat. Gr. 367, compiled in Nicosia by Michael's close contemporary, the Taboullarios Constantine Anagnostes.⁷ In art, however, only Michael can still be seen to have emulated his aristocratic twelfth-century forebears and introduced into his portrait a metrical poem of petition. The poem was surely composed for this purpose, drawing for help on a hymn to the Mother of God from which its final three lines are derived.⁸

3 See A. W. Carr on Asinou, I.2.6 in this volume and on Moutoullas, II.6.7 in this volume.

4 Michael's murals at Dali deserve fuller study. The careful interplay of the portrait with the images around it amplifies their eloquence. Above the portrait is the Crucifixion; the placement of Michael's head directly beneath Adam's skull in Golgotha, as if *in loco Adam*, cannot be happenstance; nor can the talismanic force of the Mandylion at his feet. Throughout, he emerges as a discriminating patron.

5 See A. W. Carr on Moutoullas, II.6.7 in this volume.

6 *BEIÜ* 1: 315; Papageorghiou, "Βυζαντινὴ ἐπιγραφικὴ," 113; Stylianos and Stylianos, "Donors Dedicatory Inscriptions," 104.

7 Beihammer 2007: 43–52.

8 *BEIÜ* 1: 315.

Text*I. Dedicatory Inscription*

Ἐνεκαινίσθη καὶ ἀνηστορήθη ὁ πάνσεπτος ναὸς τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς (ἡμῶν)
 Δημητριάνου τοῦ Ἀνδριδιότου διὰ συνδρομῆς καὶ πολλοῦ πόθου Μιχαήλ τοῦ
 Κατζουρούμπου καὶ τῆς συμβίου καὶ τῶν τέκνων αὐτοῦ, ἀμήν · ἔτους ,ςθκε΄
 ἰνδικτιῶνος ...

II. Petitionary Poem

Οἰκτρὰν δέησιν δέχου, Θεέ μου,
 κάμοί τοῦ ἀναξίου δούλου σου Μιχαήλ
 φλόγα παθῶν [μου τῆς] καρδίας
 ἐναπόβεσον τῇ δρόσῳ σου, Θεέ μου,
 5 καὶ πυρὸς φλογεροῦ ἑξάρπασόν με
 καὶ αἰωνίου λύτ[ρωσον] κατακρίσεως.¹

Translation*I. Dedicatory Inscription*²

The most venerable church of our father among the saints Demetrianos Andridiotes was renovated and painted through the donation and great desire of Michael son of Katzouroubes and of his wife and of his children, amen, in the year 6825 (= 1317 CE), indiction ...

*II. Petitionary Poem*³

Receive the piteous prayer, O my God,
 of your unworthy servant, Michael.
 The flames of my heart's suffering,
 quench them with your dew, O my God,
 and snatch me from the flaming fire
 and preserve me from eternal condemnation.

Commentary

1. Interpolations with guidance from *BEIÜ* 1: 316.
2. The use of dual inscriptions, one asserting patronage, unadorned by pious petition, and the other within a portrait invoking divine aid, had been seen in aristocratic foundations ever since Asinou. In the Lusignan period, however, the poetic component became rare, and the statement of patronage, unaccompanied by petitionary prayer, was framed. As Gerstel notes, the frame gives it an iconic quality, allowing its significance to be grasped even without reading its words.⁹

⁹ Gerstel, *Rural Lives*, 49.

3. The interplay of dedicatory and petitionary inscriptions shifted over time, and Michael Katzouroubes' inclusion of a poetic petition stands out in the Lusignan period. Equally notable is his distinction between donation and intercessory plea. Where art patronage had tended to emerge in Komnenian inscriptions as a polite but calculated gift exchange, the donation securing benefaction, the poem here is pure petition, set off firmly from the act of patronage, which is recorded in an inscription physically distanced from the portrait by the intervention of an imposing image of the Mandylion.
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II.6.10 Unknown (1270/71)

Building Inscription from the Church of St. Nicholas, Manastir, North Macedonia

IDA TOTH

Ed.: *Natpisi istorijske sadržine u zidnom slikarstvu/Inscriptiones historicae in picturis muralibus*, Vol. I: *Saeculorum XII–XIII*, (Belgrade, 2015), 59–60 (earlier editions: F. Barišić, 1964, “Dva grčka natpisa iz Manastira i Struge”, *ZRVI* 8.2, 13–27; H. Melovski, “Natpisot od crkvata Sv. Nikola, c. Manastir, Mariovo,” *Natpisi i zapisi od vizantisko i postvizantisko vreme = Miscellanea byzantino-macedonica* 2 (Skopje, 2009), 37–61)

Monument/Artefact: Inscription in the Church of St. Nicholas in the village of Manastir, Mariovo District (North Macedonia). Details of the inscription in fig. II.6.10; full drawing by Nikola Dudić in B. Miljković, I. Špadijer, G. Subotić, and I. Toth, *Natpisi istorijske sadržine u zidnom slikarstvu/Inscriptiones historicae in picturis muralibus*, vol. I, *Saeculorum XII–XIII* (Belgrade, 2015), 60–61

Translation: B. Miljković, I. Špadijer, G. Subotić, and I. Toth, as above, 61–62 (earlier transl.: F. Barišić, “Dva grčka natpisa iz Manastira i Struge”, *ZRVI* 8.2 (1964), 13–27) (both in Serbo-Croat)

Significance

This painted epigraph is one of the longest surviving donor inscriptions. It records several successive stages in the history of the church of St. Nicholas, a monastic *katholikon*, founded in 1094/5 by the *protostrator* Alexios, a relative (θεῖος) of the emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118). The text makes reference to the foundation charter, which may also have been inscribed in the church. It states that the derelict state of the original structure motivated the second patron, Ioannikios (monastic name Akakios), to re-erect the building in 1265/6, and to have it decorated in 1270/71. The painter, who accomplished this task, is commemorated in the inscription as John, a deacon and ἐπί τῶν κρήσεων of the Archbishopric of Ohrid (modern North Macedonia).



Fig. II.6.10a Detail of the drawing by Nikola Dudić, taken from B. Miljković, I. Špadijer, G. Subotić, and I. Toth, *Natpisi istorijske sadržine u zidnom slikarstvu/ Inscriptiones historicae in picturis muralibus*, vol. I: *Saeculorum XII–XIII* (Belgrade 2015), 60

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

St. Nicholas is a monumental tri-aisled, timber-roofed basilica, most probably built to serve as a monastic *katholikon*.¹ Some of the church's history is recorded in the donor inscription, which runs more than 20 meters in length across the southern and northern walls in the central nave. Set high above the eye level, it separates two registers of the iconographic programme. Some sections of the inscription are damaged, some other are entirely illegible. Moreover, the present state of preservation does not allow us to establish whether the writing also extended over the western wall and, if it did, what it might have said. The text as it stands is rendered in a single line, in dark lettering against a white background. It employs a combination of oval and square ornamental majuscule, with recurrent elements of cursive script. Although the space for the inscription is carefully outlined and delineated in red paint, individual letters differ in shape (for example, there are five distinct types of alpha; peculiarly, almost every iota is marked by the sign of dieresis) and they conspicuously vary in size. This paleographic diversity is typical of the inscription as a whole, but is perhaps most striking in the opening section, which may have been copied from an older document or even from an earlier inscription that could have been damaged when the original structure fell to ruin. Overall, numerous ligatures, abbreviations, contractions, suspensions, somewhat haphazard diacritics and multiple punctuation marks all create an intricate decorative effect, but they also leave an impression that the legibility of the text was not of primary concern. Moreover, the relatively small size of lettering, the poor space management, and the lack of any distinguishing features that may guide readers through the text suggest that the content would have been difficult to work out even for the more literate among viewers. The surrounding iconography provides clues to understanding the textual content: the *deesis* composition in the northern nave both depicts and describes the second *ktetor* of the church, Akakios,² while the section of the inscription referring to Michael VIII Palaiologos (r.1261–82) as a New Constantine receives additional emphasis by its proximity to the fresco paintings of the Archangel Michael, the heavenly protector of the Byzantine emperor,³ and of St. Nicholas, the patron-saint of the church.

The simple, linear narrative of the inscription stands in stark contrast to its elaborate visual features. In spite of the fragmentary state of preservation, and some peculiar phrasing, it is clear that the narrative follows a chronological sequence of events in the history

1 Koco and Miljković-Pepok 1957; Koco and Miljković-Pepok 1958: 5–6, 8–27, 29, 50–51, 98–101, ills. 9–10a, 14–16, 18, 19a, 37, 51–53, 56–57, 58, pl. I, III–IV.

2 See the Commentary, n. 4.

3 See the Commentary, n. 9.

of the church. In terms of content, the inscription consists of two distinct sections: the first recounts the foundation of the church and, possibly, of a monastery, in 1095; the second describes the derelict condition of the church in the 1260s, when it was completely re-built and redecorated through the efforts of the abbot and his monastic community. These sections are marked as I and II in the Greek text and translation of the inscription below.



Fig. II.6.10b Building Inscription from the Church of St. Nicholas, Manastir: south wall. © Sašo Cvetkovski

Text

I

+ ἐν ἔτει ,σγγ´ ἐπὶ τῆς βασιλ(εῖ)ας τοῦ εὐσεβεστάτ(ου) βασιλέως καὶ αὐτοκράτωρ[ος] Ῥωμαίων κυρ(οῦ) Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κομ[νηνοῦ]. διελθὼν ἐν τόδῃ τόπ(ον) ὁ περιπώθητο(ς) θεῖο(ς) τῆς βασ(ι)λ(εῖ)ας αὐτ(ῆ)ς, κυρ(ὸ)ς Ἀλέξιος ὁ πρωτ(ο)στράτ(ω)ρ κ(αί) ἀρεστ(ὸ)ς τὸν τόπον ἀνήγυρε ναὸν ἐκ βάρων τοῦ ἐν ἀγίοις π(ατ)ρὸς ἡμ(ῶν) ἀρχ(ι)εράρχου καὶ θαυματουργ(οῦ) Νικολ(άου) [---] καὶ τιμῆσεως αὐτῶ διὰ χρυσοβού[λλου] κτήμ(ατα) οἶκα προκυρῶσ(ε) καθ(ῶ)ς τὸ βρέβαιων παραδηλῶσειν.

II

ὁ ναὸς γὰρ ἦν σμικρῶτ(α)τ(ος), σαθ(ρὸς), ῥακοθ(εῖ)ς δὲ καὶ διατετρω[μένος] ἀρ(ρ)αγῆς καὶ μὴ φ(έ)ρων ὄρᾶν τὴν τοῦ ναοῦ σβέσιν ὁ πανοσιώτ(τατος) καθηγ[οῦ]μ(ενος) τῆς μονῆς ὁ κύρ(ὸ)ς Ἰωαν(ν)ίκιο(ς), ὁ καὶ διὰ τοῦ ἀγίου σχίματο(ς) ἐπιωνο[μασθεῖς] Ἀκάκιος καὶ χωρέ[σας] ὑπ(έρ) χρη(μά)των ἀν(α)χωρ(εῖ) τοῦτον θεῖαν εὐσ(εβ)ῆς ἐπιχωρεῖν καὶ ἐν ὑπηρεσί[α] ἄγειν ὁ καὶ πρ[ο]καλ[έ]σα[ς] τοὺς ἐν Χρ[ιστ]ῶ ἀδε[λφούς] αὐτοῦ [---] ἅμα καὶ εὐθ[ύς] χαλάσ(ας) τὴν ἐκ(κ)λησίαν ἀνήγυρεν ἐκ βάρων τὸν πάνσεπτον ναὸν τοῦ[τον] καὶ οραῖσ(ας) καὶ καλεῖ ἐν αὐ[τοῖς] τὸν ἐν χρωματουργίμασιν πικυλοτρόπ(οις) καὶ ἐν βαθεῖ γνόμ(ονας) χεῖρας ταπεινότ(α)τ(ος?) Ἰω(άννης?) διάκον(ος?) καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν κρίσεων τ[ῆς] ἀγιωτ(ά)τ(ης) ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς, καὶ [ἐν ἔτει ἑξακισχιλιοστῶ] καὶ ἐπτακισιοστῶ τε ο δ', ἰν(δικτιῶνος) θ', ἀνιστορήθει δὲ ἐν ἔτει ,σψοθ', ἰν(δικτιῶνος) ιδ', [ἐπὶ τῆς βασιλ]εῖας τοῦ εὐσεβεστάτου μεγ(ά)λ(ου) βασιλ(έως) καὶ αὐτοκράτωρος Ῥωμαίων Δοῦκα Ἀγγέλου Κομνηνοῦ Μιχαῆλ τοῦ Παλαιολόγ(ου) καὶ Νέου Κωνσταντίνου.

Translation*

I

In the year 6603, in the reign of the most pious emperor and *autokrator* of the Romans Lord Alexios Komnenos, the emperor's most affectionate θεῖος, the protostrator lord Alexios,¹ having arrived in this place and finding it to his satisfaction, built from foundations² a church [dedicated to] our Holy Father, Hierarch and Wonder-Worker St. Nicholas [---] and, according to the custom, confirmed his donation with a *chrysoboull*, as is clearly stated in the *breviary*.³

II

The church was very small, unsound, dilapidated, and crumbling. Unable to bear the sight of the ruined church, the most venerable abbot of the monastery, lord Ioannikios, in his holy *schema* named Akakios,⁴ gathered funds and carried out his pious deed, and having summoned his brethren in Christ⁵ [...] as soon as he demolished [the old structure], he built anew the church, this most sacred of shrines; he [then] invited John, the humble deacon and ἐπὶ τῶν κρίσεων of the holy [Arch]bishopric [of Ohrid]⁶ to use his skills and decorate [the building] with his intricate and colorful painting. [The church was rebuilt] in the year six thousand seven hundred seventy-four, in the ninth indiction;⁷ it was decorated 6779, in the fourteenth indiction,⁸ during the reign of the most pious Emperor and *Autokrator* of the Romans, our great Michael Doukas Angelos Komnenos Palaiologos and New Constantine.⁹

Commentary

- * The Greek text is presented in a diplomatic edition. Due to the large number of abbreviations and the density of the text *in situ*, the grammar and precise wording of the original are difficult to reconstruct. The translation is not entirely consistent with the edition: wherever possible, it provides a reader-friendly rendering *ad sensum*.
1. In the year 6603 = 1094/5. The reference to the first *ktetor* of St. Nicholas, the *protostrator* lord Alexios, a θεῖος of the emperor Alexios Komnenos seem to be a prosopographical hapax: this *protostrator* Alexios cannot be securely identified as any known member of the Komnenian imperial family.⁴
 2. ἐκ βάρων, “from its foundations,” is a set phrase commonly found in donor inscriptions.
 3. Reference to the foundation documents: a *chrysoboull* (imperial charter) and *breviary* (an itemized list of monastic property). Even though these two documents no longer survive, the south façade of St. Nicholas preserves faint traces of another imperial charter, issued by Andronikos II Palaiologos, whose portrait may also have been part of the display.⁵
 4. The second *ktetor* of the church, Akakios, is attested in another inscription, found in the northern nave of the church: [+ Δέησις τοῦ δούλ]ου τοῦ θ(ε)οῦ Ἀκακίου ἱερο(μον)άχ(ου) κ(αί) καθηγουμ(έ)ου ½ [...]ορευτος. καὶ δευτέρου κτήτωρ[ος]. (“Supplication of the servant of God Akakios, the *hieromonachos* and *hegoumenos* [...] and of the second patron”). This inscription is accompanied by the donor portrait of Akakios, who is represented holding the model of the church, as he is being led into the presence of Christ by the patron saint of the church, St. Nicholas.⁶
 5. “His brethren in Christ,” i.e. “his fellow monks.”
 6. As well as being a deacon and ἐπι τῶν κρίσεων of the Archbishopric of Ohrid, John was an accomplished painter, and perhaps also the head of a workshop.⁷
 7. 1265/66.
 8. 1270/71.
 9. Michael VIII Palaiologos was frequently referred to as a New Constantine.⁸ Moreover, in his *Typikon* for the Monastery of the Archangel Michael on Mount Auxentios near Chalcedon, Michael VIII calls the Archangel Michael his vigilant guardian, who has led him to victory over both domestic and foreign enemies.⁹

4 It has been suggested that the *protostrator* Alexios was one of Alexios I's maternal uncles (Miljković *et al.* 2015: 63–64) or a nephew of Alexios I (Kostovska and Popovska 2015: 139–40); neither of these suggestions can be confirmed.

5 Miljković *et al.* 2015: 76–78.

6 Miljković *et al.* 2015: 64.

7 On stylistic and palaeographical grounds, some scholars have suggested that John is the painter of the icon of St. George from Struga, and of the text inscribed on the reverse: Barišić 1964: 17–19; Kostovska and Popovska 2015: 141–42; this connection, however, cannot be fully verified: Kalopissi-Verti 1997: 148; Miljković *et al.* 2015: 109.

8 Macrides 1980: 22–24; Talbot 1993; Angelov 2007: 42–47.

9 Michael VIII Palaiologos, *Typikon*: 1215–16; for further textual and material evidence of this association see Talbot 1993: 258–60; Maguire 1997: 254–55.

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II.6.11 Sava of Serbia (1208/09)

The Ktitor's Inscription in The Church of the Holy Virgin, Studenica, Serbia

IRENA ŠPADIJER

Ed.: *Natpisi istorijske sadržine u zidnom slikarstvu/ Inscriptiones historicae in picturis muralibus*, Vol. I: *Saeculorum XII–XIII* (Belgrade, 2015), 36; other editions: S. Radojčić, *Majstori starog srpskog slikarstva* (Belgrade, 1955), 7–8; L. Mirković, “Die Ikonen der griechischen Maler in Jugoslawien und in den serbischen Kirchen ausserhalb Jugoslawiens,” *Πεπραγμένα τοῦ ΙΧ διεθνoῦς βυζαντινολογικοῦ συνεδρίου*, vol. 1 (Athens, 1955), 305; S. Mandić, “Otkrivanje i konzervacija fresaka u Studenici,” *Saopštenja* 1 (1956), 39; S. Mandić, *Setite se Save grešnog, Drevnik* (Belgrade, 1975), 81–88; V. Djurić and A. Tsitouridou, “Namentragende Inschriften auf Fresken und Mosaiken auf der Balkanhalbinsel vom 7. bis zum 13. Jahrhundert,” *Glossar zur frūmittelalterlichen Geschichte im östlichen Europa, Beiheft Nr. 4* (Stuttgart, 1986), 8–10 nos. 8, 9; L. Maksimović, “L'idéologie du souverain dans l'Etat serbe et la construction de Studenica,” *Studenica i vizantijska umetnost oko 1200. godine* (Belgrade, 1988), 43–45; B. Todić, “Ktitorska kompozicija u naosu Bogorodičine crkve u Studenici,” *Saopštenja* 29 (1997), 35

Monument/Artefact: The ktitor's inscription in the Church of the Holy Virgin in Studenica monastery. Details reproduced in fig. II.6.11a–c; for a drawing of the inscription by Gojko Subotić see Irena Špadijer, “Pisar ktitorskog natpisa svetog Save u Studenici,” *ZRVI* 43 (2006), 517–26 in 523–24 and 526 (open access: <https://doi.org/10.2298/ZRVI0643517S>)

Other Translations: I. Špadijer in G. Subotić, B. Miljković, I. Špadijer, and I. Toth, *Inscriptiones historicae in picturis muralibus/Натписи историјске садржине у зидном сликарству, vol. I: Saeculorum XII–XIII* (Belgrade, 2015), 37 (Serbian)

Significance

Studenica monastery is an endowment of Stefan Nemanja, the founder of the dynasty that ruled over Serbia for more than two centuries (1166–1371). Construction began in the 1180s and it is one of the most prominent monasteries in Serbia. The ktitor's inscription in the Church of the Holy Virgin in Studenica monastery is one of the oldest dated inscriptions in Serbian Church Slavonic (the Serbian recension of Church Slavonic). It has also enabled the oldest frescos in Studenica to be dated precisely to the year 1208/1209. Its historical importance is mirrored by its contents: it contains the name of the ktitor of the monastery, the great župan Nemanja, and his sons – Vukan and, presumably, Stefan (in this place the text is damaged), as well as the author himself, Monk Sava, later the first Serbian archbishop and saint.



Fig. II.6.11a–c Details from the dedicatory inscription in the ring of the dome
© Blago Fund

The Author

The author of the text is Saint Sava, the third son of the great župan Nemanja, the ktotor and builder of Studenica. This is evidenced by the last sentence of the inscription: и мене работавъш[аго помен]ѣте саву грѣшнаго – “And remember me, who carried out this work, sinful Sava.” The scribe who wrote this was Greek – the passage was probably inscribed by the head painter of Studenica.

Text and Context

The ktotor's inscription in Studenica is located in a prominent place in Nemanja's most important endowment. It is inscribed on the drum of the dome of the main church in the monastery (dedicated to the Holy Virgin), in the place that separates the dome from the weight-bearing substructure, about 12.5 meters above ground level. The length of the inscription is slightly less than the circumference of the dome, which is about 20 meters. Originally interrupted in three places (where the lower parts of the image of the Holy Keramion and two medallions with busts of angels are painted), today it is damaged and a third of the original text is missing.¹ It is written in one line, in gold letters on a dark background. The letters take the form of upright rectangles that are 10–12 cm high. They are written between two lines, in a row, slightly slanted to the left. They are not decorated, are minimalist in design and, particularly towards the end of the inscription, they appear elongated and condensed – probably due to a lack of space. The only punctuation marks are dots: they are placed between the two lines, in the middle of the row or slightly above it.

The inscription is written in Serbian Church Slavonic, following the orthography of the School of Raška, using only one “yer” (ѣ), as is common in Serbian texts dating back to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The Greek painter who painted most of the church signed his name in small letters underneath the ktotor's inscription. Unfortunately, due to damage, this personal prayer, which also contains the name of the painter, cannot be read in its entirety: Κ(ύρι)ε Ἰ(ησο)ῦ Χ(ριστ)ἔ ὁ Θ(εὸ)ς [ἡμ]ῶν ἐλε(ήμων) σῶσον τ[ὸν] λα(όν) καὶ ... [ἀ]μαρτολόσ καὶ ...² (Lord Jesus Christ, our merciful God, save our people and ... sinful and ...).

The earliest inscriptions found on frescoes in Serbian Church Slavonic are from Studenica. They appear in the names of saints, names of church feasts, inscriptions along the walls, and in depicted scrolls and books. Although it was commonly accepted by the first scholars of these texts that they were written by the Serbs,³ later scholarship proved that they were done by Greek painters.⁴ The ktotor's inscription was also written by a Greek. As well as on the grounds of its similarities with the writing/letters in some surviving fresco

1 For more detail see Subotić *et al.* 2015: 35, with relevant secondary literature.

2 Edition: Subotić *et al.* 2015: 37.

3 Đurić 1974: 32.

4 Đorđević 1986: 197; Trifunović 1986: 10.

material, this can also be ascertained by comparing individual letters with the evidence of Greek monuments. The letter “K” is particularly striking: it is written such that both the upper and the lower hastas bend towards the stem at the ends, but they do not touch it – similar to how it appears in inscriptions from Lagoudhera in Cyprus (the Church of the Virgin Arakiotissa, painted before 1192).⁵ It is possible to prove this with even greater certainty by analyzing the Cyrillic letter “Ѡ” in the Studenica inscription, which the scribe wrote like “Y” (“izhitsa”), which is the Church Slavonic equivalent of the Greek “ypsilon” (Υ). The oldest form of “Ѡ” in Church Slavonic writing is quite similar to the Greek “Υ,” with a stem that is in the center, from which the main body of the letter rises out to resemble a “cup” that can be either deep or shallow (especially in the earlier period). That version would have been easy to mistake for the Greek letter. But, even the other form of the letter “Ѡ,” with a rounded cup, could be recognized by a Greek painter. A comparable form, practically identical to the letter “Ѡ,” can be found in Greek manuscripts from an earlier period, only it meant something completely different. This form is a ligature which developed from “ypsilon” and “iota.” We can find it in the word “ѠЕ=YIE (MOY)”: “(my) son,” in scrolls devoted to the Virgin Mary, such as, for instance, that of the church in Lagoudhera, Cyprus (1192), or in the church of Saint Nicholas, in Manastir (1270–71).⁶ Therefore, a Greek painter could easily have made a mistake by “recognizing” the letter as being a familiar form, when in fact it was not. Thus, instead of “Ѡ” he wrote “Y” everywhere.⁷

Both the position and contents of the inscription in Studenica bear clear witness to the intent of the ktetor and to the messages that he sent to the faithful and all his subjects. Positioned in a prominent and structurally important place at the base of the main dome of the *katholikon*, it informs us of the ktetor, the great župan Nemanja, who became a monk. It bears his monastic name (Simeon) and emphasizes his relationship with the Byzantine ruler Alexios III Angelos, the father-in-law of Nemanja’s middle son and the heir to the Serbian throne, Stefan. It was precisely because Stefan had a connection to the Byzantine royal family that he became the ruler, despite being the younger son and therefore not the first in line of succession. At the time that this inscription came into existence (1208/09), however, Alexios III was no longer an emperor: he had already been overthrown before the fall of Constantinople in 1204, and even before the fall he had called off Stefan’s marriage with his daughter. The facts that are presented in the text have an entirely symbolic meaning and serve to place the Serbian ruling family in a prominent place in the hierarchy of the peoples of the known Christian *oecumene*. The inscription was painted after Nemanja’s son Stefan had consolidated power in the state, having been victorious against his older brother Vukan who, displeased with his father’s choice of heir, had risen up against Stefan after Nemanja’s (Simeon’s) death on Mount Athos. The mention of Vukan in the inscription can be read as a symbolic reconciliation of the estranged brothers.

5 I. Špadijer 2006 examines this in detail, with relevant secondary literature. The study compares the Studenica inscription with the epigraphic evidence of Lagoudhera; see Winfield: 2003.

6 See I. Toth, II.6.10 in this volume.

7 Špadijer 2006.

II.6.12 Unknown (early twelfth century)

The Greek–Georgian Inscription on the Icon of King David the Builder

EKATERINE GEDEVANISHVILI

Ed.: D. Kldiashvili, *Sinodicon of the Georgian Church at the Monastery of St. Catherine on Sinai* (Tbilisi, 2008), 53–56, with corrections on the Greek text from BEIÜ 2: Ik10

Monument/Artefact: Icon of David the Builder, Monastery of St. Catherine, Mount Sinai. See: E. Eastmond, *Royal Imagery in Medieval Georgia* (Philadelphia, Penn., 1998), il. 43, 67–70; G. and M. Soteriou, *Εἰκόνες τῆς μονῆς Σινᾶ*, vol. 1 (Athens, 1956), 131–32, il. 152; see fig. II.6.12

Other Translations: V. Beneshevich, *Xristianskii Vostok*, I (St. Petersburg, 1921), 64; T. Kaukchishvili, *sakartvelos berznuli carcerebis korpusi* (Tbilisi, 2009), 14–15; G. and M. Soteriou, *Εἰκόνες τῆς μονῆς Σινᾶ*, vol. 1 (Athens, 1956), 131–32. Greek text only: A Rhoby in BEIÜ 2: Ik10 (German)

Significance

An original iconographic program and high artistic skill give the icon of David the Builder (David Agmashenebeli, 1089–1125) a special place in the collection of the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai.¹ The icon (65 cm × 50 cm) was probably completed by a workshop based on Mount Sinai and it was intended to be kept in the monastery to mark a large donation made by the renowned Georgian king, David the Builder. Its visual and textual message provides evidence for the special political ambition and piety of one of the most powerful rulers of the time.

The Author

Unknown.

Text and Context

The icon shows a royal figure with a saint below the bust of Christ. The image is accompanied by Greek inscriptions executed in red identifying the Saint as St. George (Ο Α[ΓΙΟΣ] ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΣ) and the King as the “Pious basileus of all the East, Bagratunianos” (ΠΙΣΤΟ[Σ] ΒΑΣΙΛ[ΕΥΣ] ΠΑΣ[ΗΣ] ΑΝΑΤΟΛ[ΗΣ] Ο ΠΑΓΚΡΑΤΟΝΙΑΝΟΣ).² Beneshevich identified

¹ Burchuladze 2016a: 141.

² On the reading of the inscription see Beneshevich, 1921: 64; Kaukchishvili 2004: 14–15; Kldiashvili 1989: 125. The Georgian letter d (D) is also readable behind the king’s portrait; see Kldiashvili 1989: 125.



Fig. II.6.12 Icon of David the Builder, Monastery of St Catherine, Mt. Sinai
© Monastery of St Catherine, Mt. Sinai

this king with David IV.³ But this identification was not accepted by all scholars.⁴ The identification was finalized thanks to the work of Kldiasvili, who read in the *tituli* in Greek and Georgian the abbreviated name of the king.⁵ The titles in the Georgian text (King of the Abxazetians, Kartlians, Radians, and Kaxetians) also support this identification.⁶

King David is depicted frontally wearing the garment of a Byzantine emperor – a low crown surmounted by a cross with pearl *pendilia*, a heavily jeweled *loros* over a garment elaborately decorated with vine leaves. The decoration of the garment is regarded as an

3 Beneshevich 1921: 63.

4 It was proposed to be a portrait of either Giorgi II (r.1072–89), Giorgi III (r.1156–84), or Giorgi IV (r.1213–23); see Mikaberidze 1984; Mouriki 1990: 39–40; Manafis 1990: 384.

5 Kldiasvili 1989; see also Kldiasvili 2008, vol. 1: 54–56.

6 Kldiasvili, 2008: 55.

iconographic allusion to the tree of Jesse, giving a visual hint to the descent of the Bagrationi family from the biblical King David.⁷ Fragments of a damaged Kufic inscription have been identified on the sleeves of the garment (left sleeve?) and on the shield of the warrior. The King holds a jeweled *labarum* in his right hand and a scroll in his left.⁸ The latter might be the *chrysobull* that marks the foundation of the church of St. George on Mount Sinai by the Georgian king.⁹

Saint George stands in three-quarter profile while addressing the king. The left hand of the saint is raised towards the image of Christ, while his right hand is directed to the ruler. The figure of Christ and that of the Saint appear to be more vivid than David's image; he is presented frontally. Christ turns toward St. George to hear the supplication, but reaches out toward David to bless him and offer him a crown.¹⁰ This exchange of gestures turns the theme of intercessory prayer into an active dialog between the three of them.

According to Kldiashvili, the portrait of the young king, together with the titles of the ruler on the icon, indicate that the creation of the icon should be dated between the capture of Kakheti in 1104 and the capture of Armenian lands in 1118.¹¹ Supposedly, it is around this time that King David founded the church dedicated to St. George on Mount Sinai.¹² According to the Life of King David Agmashenebeli (twelfth century) (*Kartlis Tskhovreba, Life of Kartli*),¹³ King David provided funds for various monastic foundations all over the Christian world including the monastery of Sinai, stressing in particular the significance of this holy place as a site for God's revelation.

The choice of St. George as an intercessor is not accidental. Alongside the cult of the Virgin, there was a special cult for this Saint in Georgia. His cult can be traced back to the very beginning of the proclamation of Christianity as a state religion in Georgia (first quarter of the fourth century) and was especially strengthened from the tenth century. This military warrior, one of the main protectors of royal families in the Byzantine world, became a "national" Saint and the main protector of Georgia and the Bagrationi family. The most distinguishing feature of Georgians for other people was their special devotion to St. George:¹⁴ indeed, the name of Georgia was associated with the cult of this great Martyr.¹⁵ Thus, the Sinai icon would proclaim iconographically and textually the unique relationship between the Georgians and their patron Saint.

It cannot be accidental that the image of St. George on the icon presents the replica of one of the most revered Georgian icons of the Martyr – the icon of Bochorma (eleventh

7 Tsagareli 1888; the design of the garment of the King reappears in the portrait of David IV in the murals of the Gelati frescoes; see Meskia 1972: 162.

8 According to Beneshevich 1921: 63, instead of the traditional image of scepter the Georgian King holds the *labarum* adorned with precious stones very similar to the one worn by the Jewish high priest, reflecting the biblical provenance of the Georgian kings.

9 Uspenskii 1856: 167.

10 Eastmond 1998: 68; the crown is no longer visible on the icon.

11 Kldiashvili 1989: 126.

12 Kldiashvili 2008: 56.

13 A vital source for the history of medieval Georgia: *Kartliscxovreba (Life of Kartli)*, ed. R. Metreveli.

14 For these sources see Tvaradze 2004: 125–48; Peradze 1995.

15 Tvaradze 2004: 136.

century).¹⁶ Instead of showing a frontal image of the holy warrior the icon presents the figure of St. George addressing the Savior¹⁷ That is an original representation with a clear meaning for a twelfth-century Georgian viewer. The reference to the Bochorma icon (that is, the main relic of the newly captured Khakheti region) might demonstrate a political context that offers a direct allusion to the unification of the Georgian lands.¹⁸

The two inscriptions are inserted in the center of the icon between the figure of St. George and those of the king. The inscription in Greek, which is written in golden ink, comes first and then the five-line Georgian inscription is written beneath in black ink. Both inscriptions are in a very fragmentary state.

16 Burchuladze 2016a: 78, 141, 348.

17 The Bochorma icon contained a relic, the arm of the Martyr, considered as one of the most important icons of Saint George.

18 The fact that King David commissioned the murals in the Bochorma church after capturing the Kakheti region is telling of his intentions; see Okropiridze 1997.

Text*Greek*

[.....κα]θ[υ]πέ[ταξας.....]ν :- [.....] Ἄραβας [καί] ἀ[γι]οὺς [τόπ]οις¹ στερρ[ῶ]
 Δα(υ)δ [ἄν]ακτι τ[ούτῳ] σῶ λάτρ[η] βρά[β]ευσον [αὐ]τῶ καὶ [.....]ων τὸ [κρ]άτος ἐχ[...]
 ἀπ[ὸ τ]ῶν δαιμό[νων.....].†

Georgian

†. ზ[- - - - -] ომბრეოთ ბრ[- - - - -]
 ც[- -]ბ[- - -]ყ[~]ს[- -]თ[~]ი ბ[-]რ[~]ი(sic)
 თ[-] [- - - - -]რ: ჟრღი[- -]თთ[-]
 ჯრღით: [- - -]რ: ბრ[~]ი[- -]ბრ:
 იბ[-] [-]ბ [- - - - -] ები

Translation*Greek*

So you conquered ... :- | ... Arabs [and] Holy Places :- | (empower) the powerful great king David :- | your servant ... :- ... Award him and | ... his power:- | (have) [...] from the [...] demons [...]

Georgian

Give a prayer Martyr St. George. A [- -] m [- - -] b v [- - -] l e m [-] tv David king of Abxazta, Kartvelta, Ranta, Kaxta. God forgive him his sins. Amen.

Commentary

The presence of the two inscriptions suggests that this image was primarily aimed at a non-Georgian audience. In the case of bilingual inscriptions, it is more typical to have one and the same texts in both languages. However, the inscriptions on the Sinai icon stresses a different meaning in each case. The Greek text's primary focus is on the power of the Sovereign and it seeks divine intercession for the defeat of enemies; while the Georgian one is more intimate emphasizing the penitence of a ruler pledging for the forgiveness of his sins.

King David's splendid military success allowed him to portray himself as the Great Christian power in the East (a rival to Byzantium).¹⁹ As Eastmond has noted, King David wanted to replace Byzantium rather than to simply copy it.²⁰ One of the most vivid demonstrations of this attitude was his rejection of Byzantine titles in favor of Georgian ones.²¹ The King David – called by Crusaders the “guardian of Caspian Sea” or the “pillar of Christian faith” – transformed Georgia into a powerful polity in the Near East.²² The

19 Eastmond 1998: 43.

20 Eastmond 1998: 70.

21 Eastmond 1998: 70.

22 For sources see Tvaradze 2004: 137.

23 Cf. references to David in post-twelfth century Arabic sources; for non-Christian sources about David see Tvaradze 2004: 177–82.

portrait of the “Superior Ruler”²³ on the Sinai icon becomes thus a manifestation of his power, at a time of decline for the Byzantine influence in the region.

- 1 ἀ[γι]ους[τόπ] ους is the reading suggested by Kldiashvili. Andreas Rhoby suggests instead the reading Ἄραβας [καὶ] ἀλ[λ]ους μ[άγ]ους. *BEIÜ* 2: Ik10, p. 61, with commentary on p. 62–63.

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II.6.13 Unknown (1314/15)

An Inscription from San Michele Arcangelo, Masseria Li Monaci, near Copertino, Italy

LINDA SAFRAN

Ed.: A. Jacob, “Une dédicace de sanctuaire inédite à la Masseria Li Monaci, près de Copertino en Terre d’Otrante,” *MEFRM* 94.2 (1982), 703–10 = “L’iscrizione dedicatoria della cripta di S. Michele Arcangelo alla masseria Li Monaci presso Copertino, in Terra d’Otranto,” in *Copertino: Storia e cultura*, ed. M. Greco (Lecce, 2013), 53–56; L. Safran, “Language Choice in the Medieval Salento: A Sociolinguistic Approach to Greek and Latin Inscriptions,” in *Zwischen Polis, Provinz und Peripherie. Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur*, Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik 7, ed. L. Hoffmann (Wiesbaden, 2005), 853–82 (862, 872–73); M. Berger and A. Jacob, *La chiesa di S. Stefano a Soletto: Tradizioni bizantine e cultura tardogotica* (Lecce, 2007), 10; L. Safran, “Cultures textuelles publiques: une étude de cas dans le sud de l’Italie,” *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 52.3 (2009), 245–63 (252–53) = L. Safran, “Public Textual Cultures: A Case Study in Southern Italy,” in *Textual Cultures of Medieval Italy*, ed. W. Robins (Toronto, 2011), 115–44 (esp. 121–22); L. Safran, *The Medieval Salento: Art and Identity in Southern Italy*, Middle Ages series (Philadelphia, 2014) no. 43A (272)

Monument/Artefact: Inscription from San Michele Arcangelo, Masseria Li Monaci, fig. II.6.13

Other Translations: L. Safran, *The Medieval Salento*, as above (English); L. Safran, “Public Textual Cultures,” as above (English); A. Jacob, “Une dédicace,” as above (French); L. Safran, “Cultures textuelles,” as above (French); A. Jacob, “L’iscrizione,” as above (Italian); M. Berger and A. Jacob, *La chiesa*, as above (Italian)

Significance

Over a dozen painters’ and architects’ names are known from Greek inscriptions in the Salento, where they usually appear in the form of a “signature” at the end of a dedicatory or devotional text. In addition to the father and son at Li Monaci, another artist pair (relationship unspecified) co-signed in Greek a long dedicatory text in Latin near Acquarica del Capo in 1282/83. Only at Li Monaci, however, are viewers explicitly enjoined to include the artists in their prayers. Also unusual here is the French-named patron and the citation of the Angevin king, signs of cultural mixing echoed in texts and images throughout the church.



Fig. II.6.13 Masseria Li Monaci, San Michele Arcangelo, inscription on east wall, 1314/15
© L. Safran

Text and Context

The small subterranean church dedicated to the archangel Michael is located on the grounds of a later fortified farmstead that is now a winery, but in the early fourteenth century there was probably a village nearby. Several frescoed saints and scenes are preserved, mainly on the east wall, and a secular couple is represented in a tender embrace among flowers, stars, and a large cross on the ceiling. St. Michael is opposite the entrance stairs. The Greek dedicatory inscription on the east wall above the larger of two shallow apses gives the date 1314/15, which applies to all of the extant images on stylistic and paleographic grounds.

Other texts in the church are bilingual: two saints are identified in both Greek and Latin, the protagonists in the Annunciation and Crucifixion scenes are labeled only in Latin, and the Crucifixion in the main apse has the titulus “VICT[OR] MORTIS” (Victor over Death) instead of the usual “Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews.” Such an explicitly salvific title strongly suggests a funerary function for the church. In the smaller left apse, an elderly John the Evangelist – the Byzantine type, not the youthful evangelist favored in “Western” art – holds a Gospel book that has around its edge Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος (Jn 1:1). Above him, a partly preserved fragment of a fish is the one that swallowed Jonah, identified by the letters ο plus a superimposed π and ρ, the beginning of “ὁ προφήτης” (the prophet) in Greek. The bilingual texts reflect the complexity of local culture, in which a

French-surnamed patron¹ hired painters whose native language seems to be Greek but who employed both Byzantine and “Western” iconographic models.

The dedicatory inscription is carefully executed in letters 2 cm tall (the indiction is slightly larger); the painter forgot part of his own or his son’s name, Demetrios, and had to add two letters (μη) in minuscule above the line. The accumulation of dating elements – the ruler’s name, the year, and the indiction – is more typical of Latin inscriptions in the region than of Greek ones, but the year is given here according to the Greek calculation from Creation. Very few dedicatory texts in Greek include the name of a non-Byzantine ruler.

The name of the patron, Souré, is not emphasized by being placed at the end of a line, even though this is typical of inscriptions in all languages in this region; instead, his title, *stratiotes*, occupies the end of line 2, probably to echo *archistrategos* at the beginning of the same line and to be as close as possible to the oversized St. Michael to the right of the apse. The leader of the angels was the soldier Souré’s patron saint and the dedicatee of his church. Attempts to identify Souré and his wife as the couple painted on the ceiling are misguided,² as the pair is far from the inscription and cannot be seen by someone reading it, and patrons are never shown in a non-devotional pose. Rather, the affectionate couple evoke a verse from the Song of Songs – “His left hand is under my head, his right hand embraces me” – while likely representing Gemini (depicted in European art as a heterosexual couple) as a metaphor for springtime.

Text

Diplomatic Transcription

Ανοικοδομήθη και ἐζωγραφήθη ὁ πανσεπτος ναὸς οὗτος τοῦ / ἀρχιστρατήγου Μιχαήλ
διὰ συνδρομῆς κ(αί) κόπου Κουρέ στρατιώ[τ](ου) / ἅμα συν συνβίω αὐτοῦ κ(αί) τέκνοις
οἱ ἐκνω] [ρη]γατεύοντος δὲ Ρωμβέρτου / Καρούλλου τριτέου : ἐπὶ [ετους,ς̄ ὦ] κ̄ γ̄ .
ἰνδ(ικτιωνος) ἰ γ̄ . [ἐζ]ωγραφήθη δὲ / χειρὶ Νικολάου κ(αί) Δη(μη)τρίου υ[ιου α]υτοῦ ἀπὸ
τῆς Σωλεντοῦς : κ(αί) οἱ ἀναγινώσκοντες . εὐχεσθαὶ ὑπερ αὐτοῦς πρὸς τὸν Κ(ύριο)ν : ἀμήν.

Edited Text

Ἄνοικοδομήθη καὶ ἐζωγραφήθη ὁ πάνσεπτος ναὸς οὗτος τοῦ ἀρχιστρατήγου Μιχαήλ
διὰ συνδρομῆς καὶ κόπου Κουρέ στρατιώτου ἅμα σὺν συνβίῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ τέκνοις οἱ
ἐκνω] ῥηγατεύοντος δὲ Ρωμβέρτου Καρούλλου τριτέου ἐπὶ ἔτους ,ςωκγ´, ἰνδικτιῶνος
ιγ´. Ἐζωγραφήθη δὲ χειρὶ Νικολάου καὶ Δημητρίου υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ Σωλεντοῦς καὶ οἱ
ἀναγινώσκοντες¹ εὔχεσθαι ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦς πρὸς τὸν Κύριον· ἀμήν.

Translation

This most venerable church of the archistrategos² Michael was built and decorated with paintings with the cooperation and effort of the soldier Souré and his wife and child[ren]³ during the reign of Robert, third [son] of Charles,⁴ in the year 6823,⁵ thirteenth indiction; it was painted by the hand of Nicholas and his son Demetrios,⁶ of Soletio.⁷ You who read this, pray to the Lord for them. Amen.

1 Jacob 1982: 708–09 states that the accented epsilon ending is typical of French names. Berger and Jacob 2007 propose the variants Suré, Suret, and Suray for the Souré of the text.

2 Calò Mariani 2002: 238.

Commentary

1. ἀναγινώσκοντες, those who read, introduces a hortatory injunction. Four other such regional injunctions in Greek are dedicatory or funerary texts, of which one at Santa Maria di Cerrate makes no mention of readers (“All who come here, pray”).
2. This is a common title for the archangel and the one used to invoke him in some regional exorcisms against hailstorms. At Li Monaci he is represented opposite the stairs that lead down into the church, which have now collapsed.
3. Attempts to identify Souré have met with no success. The accent on his name is clear; the number of his children is not. Reference to an unnamed wife and/or children is common in Salentine inscriptions.
4. The reign is that of the Angevin Robert “the Wise,” king of Naples (and titular king of Jerusalem) from 1309–43 CE. He was the son of Charles II and Maria of Hungary.
5. That is, 1314/15 CE.
6. Of the sizeable number of artists’ and architects’ names recorded in Greek inscriptions in the region, this is the only explicitly identified father and son pair.
7. Soleto was an important center of Orthodox and Greek culture in the late medieval Salento. In 1540 one of its churches still had twenty Greek books, and as late as 1607 a pastoral visit reported that twenty-four churches inside the town and another thirteen in its hinterland maintained some form of Orthodox rite (two of them hosted both rites). For an overview of hellenophonic Soleto, see Berger and Jacob, *La chiesa di S. Stefano*, 9–12.

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II.7 Lamenting: Tomb Epigrams

Introduction

FOTEINI SPINGOU

ἀλλ' εἰ μὴ ψόφον τοῦ χρυσοῦ οἱ κατὰ γένος προσήκοντες ἐν ἡμῖν αἰσθωνται, . . . οὐδὲ τῆς προσηκούσης ὀσίας ἡμᾶς μετὰ θάνατον ἀξιώσουσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ ἐκκλησιῶν διαφόρων πόλεμος ἔσεται ὑπὲρ τῆς ἡμετέρας ταφῆς, οὐ τάφοι περιφανεῖς καὶ ὠραῖοι ἡμᾶς ὑποδέξονται, οὐ ψαλμοὶ πρὸ αὐτῶν καὶ τερετίσματα, οὐ ῥητόρων ἐγκώμια, οὐ φώτων πλήθους καὶ ἀρχόντων σύλλογος ἐκδραμεῖται ἐπὶ τῇ ἡμῶν ἐκφορᾷ, οὐ κραυγαὶ προσηκόντων καὶ δάκρυα καὶ στερνοτυπία, οὐ τὰ τοιαῦτα προκαλούμενα γυναῖκες καὶ τῶν θρήνων ἐξάρχουσαι, οὐδὲ διὰ πάντων τούτων τιμῆ.

If our relatives hear not the ring of our gold . . . they will not think us worthy of the holy rites after our death. There will be no struggle between the different churches for our burial, no splendid and beautiful graves will receive us; no psalms or chant, no eulogies from the orators (will resound); no flood of lights, no dignitaries who assemble to follow our funeral cortege. There would be no relatives wailing, in tears, beating their breast, no lamentations and dirges from mourning women, no respect expressed by these actions.¹

The passage above comes from a rather unconventional dialog composed in the fourteenth century, right in the heart of the second civil war (1341–47) between John Kantakouzenos and the regents for the ten-year-old John V (his mother, Anna of Savoy, the Patriarch John Kalekas, and the *megas doux* Alexios Apokaukos). The interlocutors are the “Poor” and the “Rich.”² The Rich, a “moderate rich,”³ is concerned that he will lose

1 Ševčenko 1960 with text p. 214–15 and transl. p. 227.

2 The author of the dialog is a professional teacher, Alexios Makrembolites. Quickly, this civil war acquired a strong social aspect. John Kantakouzenos was supported by the land, aristocracy, while the common people (*demos*), sailors, and merchants supported the regency. Makrembolites is concerned in this Lucianic dialog about the rising gap between lower and higher echelons of the Constantinopolitan society and the impoverishment of the middle (*μεσότης*, see n. 3 below). Makrembolites does not propose radical social reforms, but some actions that give a temporary relief to the poor. On Alexios Makrembolites see *PLP* 16352; Polatoph 1989: 7–23; Ševčenko 1960: 188–94; *Tusculum*, s.v.; *ODB* s.v. For the translations of the text into modern language see Primary Sources. For the dialog in general see Di Branco 2007; Polatoph 1989: 36–43; Ševčenko 1960, all with further bibliography.

3 The Poor and the Rich (οἱ πένητες and οἱ πλοῦστοι) do not represent social extremes, the very impoverished echelons or the higher aristocracy. The Rich name themselves as “middle” (*μεσότης*), while the context suggest that the Poor are not the lowest level (see Ševčenko 1960: 201, 207, l. 5–10). Makrembolites chose classes of people instead of isolated persons for this dialog in order to address a general problem and not a specific event.

everything, even a proper funeral, should he lose his wealth. The “proper” funeral is designed to meet the expectations of his social circle, with an abundant display of rhetoric and a spectacular visual performance. In later Byzantium, the moment of burial was an opportunity for social display. That opportunity was not restricted to the funeral, but was continued by the construction of a funerary monument. Word and image cooperated to add decorum to the place of burial and to mark the social status of the family of the deceased and a perpetual ritual for the commemoration for his or her departed soul.⁴

Tombs had been identified by tombstones, stelae, and crosses. But in later Byzantium *arcosolia* (sing. *arcosolium*), niched arches created specifically for burials, became exceptionally prominent for marking burials of the socially well off. The form of the *arcosolia* originates from the Roman catacombs,⁵ but in medieval times, they were lavishly decorated with marbles, frescoes, mosaics, and verse inscriptions – the so-called “tomb epigrams” or “verse epitaphs.” It was common in Byzantium to place *arcosolia* (and tombstones) inside church buildings, even though interments in these buildings had been forbidden by law since Late Antiquity.⁶ The narthex and the aisles of a church were not as sacred as the sanctuary and so burials could be placed in this part of the building.⁷ Furthermore, burials within the walls of a church were reserved for benefactors and monastic founders, as well as their family and their acquaintances/protégés.⁸

Provisions for the burial were often made during one’s lifetime. In the middle of the eleventh century we hear about the supervisor of the port (*parathalassites*) and judge Melias, who had his portrait as a monk and a layman, and his epitaph made for him before dying.⁹ In an oft-mentioned passage, Isaac Komnenos, brother of Emperor Manuel I (r.1143–80), describes how he designed his tomb and burial in the monastery he erected in Pherrae (now in Northern Greece).¹⁰ Similarly, the design of the funerary chapel attached to St. Mary Pammakaristos church in Constantinople, as has been recently argued, is thought to have been completed before the death of Glabas Tarchaneiotēs.¹¹

Imperial burials in later Byzantium followed patterns similar to those for aristocrats. Emperors were buried in monastic churches that they or their very close family had founded or re-founded. Alexios I (r.1081–1118) was buried in the church of the monastery of Christ *Philanthropos* (“Human-loving”), which was founded by his wife.¹² His daughter, Anna Komnene and her son-in-law were also buried there. The Heroön at the complex of the monastery of Christ *Pantokrator* (“All-mighty”) accommodated the

4 Commissioning art and literature was a social asset in later Byzantine society; see Introduction, p. xlviii–l.

5 Mango, “Sépultures et épitaphes,” 102–03.

6 Marinis 2009: 150–51; see also A. Cutler, *ODB*, sv. “arcosolium.”

7 Marinis 2009: 142–56.

8 Marinis 2009: 151; Papamastorakis 1996–97: 284–85.

9 Mitylenaios, *Poems* no. 16. The earliest dated Byzantine funerary portrait in an *arcosolium* is dated to the year 1197 and comes from the church of Panagia Krena on the island of Chios (Greece).

10 Isaac Komnenos, *Kosmosoteira Typikon*, par. 89.

11 See A. Rhoby, II.7.5 in this volume.

12 Janin, *Églises CP*, 211, 525–27; see Sodini 2003: 180 for an account of the burials of the Komnenoi.

tombs of the founder, John II Komnenos (r.1118–43), and his wife, Eirene-Piroska, and their sons.¹³ The fact that John II Komnenos asked to be buried in the same tomb with his first-born son is telling for the initial conception of the chapel as a family rather than a dynastic mausoleum. Common burials were frequent in the period in question, at least between close relatives.¹⁴ After the hiatus of 1204 to 1261, there was no effort to re-establish an imperial mausoleum similar to that of the Holy Apostles.¹⁵ The interment of Michael VIII (r.1261–82) is exceptional, because he was denied a Christian burial for having signed an agreement marking the union of the churches. His son and successor, Andronikos II (r.1282–1328), was buried in the church of the Lips monastery, the new founder of which was his widowed mother Theodora.¹⁶ To put it differently, emperors in later Byzantium were buried as members of the aristocratic clan to which they belonged, rather than as exceptional individuals.

Arcosolia were the most prominent type of aristocratic burials at the time in question. They are arched niches built in front of a wall. As will be discussed later, their lunettes were richly adorned. Sarcophagi were placed beneath the arches that defined the significance of the place. These sarcophagi differed from Roman ones. Superior examples resemble complete antique models, but were usually assembled from marble plaques and panels or they were carved out of local stone. Regardless of their form, sarcophagi had a purely ornamental function, as the corpse (often more than one) was (were) deposited in a subterranean chamber beneath the sarcophagus.¹⁷ Shared burials were normally called *πολυάνδρια/polyándria*.¹⁸ In other cases, tombstones were placed directly on the ground to mark the place of the burial. Such plaques (called “πλόξ”) were adorned with a cross or an icon or it could have the deceased’s personal objects of devotion, such as an encolpion, embedded in it. The frames of the tombstones could be silver gilt or gold.¹⁹ Columns and stelae or crosses were used to mark tombs in cemeteries.²⁰ *Arcosolia* and other types of interments inside churches were associated with a rich iconographic program fashioned around the portrait of the donor and either in fresco or mosaic. The portrait of the deceased was placed in close association with depictions of Mary and Christ. In fact, as Titos Papamastorakis has noted, three types of iconography were the most popular in

13 See Ousterhout 2019; for the Pantocrator monastery in the urban–sacred topography of Constantinople see Magdalino 2013: 38–48.

14 See p. 1546–47 for the epitaphs for Sophia Dokeiane Komnene and Eirene.

15 See Mango, “Sépultures et épitaphes,” 114–15.

16 For the burials in the Lips monastery see Marinis 2009: 156–66.

17 See p. 1540–41.

18 See p. 1542, n. 1, below.

19 See F. Spingou, II.7.3, esp. p. 1547. The evidence about portable icons placed on (and not inside) tombs is thin: see, e.g., Kallikles, *Poems* nos. 12 and 13, ed. Romano, p. 87–88. Hörandner 1987: 242 suggests that the title of the second epigram should be corrected to εἰς τὴν χρυστὴν εἰκόνα τὴν βεβλημένην (instead of κεκλιμένην ἐν τῷ τάφῳ) and so to interpret the text as a reference to an icon placed inside the coffin, following funerary customs at that time. However, the references to a further object, inlaid on tombstones make plausible that the icon was actually placed on the tombstone.

20 See for example *BEIÜ* 3: GR28.

later Byzantine burials.²¹ In the first, the deceased were depicted beseeching the Virgin, who has the Child on her chest.²² The second shows the deceased being presented by Mary (or a saint) to an enthroned Christ, who passes judgment on the departed.²³ A final category, includes double portraits (*Doppelporträt*) of the deceased, as a layperson and a monk.²⁴ Relief marble icons could also be placed above sepulchral monuments.²⁵ In addition, portable icons were associated with interments: these were either placed inside the coffin or adorned the walls around the funerary monument.²⁶

Elaborate funerary monuments came into full prominence for the burials of members of the middle and upper echelons of society, while members of the lower classes or monks with no special connection to the foundation or a major donor of the monastery were buried in cemeteries.²⁷ Given that these higher echelons had a particular taste for literature,²⁸ it is unsurprising that the composition of metrical epitaphs came into full bloom at this time. Epitaphs were placed on slabs set on the semi-circular archivolt of the *arcosolia* or they were inscribed directly on the tombstone.²⁹ Should the verses refer to a mausoleum or a funerary chapel (called, κοιμητήριον), then the epitaph could have been inscribed on architectural parts of the building, as at the Church of St. Mary Pammakaristos, where the poem was inscribed on the cornices of the building.³⁰

In some cases, more than one epitaph was written for different parts of the same tomb. For example, the burial of Sophia Dokeiane Komnene and her daughter Eirene, discussed

21 Although Papamastorakis 1996–97: 304 argues for “an unbroken continuity in the conception of funerary monuments and their decoration from the Antiquity well into the middle years of the Byzantine age,” all the examples he provides come from between the late eleventh and the fifteenth centuries. In my view – and what I am arguing for here – although there is some resemblance with late antique funerary monuments, Later Byzantium had an amplified appetite for richly decorated tombs with words and pictures. It is to this appetite that we owe the prominence of the tomb epigram. This appetite was then spread to the Balkans (see imperial and aristocratic burials in Serbia, in Papamastorakis 1996–97) and the West (where *arcosolia* reappeared in the thirteenth century). Tenth-century examples cannot match the elaboration of later funerary monuments. See, e.g. Tomadaki 2014: p. 7, 350–51 and 420, and *BEIÜ* 3.1: IT17, IT18, TR64.

22 Papamastorakis 1996–97: 286–93.

23 Papamastorakis 1996–97: 293–97.

24 See Papamastorakis 1996–97: 286–93; Drpić 2008: 224; Underwood 1966: 280, with further bibliography. Byzantines became often monks or nuns shortly before their death or even on their deathbeds.

25 Papamastorakis 1996–97: 300–03; of the most celebrated examples of this type is the so-called “Monument of Maria Palaiologina” from the end of the thirteenth/the beginning of the fourteenth century, today in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, coming from the church of St. John in the Lips monastery. It includes the depiction of the Virgin, an epigram in very fragmentary condition and perhaps the portrait of the deceased. See *BEIÜ* 3: TR62 with further bibliography and German transl. For an English transl. of the epigram see Talbot 1999: 81.

26 Papamastorakis 1996–97: 298–300; for a further example of an icon created for funerary context see “Virgin with Moses and Patriarch Efhymios II of Jerusalem,” attributed to the “painter Peter,” c.1223, Mt. Sinai; Nelson and Collins 2006: 259, discussed in Spingou 2016: 194–95, with further bibliography.

27 See, e.g., the provisions that Isaac Komnenos made for the departed monks of the Kosmosoteira monastery. It is noticeable that he asked for the monks to be buried outside the enclosure wall of the monastery because of lack of space. This proved unpopular between monks and he had to justify his position; see Isaac Komnenos, *Kosmosoteira Typikon*, par. 54 and 118.

28 See the discussion on “The ‘Culturally Dominant Group,’” p. xlviii–l.

29 See, e.g., the epitaph for Michael Tornikes in the Kariye Camii/Church of Christ of Chora; Underwood 1966: 276–77, with English transl. A. van Millingen and emendations by Underwood.

30 See A. Rhoby, II.7.5 in this volume.

in II.7.3 in this volume, has three tomb epigrams: a long epigram to be written next to their portraits or on the tombstone, one on the cross of the tombstone, and one on its lateral gilding. A second example is offered by the two epitaphs for the *protoierakaria* Melania for which Manuel Philes wrote a distich and an epitaph in the first person (*ek prosopou*) that amounted to thirty-seven verses. Presumably, the epitaphs were to be written on different parts of the same funerary monument, probably on the wall of the *arcosolium* and the lid of a sarcophagus.³¹

The long epitaph for the *protoierakaria* Melania contains a key passage for understanding the role that tomb epigrams were called to play; vv. 8–10 read:

“Ἴνα πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ἐντεῦθεν μάθῃ
σκιὰν θεωρῶν μὴ πτοεῖσθαι τὸν βίον
τὰ κατ’ ἔμαυτὴν ζωγραφῆσω μετρίως.³²

In order for any man to know from here
how, seeing my shadow, not to be defeated in life,³³
I will paint moderately my vicissitudes.

Indeed, after these verses the poet, always with the voice of the depicted Melania, “paints” her life-story “with words,” as he speaks of the family, her husband and the deeds of the deceased. For Melania/the poet, the epigram is a further opportunity to keep her memory alive.³⁴ Word and image collaborate and complement each other in a manner that is very similar to that found in dedicatory epigrams on works of art.

Tomb epigrams and epigrams on works of art are directly related to each other.³⁵ Like epigrams on works of art, they exist in a dependent relation with the object/tomb they have been written for. Poets often provide details about the funerary monument, especially when the portrait of the deceased was included in the iconographic program, even though there was no intention to describe it.³⁶ The length of the poem was occasionally regulated by the draft plans for the funerary monument.³⁷ A further point of connection between the two sub-genres of epigrammatic poetry is the performative experience that tomb epigrams initiate. The correct reading of an epigram on a work of art or a tomb epigram would require a group acquainted with the special vocabulary of these poems.³⁸ Moreover, rhythm generated by a metrical text, movement, and the use of a set vocabulary suggest

31 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Scor. 179 and 180, ed. Miller, I, 86–88.

32 Miller prints: ζωγραφῶ δὲ σοί, ξένε, although the Parisian codex offers ζωγραφῆσω μετρίως.

33 Referring to her portrait as noted by Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion*, 56–57, who also discusses this passage.

34 Similar content in *AM*, B76, 1–4 = Lambros, “Ο Μαρκιανὸς κῶδιξ 524,” no. 242.

35 The relation between epigrams on works of art and tomb epigrams is also discussed in II.7.1 and II.7.3 in this volume.

36 See Rhoby 2011: 196–99.

37 Brooks 2006: 236. See also the case of *AM*, B122 (= Lambros, “Ο Μαρκιανὸς κῶδιξ 524,” no. 396) composed for the tomb of Maria Xerena Melissene, where information about the accompanying depiction can be found in the title of epitaph, indicating that these were instructions for the poet.

38 Cf. p. 1 in the general introduction.

that the reading of the epigram had attributes of a ritual performance.³⁹ Like epigrams on works of art, the content of the tomb epigrams also served social ends. For instance, there is a particular emphasis on the family origin of the deceased. This is unsurprising at a time when coming from an influential family was a social asset and could ensure titles and jobs in the imperial administration. Any affiliation with prominent or less prominent families, such as the Komnenoi, Doukai, Palaiologoi, Angeloi, or even Gabalas and Skouteris, deserved a special mention aimed at commemorating the deceased's virtues.⁴⁰

Verse epitaphs and tomb epigrams borrow elements from prose epitaphs (funeral speeches) and monodies.⁴¹ For example, the tomb epigram presented by I. Taxidis (II.7.4 in this volume) borrows the praise of the deceased and its structure from monodies. Verse epitaphs and monodies, like all rhetorical texts, have a tripartite division of the text: a *prooimion*, a main part, and an epilog. Also, in respect to their contents, epitaphs, like the monodies discussed by Menander the Rhetor, often become an encomion for the deceased,⁴² with authors mentioning individual experiences and remarkable life events.⁴³ Nonetheless, there are examples like the following tomb epigram that were potentially re-used for different burials, as they do not specifically identify the deceased with the *topoi* in play:⁴⁴

Ἐπιτάφιοι

Λαβῶν ἀπαθῆς ἐκ χροῦς τὸ σαρκίον,
ἐμπαθῆς ἀπέδωκα τῇ γῆ τὸ χρέος,
πολλῶ δὲ τοῦ πρὶν ὀλβιώτερον πάλιν
ἔχω⁴⁵ τὸ ληφθὲν ἀπὸ τῆς δανεισάσης.

Epitaph <verses>

Albeit I received the flesh from soil free from passions,
my return was filled with passions.
Once again, I consider what I received
far more blessed than my return.

In the above case, the epitaph has become a gnomic epigram that aims to create a *memento mori*.⁴⁶ Generic epigrams that do not refer to the name of the individual and often appear in monastic cemeteries.

The content of the epitaphs is adjusted to social needs related to the burial, rather than to the actual monument. Metrical epitaphs do not aim to describe, in the manner of an

39 See also Spingou 2019.

40 See Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Scor. 180, ed. Miller, I, 87.

41 Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 219.

42 Menander the Rhetor, *Treatise II*, 171–79, a good twelfth-century example of an epitaph trying to reflect on the rhetorical treatise.

43 Eg. *AM*, B60 = Lambros, “Ο Μαρκανὸς κῶδιξ 524,” no. 247.

44 Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Flor. 87, ed. Miller, I, 256–66.

45 ἔξω ed. Miller.

46 On gnomic epigrams on *memento mori* see Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 243–46.

ekphrasis, either the burial place with all its features, the looks of the deceased, or delineate the ideal beholder.⁴⁷ Most often, they include prosopographical information about the deceased and the way that he/she died. As for the metaphors and the mythical examples used, most are expounded with well-established literary clichés.⁴⁸ Poets refer to the emotional pain the death caused to his relatives and “the storm of life” (ζάλη τοῦ βίου).⁴⁹ A further essential part of these epitaphs is the references to the Last Judgement and a plea for the beholder to commemorate the deceased.

Marc Lauxtermann divided tomb epigrams into three types on the basis of the narrative voice. Epitaphs of the first type are written in the first person and are distinguished by a strong inclination towards the confession of sins. The deceased, who is the person speaking, talks about his or her vicissitudes and sins, and asks for forgiveness and redemption.⁵⁰ This makes them similar to *ethopoiiai*.⁵¹ Rarely, it is the tomb rather than the deceased who speaks in the first person to threaten grave-robbers, as was often the case in tomb inscriptions from the Classical, Hellenistic, and Late Antique eras.⁵² In later Byzantine tomb epigrams, the tomb is personified only if it engages in a dialog with the passer-by.⁵³ The second type of epitaphs include those written in the second person. The next of kin is the one speaking in this case. Examples of such epitaphs are less common and they resemble metrical monodies, since lamentation and the emotional burden are their main features.⁵⁴ Finally, epitaphs composed in the third person have an anonymous narrator who commemorates the deceased and all his/her excellent qualities and virtues.⁵⁵

These types of epitaphs were often mixed in order to create dramatic rhetorical effects. Greater complexity could also enhance the ritual aspects of the tomb and commemoration. This was certainly the case with the tomb epigram for Manuel I Komnenos, in the Heroön of the Pantocrator monastery.⁵⁶ The peculiarity of Manuel’s tomb is that the tomb was covered by a relic, the Stone of Deposition. According to contemporary sources, Manuel carried the stone on his shoulders when the relic was translated from Ephesos to Constantinople.⁵⁷ An eighteenth-century source reports that “according to tradition” (ἐκ παραδόσεως) at least forty verses were inscribed on that stone.⁵⁸ The poet of these verses

47 See Rhoby 2011.

48 Papadogiannakis 1984.

49 See Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 217, 224–25.

50 Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 215–18. For a later example see the epitaph by George Akropolites for Eirene Komnene, the daughter of Theodore I Laskaris of Nicaea (r.1205–22).

51 See for example, A. Rhoby, II.7.5 in this volume, for the funerary epitaph in St. Mary Pammakaristos. On *ethopoiiai* see E. Jeffreys, Introduction, II.3 in this volume.

52 E.g. *AM* B93 = Lambros, “Ὁ Μαρκετιανὸς κωδ. 524,” no. 260; see also Bees 1921.

53 See, e.g., the epitaph by Kallikles translated by L. Andriollo, II.3.3 in this volume. For a different example see Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems* nos. 64 a–b, ed. Hörandner, p. 497–99.

54 Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 218–21.

55 Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 221–27.

56 For text and translation see the Appendix, p. 1530–33.

57 For the translation see Antonopoulou 2013: 109–15.

58 Vassis 2013: 240 n. 106.

is anonymous, but he was well acquainted with the conventions of imperial rhetoric, as is shown by the use of *topoi* particular to Manuel's reign.⁵⁹ In the first part of the poem (vv. 1–8), the poet praises the translation of the relic and interprets its function as a tombstone. In vv. 9–24, he speaks about Manuel's wife, the empress Maria (who had become a nun with the name Xene), whom the poet sees as a new Mary lamenting at the tomb of the Lord (Manuel/Christ).⁶⁰ He refers briefly to their son Alexios II (v. 12) and presents the deceased in his double capacity as an emperor and a monk.⁶¹ In vv. 25–37 the poet elaborates on the Empress and her lamentation. The narrator's voice changes at v. 38; it is no longer the poet speaking, but the empress herself. Reading verses 35–44 together, it becomes apparent that the empress is offering her deceased husband an eternal lament. She laments in a ritual fashion in vv. 25–37 as she is presented to shed tears, throw herself onto the tomb, strike it with her hands (vv. 25–26, 30), be barely able to speak (v. 27), wear a special garment of mourning,⁶² and offer a shroud and the necessary unguents to the deceased (vv. 34–36). The syntax is relatively disrupted, underscoring her turbulent state. Enjambment – usually avoided in Byzantine poetry – is omnipresent (see vv. 34–35, 40, 41). She emphasizes her feelings of sorrow and pain at the loss of her most dear husband. This tomb epigram is explicitly attested as an inscription – and thus was destined to be present for eternity – and, as with all Byzantine inscriptions, Maria–Xene's dirges would have been read aloud by the beholder. Each time the verses were pronounced, the words of the poem would re-enact her lamentation. In that sense, the epitaph was destined to become an eternal *mnemosynon* (memorial rite) for the deceased.⁶³

The vast majority of verse epitaphs survive in manuscripts. Some of the most interesting examples come from the corpus of anonymous poetry in the *Anthologia Marciana*, and many more are attributed to Manuel Philes.⁶⁴ Although it cannot be excluded that some of the surviving verse epitaphs were written as mere rhetorical exercises,⁶⁵ the presence of epitaphs in these and similar collections with commissioned poetry suggests that many were meant to function as verse inscriptions. Indeed, the prolific twelfth-century scholar John Tzetzes refers to the composition of an epitaph for a certain noble (*sebastos*) Alexander⁶⁶ with the following words:⁶⁷

59 See, for example, the pun with the words Κύριος (v. 4, 18), δεσπότης (v. 8, 10), χριστός (v. 18), that point to well-established clichés in the laudatory rhetoric developed for Manuel; see Magdalino, *Manuel*, 434 and elsewhere.

60 See Ousterhout 2019.

61 Manuel became a death-bed monk, with the name Matthew.

62 See Papadogiannakis 1984: 259–61.

63 This function of tomb epigrams in general has been also noted by Marinis 2014: 108–09. For the liturgical aspect of the *mnemosynon* see Velkovska 2001: 39–40; for the *mnemosynon* see Marinis 2016: 93–102.

64 Papadogiannakis 1984: 284–87 lists sixty-five epitaphs and monodies attributed to the pen of Manuel Philes. Four tomb epitaphs by Philes have been translated in Brooks 2006. For the *Anthologia Marciana* see the forthcoming edition and transl. by F. Spingou.

65 As suggested by N. Zagklas, I.3.1, I.3.2, II.3.4, and II.4.1 in this volume for some of the poetry by Theodore Prodromos.

66 *PBW* Alexandros 102.

67 John Tzetzes, *Letters* no. 37.

37. ΤΩΙ ΖΑΒΑΡΕΙΩΤΗ ΚΥΡΩΙ ΓΡΗΓΟΡΙΩΙ

(52) Καὶ κειμένω τῷ ἥρωι Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τῷ σεβαστῷ ζῶσαν ὁ Τζέτζης χάριν ὀφείλω. οὐκ ἔστι γὰρ ὅτε ζῶν ὁ ἀνὴρ ἐντυχῶν μοι τῷ πενιχρῷ αὐτοποδία βαδίζοντι μετὰ λαμπρᾶς αὐτὸς τῆς προπομπῆς πορευόμενος οὐχ ὑπέκλινεν οἱ τὴν κορυφήν, καίτοι μηδὲ συνήθει μοι οἷ πεφυκῶτι μηδὲ τῶν ἄλλως γνωστῶν. ἔνθεν τοι καὶ κειμένω ζῶσαν ὀφείλων τὴν χάριν (οὐ γὰρ ἀγνώμων ἐγώ), εὐθύς σου δεξιόμενος τὴν γραφὴν τοὺς ἰάμβους ἀπεσχεδίασα τοῦσδε τοῦ ἐπιγράμματος μηδὲ μικρόν τι μελλήσας ἢ ὑπερθέμενος, καίπερ μυρίαὶ ὦν ἄσχολος περιστάσεσιν.

37. To *kyr* Gregory Zavareiotēs⁶⁸

(52) Even if my most venerated hero Alexander is dead, I, Tzetzes owe him a lively thanks. For, when he was alive, whenever he met me – the wretched one, who walks only on my own feet – he greeted me, even though he was surrounded by a glorious escort and I was not one of his acquaintances and he did not know me otherwise. For this reason, and despite him being dead, I owe him a lively thanks (for I am not ungrateful). Thus, in response to your letter, I instantly drafted the verses for this tomb epigram [ἐπίγραμμα⁶⁹] having left aside everything else, as I am very busy.

This letter illuminates the process for the composition of a tomb epigram, which resembles that for epigrams on works of art. As in epigrams on works of art, there is an instigator – in this case, the addressee of the letter – whom the author tries to please. Alexander (the deceased) would have been part of Tzetzes' direct or indirect social network, for otherwise he would not have acknowledged Tzetzes in a city of 400,000 people. Moreover, Gregory's petition confirms the existence of some connection between the two men. By composing the verses, Tzetzes confirms his inclusion in a social circle from which he would expect a reward for his writing. Perhaps Tzetzes did not receive an immediate material return – although this remains ambiguous in the letter. "Favors," like the composition of the epitaph, might have given him fame, and only indirect rewards.

Although the majority of the surviving tomb epigrams, and certainly the most elaborate ones, are composed for the upper aristocracy, there are numerous examples of verse epitaphs for members of non-influential families in the twelfth century.⁷⁰ By the late thirteenth century epitaphs must have become a trend that reached beyond the uppermost echelon, as evinced by the extraordinary number of tomb epitaphs attributed to Manuel Philes.⁷¹

Verse epitaphs do not differ from prose epitaphs in respect to their content, but the former convey social status and create a ritual experience, highlighted further by the

68 On Gregory Zavareiotēs, see *PBW* Gregorios 20127.

69 A tomb epigram is a subgenre of epigrammatic poetry; cf. p. 1371 (on book epigrams).

70 See p. 1356; see also, e.g., the tomb epigram for protopsaltes John Manougras in *AM*, B106 = Lambros, "Ὁ Μαρκιανὸς κῶδις 524," no. 273 or the tomb epigram for the child of a certain Kyriakos Edessenos and Maria Triakontaphylline in *AM*, B133 = Lambros, "Ὁ Μαρκιανὸς κῶδις 524," no. 76.

71 Papadogiannakis 1984.

placement of tomb epigrams primarily on monuments inside churches, whether these were *arcosolia* or funerary monuments of a different kind. It is not surprising that tomb epigrams became prominent at a period when understanding, composing, and commissioning literature in a highly rhetorical form had become a social asset. Yet, their form and public display (if inscribed) enabled them to direct the liminal experience of death towards eternity and to create elaborate ways to maintain the memory of the deceased.

Appendix

Epigram on the Tomb of Manuel I Komnenos

Ed.: Vassis 2013: 240–41

Translation: Mango 1969–70: 373 with adaptations (Mango’s translation is based on his own edition of the tomb epigram)

Text

Ὅρων τὰ καινὰ ταῦτα θαύμαζε, ξένε·
 βουλὴν μαθητοῦ σχηματουργεῖ δεσπότης
 ὦμοις βασιλεὺς Μανουὴλ λίθον φέρων,
 ἐν ᾧ τὸ σῶμα συνταθὲν τοῦ Κυρίου
 5 ἐσχηματίσθη πρὸς ταφὴν τῆ σινδόνη·
 καὶ τοῦτον αἶρει, τὴν ταφὴν προμηνύων,
 ὡς συνταφῆ θάνατον ἐσταυρωμένῳ
 καὶ συναναστῆ τῷ ταφέντι δεσπότη.
 ἡ δ’ αὖ βασιλὶς καὶ σύννευος Μαρίας,
 10 τῆ δὲ στερήσει τοῦ φεραγοῦς δεσπότητος
 αὐγοῦστα σεπτὴ βασιλὶς πάλιν Ξένη,
 αὐτοκρατοῦντι σὺν Ἀλεξίῳ γόνῳ
 ὡς μυροφόρος μύστις ἄλλη Μαρίας
 τὰ μύρα τοῖς δάκρυσιν κινῶ καὶ πάλιν,
 15 οὐ τὸν λίθον ζητοῦσα τίς ἐκκυλίσει
 ζωηφόρου μνήματος ἀπὸ τῆς θύρας,
 ἀλλ’ ὡς κυλίσει ζωτικὸν λίθον τάφῳ,
 ἐν ᾧ τέθαπται σῶμα χριστοῦ κυρίου,
 τοῦ Μανουὴλ ἀνακτος, εἴτα Ματθαίου.
 20 ἐν οἷς βασιλεὺς τοῖς δυσὶ θεωνύμοις
 διττὰς καθαιρεῖ τὰς ἐναντίας φύσεις·
 ὁ γὰρ Μανουὴλ ἦπταν ἐθνῶν ἐμφέρει,
 τῶν δ’ αὖ νοητῶν κλήσις ἡ τοῦ Ματθαίου
 τῷ σχηματισμῷ τῆς ἰσαγγέλου θεάς.
 25 ἡ γοῦν βασιλὶς δάκρυσιν ὥσπερ μύροις
 ὄλην ἑαυτὴν ἐκκενοῖ πρὸς τὸν λίθον,
 φωνὴν παρεστῶς ὡς ἐπαφήσῃ πάλιν

Translation

Seeing these strange things, admire, O beholder!
 The despot¹ models² the wish of the disciple,
 with the emperor Manuel carrying on his shoulders the stone,
 on which the body of the Lord had been placed
 5 and so he fashioned a shroud for a burial.
 He lifts this, pre-announcing his burial:
 that he was to be buried together with the Crucified after his death
 and that he will rise again together with the Despot [= Christ] who was also
 buried.
 The empress and wife Maria,
 10 after she was deprived of the splendid despot [= Manuel]
 remains a venerated augusta, the empress Xene,³
 together with the emperor Alexios, their son.
 Like a myrrh-bearing Mary, privy to the mysteries,
 she mixes the myrrh with tears again.
 15 Yet, she does not ask who has rolled the stone
 from the door of the life-giving tomb,
 but that she may roll the stone that maintained life from the tomb,
 in which is buried the body of an anointed (*christos*) lord,
 that is of Manuel the king, [who was named] later Matthew;
 20 with these two divine names the emperor
 defeats enemies of two kinds:
 for Manuel defeats [adverse] nations;
 yet, the name Matthew defeats spiritual [enemies],
 because of the shape of a sight equal to that of angels.
 25 The empress with tears like unguents
 throws herself entirely onto the stone,
 and stands there, as if she was about to give voice again
 and raise a second Lazarus.

καὶ δεύτερον Λάζαρον ἐξαναπλάσῃ·
 εἰ δ' οὐκ ἀκούσει καρτερῶν τῆ ἔσχάτῃ,
 30 αὐτῷ λίθῳ κρούσαιτο τὴν τάφου θύραν,
 δι' οὗ τάφων πρὶν ἠνεψύχθησαν λίθοι,
 πέτραι διερράγησαν Ἰδοῦ καὶ πύλαι,
 καὶ τὸν νέκυν κλέψειε τὸν πεφιλέμενον
 καὶ τὴν ἑαυτῆς καρδίαν ὡς σινδόνα
 35 καινὴν ὑφαπλώσασα σκευάσῃ μύρα,
 ἀντ' ἀλόγῃ δάκρυα καὶ σμύρνης μύρα,
 καὶ πενθικῶ σχήματι ταῦτα κωκύσῃ·
 «ὦ καρδία, ῥάγηθι· δέξαι δεσπότην
 σπλάγχχνων ἐμῶν ἔσωθι τῶν πολυστόνων,
 40 ὃν εἶχες ἐγκάρδιον, ὄνπερ ἐφίλεις·
 οὗ νῦν θανέντος καὶ κρυβέντος ἐν λίθῳ
 πέπηγα κάγῳ τῷ πάθει καθὰ λίθος
 καὶ συννεκροῦμαι τῷ τάφῳ καὶ τῷ λίθῳ,
 ψυχῆς ῥαγείσης καὶ πνοῆς ἀποπτάσης».

30 But if he does not hear [her voice] when he waits for the Last Day,
 she may knock on the door of the tomb⁴ with that stone,
 thanks to which the stones of Hades were opened,
 she may steal her beloved deceased,
 and depose her heart, as a novel
 35 kind of shroud to prepare unguents
 (that is tears instead of aloes, and unguents instead of myrrh).
 [Wearing] the garment of mourning, she laments with these words:
 “Oh heart, break! Receive the despot
 in my mournful midst,⁵
 40 him whom you had most dear, him whom you loved.
 Because now he is dead and hidden in a stone [= tomb].
 Given the [great] pain, I too became hard like a stone
 and I am mortified together with the tomb and the stone,
 because my soul breaks and my breath is flown away.”

Commentary

- 1 Cf. vv. 10, 38.
 - 2 Cf. vv. 5, 24.
 - 3 Maria became a nun with the name Xene after Manuel's death.
 - 4 Cf. v. 16.
 - 5 Σπλάγχων ἐμῶν: metaphor for the seat of the feelings.
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II.7.1 *Anthologia Marciana*, Sylloge B (c.1050–c.1200)

On the Tomb of a Certain Woman

Who Died Unexpectedly from a Throat Infection

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: Spingou, *Poetry for the Komnenoi*, B170; Lambros, “Ο Μαρκιανὸς κῶδιξ 524,”
no. 114, 129

MS.:¹ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus Z 524 (s. XIII ex.), f. 46v

Other Translations: None

Significance

The composition of verse epitaphs was a social norm for members of the Komnenian elite. The text below provides an example of a tomb epigram composed on behalf of a member of the civil administration, who commissioned an epitaph for his late wife following perhaps a trend preferred by his patrons (see v. 7).

The Author

See F. Spingou, I.3.3 in this volume.

Text and Context

The epitaph was written for a certain Arete, who died from an infection of the pharynx.² Arete is otherwise unknown. According to the epitaph, she was the wife of John Klaudiopolites, who held the title of *kouropalates*, a title which places him in the middle strata of the Komnenian court.³ According to the text, he had a close association with the *proto-sebastos protovestiaros* John Komnenos, the son of the famous *sebastokratorissa* Eirene.⁴ Like his mother, John Komnenos had commissioned a number of artworks and epigrams to accompany them. Thus, John Klaudiopolites by commissioning the epitaph followed a common practice in his social circle.

A *terminus post quem* for the composition of the epitaph is the year 1148, which is when Manuel I Komnenos gave the titles of *protosebastos* and *protovestiaros* to John Komnenos

1 Consulted.

2 See the Commentary, n. 1.

3 See the Commentary, n. 4.

4 Magdalino, *Manuel*, 511, was the first to identify John Klaudiopolites as an *oikeios* of John Komnenos; on *protosebastos protovestiaros* see Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 128, vol. 2, 142–55.

– mentioned in v. 7. A *terminus ante quem* is the death of John Komnenos in September 1176.

The typical structure of a verse epitaph is followed here: The poet refers first to a general story from the Old (or the New) Testament (vv. 1–3), then he introduces the deceased and the commissioner of the funerary monument (vv. 4–10), and finally he asks for the passer-by to pray for the soul of the deceased (vv. 11–12). The epitaph's structure has a striking similarity to that of the epigrams on works of art.⁵ A further similarity is the reference to the connection of the instigator/commissioner of the epigram with the very core of the imperial family; this can be attributed to the social structure of the Komnenian court.

⁵ See F. Spingou, Introduction, II.4 in this volume.

Text

Ἐπὶ τῷ τάφῳ τινὸς γυναικὸς αἰφνιδίως θανούσης διὰ κυνάγχης

Τερφθεις Ἄδὰμ φάρυγγα καρπῷ τοῦ ξύλου
 θάνατον εὔρεν ἠδονῆς πικρὸν τέλος,
 ὃν κλῆρον ἐκλέλοιπε τοῖς ἀπεκγόνοις.
 Ἰωάννου γοῦν Ἄρετῆ συνευνέτις
 5 κουροπαλάτου τοῦ Κλαυδιοπολίτου
 ὃν γνώσις ὠκείωσε καὶ πίστις πόθου
 πρωτοσεβαστῷ πρωτοβεστιαρίῳ
 αἰφνιδίᾳ φάρυγγος ἐκλείπει νόσῳ.
 ὁ δ' ἐξεγείρει τοῦτον αὐτῇ τὸν τάφον
 10 δάκρυσι πυκνοῖς λατομήσας τὸν λίθον.
 σὺ δ' ἄλλ' ἐπεύχου τῇ παρελθούσῃ ξένε,
 καρπὸν τρυγᾶν ἄφθαρτον ου

Translation

On the Tomb of a Certain Woman¹ who Died Unexpectedly from a Throat Infection²

With his throat filled with the juicy fruit of the Tree³
 Adam tasted death, the bitter end of pleasure,
 which he passed on to his descendants.
 Thus, Arete,⁴ the wife of John
 5 Klaudiopolites,⁵ the *kouropalates*,⁶
 whose diligence and fervent loyalty
 brought him close to the *protosebastos protovestiaros*,⁷
 dies from an unexpected illness in her throat.
 He [John] erects this tomb for her
 10 having carved the stone with his many tears.
 But may you, stranger, pray for the deceased
 that she may reap the imperishable fruit⁸ ...⁹

Commentary

1. The omission of the woman's name in the title is surprising at first, since her name is given by the poet in the main text. Possibly, Arete did not come from a family prominent enough in the Komnenian system. Should this be the case, either the anthologist or the poet decided that her name was not important enough to be included in the title of the epitaph. Her origin from a minor aristocratic family is also suggested by the absence of Arete's family name in the main text.
2. Κυνάγχη is a severe infection of the pharynx. Hippocrates describes it as a possibly fatal infection and Galen understands the term to refer to any kind of infection re-

stricting breathing.⁶ Any kind of throat infection could easily prove fatal at a time before antibiotics; thus, it is impossible to postulate the exact cause of Arete's death.⁷

3. Cf. Gen. 3:23.
4. The name Arete is rare in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.⁸
5. John Klaudiopolites is otherwise unknown. A certain John Klaudiopolites, official in the *sekretion* of the *megas sakellarios* attested in a document from the year 1186 shares only the same name with Arete's husband, since the epitaph is composed at an earlier date.⁹ A number of members of the family of Klaudiopolites formed part of the imperial elite before 1204.¹⁰ Spyridon Lambros read the name as Κλαυδιοπολιστου and he noted that this may be a scribal mistake. According to my consultation of the manuscript the name reads Κλαυδιοπολιτου.
6. Although the title of *kouropalatis* was originally reserved for members of the imperial family, it was granted also to generals outside the imperial family already from the eleventh century. The amplification of titles during the Komnenian period resulted in the introduction of the title of *protokouropalatis* and so the title of *kouropalates* further lost its significance as a title of exceptional status.¹¹
7. On *protosebastos protovestiaris* John Komnenos see Text and Context, p. 1536–37.
8. The imperishable fruit comes from the restored Tree of Life, cf. Gen. 3:22–24, Ez. 47:12. With this reference to the tree of life the poem comes full circle, suggesting that Arete should take what Adam has been deprived of, that is a place in Paradise.
9. The final five syllables are missing because the bottom of f. 46v is in poor condition.

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⁶ Hippokrates, *On Popular Diseases*, bk. 2.9, bk. 3.10; Galen, *On Affected Places*, vol. 8, 247–48.

⁷ Laurent 1972: 38 suggests that Arete died from *anthrax*; an infection by *streptococcus* could equally lead to death.

⁸ See also Laurent 1972: 38. A certain Arete "num and pantimos" is attested on an eleventh-century seal (see *PBW* Arete 20101).

⁹ *PBW* Ioannes 347.

¹⁰ For the family before and after 1204 see Van Tricht 2011: 33–35.

¹¹ See A. Kazhdan, *ODB*, s.v. "Kouropalates," with further bibliography.

II.7.2 John Apokaukos (c.1155–1233)

A Tomb Epigram on a Shared Burial

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, “Επιγράμματα Ἰωάννου τοῦ Ἀποκαύκου,” *Ἀθηνᾶ* 15 (1903) no. 7, 31–32; repr. in I. Delimaris, *Πατέρες τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικοὶ συγγραφεῖς τῆς δυτικῆς Ἑλλάδος 1: Ἄπαντα Ἰωάννου Ἀποκαύκου* (Nafpaktos, 2000); F. Dimitrakopoulos, “Τὰ ποιήματα τοῦ Ἰωάννου Ἀπόκαυκου,” *Ναυπακτικὰ* 10 (2001), 566–67

MS.:¹ St. Petersburg, RNB, Φ no. 906, gr. 250 (= Granst. 454) (s. XIII), f. 79v

Other Translations: I. Delimaris, as above (Modern Greek)

Significance

The verse epitaph is written for the burial of several deceased under the funerary monument. It is an example of a tomb inscription composed for members of families from the middle strata of the imperial administration.

The Author

See T. Tsampouras and F. Spingou, I.2.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

The epitaph was written for the tomb of Constantinos Nesteggonos/Nestengonos, Maria Pleure, and their two children, who all died in the time-span of three months. Maria Pleure seems to have been related to the imperial administration, because her father was a *protonotarios*.²

The tomb epigram is a remarkable attestation of a common burial. Similar burials seem to be frequent in eleventh- and twelfth-century Constantinople for members of all social echelons. John II Komnenos (r.1118–43) ordered that his first-born son be buried in the same tomb as him.³ The wife of the second son of John Komnenos, the *sebastokrator*

1 Consulted.

2 It is uncertain whether he was a *protonotarios* of the emperor or a *protonotarios* of a bureau.

3 *Typikon of Pantokratos monastery*, p. 83 and 90, transl. Jordan, p. 756 and 759, respectively.

Andronikos, asks for her to be buried in the same tomb as her husband.⁴ John Mauropous laments in the middle of the eleventh century for the deceased in a polyandrion.⁵ Archaeological evidence suggests that such burials were a common practice already in early Byzantium. According to archaeologists, the existence of shared burials may be related to a high number of deaths caused by a natural disaster or disease; alternatively they may serve as family tombs, or may be applied to tombs regularly re-used for interments.⁶

The burial to which the following tomb epigram refers may resemble one discovered in a church in the neighbourhood of the Vefa Kilise Camii in Istanbul that dates from around the year 1100. Between 1937 and 1938 Miltiadis I. Nomidis discovered a tomb there in the form of a funerary chamber under the floor of the Palaiologan exonarthex that was 3.45 m long, 2.65 m wide, and 1.80 m high. Nomidis found a number of coffins with skeletons inside that tomb. Above the tombs, at ground level, there was a masonry platform that could support a sarcophagus. More multiple burials were discovered in the same church during the same survey.⁷ The epitaph below defines this type of burials as *polyándrion* (plural, *polyándria*).⁸

The epitaph's exact date of composition is not known. Perhaps it dates from before the year 1204, since Apokaukos is believed to have written all his poetry while he resided in Constantinople.⁹ The epigram offers a good example of epitaphs composed for members of different echelons of the Constantinopolitan society.

4 Spingou 2019. See also *typikon* of Libos, where the empress asks to be buried in the same tomb with her daughter.

5 John Mauropous, *Epigrams*, no. 42.

6 Sodini *et al.* 1984: vol. 2, 235–36.

7 For the report see Mango 1990: 423–24; for further examples see Marinis 2009: 151 n. 21 and Saitas 2009: 374, fig. 40.8, for evidence from the churches of Mani. On Vefa Kilise Camii see Marinis 2014: 204–05, with further bibliography.

8 See the Commentary, n. 1.

9 Also pointed out by Cheynet 2008: 606.

Text

Εἰς τάφον πατρὸς καὶ μητρὸς καὶ δύο παιδῶν αὐτῶν, θανόντων καὶ τῶν τεσσάρων ἐν τρισὶ
μησὶν

Καινὸν πολυάνδριον, εἷς οὔτος τάφος·
μήτηρ πατὴρ γὰρ ἔνδον, ὡς τέκνα δύο·
πατὴρ Νεστέγκων εὐγενῆς Κωνσταντῖνος,
μήτηρ Μαρία, τοῦ πρωτονοταρίου
5 Πλευρῆ θυγάτηρ, τέκνα Μανουήλ, Ἄννα.
ἦλιε, τοὺς τέσσαρας εἷς ἔνδον τάφος
νεκροὺς συνέσχευεν ἐν τρισὶ μῆσὶ μόνοις.

Translation

On a Tomb of a Father, a Mother and Their Two Children, All Four of Them Died Within
Three Months

This single tomb is a new *polyandrion*,¹
for inside [the tomb] a mother, a father, and two children [are buried].
The father [is] the noble Constantine from the Nestegkos family,²
the mother is Maria, the daughter of the *protonotarios*³
5 Pleures;⁴ the children are Manuel and Anna.
O sun,⁵ a single tomb contains
the four deceased [who died] within only three months.

Commentary

1. The term πολυάνδριον or πολυανδρεῖον (see LSJ) refers to a single tomb in which more than one corpse was put to rest. The tenth-century *Souida Lexikon* (Pi, 1939), referring to a fragment from Eunapius' history (late fourth/early fifth century CE), provides the gloss ξενοτάφιον/*xenotaphion* for *polyandrion*. The *lexicon* compiled by Hesychios (P 2819) in the fifth or sixth century explains the term *polyandrion* as a spacious tomb (τάφος πολυχώρητος) or a funerary monument (μνημα). The prolific twelfth-century scholar Eustathios of Thessaloniki (*Commentary on the Iliad*, vol. 2, p. 468, 490) understands the word to refer to a τύμβος for the Greek soldiers in the Trojan war.¹⁰ The term does not appear in the Homeric work, and only begins to be used for a common burial in inscriptions from the third century BCE (see LSJ and TLG).

¹⁰ Tzetzes' scholion in his *Chiliades* no. 6.36, l. 26, interprets the term as a place that one can see many corpses (no. 6, 26); see also Mitylenaios, *Poems* no. 82 about grave-diggers who looted the garments of the deceased, which can be compared to the accusations of sacrilege in the church of St. Andrew, by Psellos in his *Synodical Oration against Michael Keroularios*, 2064–2071, from the year 1058; ed. Dennis, p. 76.

2. The family of Nestegkos or Nestogkos or Nestogkonos or Nevstongos came from Bulgaria in the early eleventh century. The family is known from sigiliographic evidence from the late eleventh century and most members appear to serve in the military administration.¹¹ After the events of 1204, the family became even more prominent.¹² A certain Constantine Nestegkos-Doukas is known from the late thirteenth century.¹³
3. The *protonotarioi* were the leading secretaries working for the imperial administration.¹⁴
4. The *protonotarios* Pleures is otherwise unknown, however the family of Pleures/Pleures was relatively prominent in the civil administration in the twelfth century.¹⁵ Many members of the family that are known to us are associated with ecclesiastical matters in Athens.¹⁶ Also, a certain Pleures, who was a *sakellarios* for Michael Choniates, is only known because of a letter addressed to him.¹⁷
5. Invocations to the sun are a regular convention in monodies and epitaphs.¹⁸ However, the invocation in this verse seems unrelated to the rest of the poem. The poet makes a reference that would have been vivid in his readers' mind: the sun that has become hidden for those in the tomb as well as for those who lament their loss.

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11 Cheynet 2008: 599–606. For before 1204 see *PBW* Georgios 20262, Ioannes 20193, Ioannes 20708, Xene 20106. The family is not included in the list drawn by van Tricht 2011: 33 with the families constituting the Byzantine imperial elite before 1204.

12 Cheynet 2008: 606–07. See *PLP* 20195 *Nestegon*; *PLP* 20197 *Nestoggonissa Eudokia* (also *Tarchaneiotissa Nostongonissa*); *PLP* 20197(b) *Nestongos*; *PLP* 20198 *Nestongos Dukas*; *PLP* 20199 *Nestongos Isaakios* = *PLP* 20200?, *PLP* 20202 (Nestongos Laskaris).

13 *PLP* 20201. Karlin-Hayter 1974: 141–43.

14 See A. Kazhdan, *ODB*, s.v., “protonotarios.”

15 Cheynet 2008: 606.

16 Herrin 1975: 261.

17 See Michael Choniates, *Letters* no. 144, ed. Kolovou, p. 234–35. with commentary p. 133*. See also Shawcross 2011: 43. For members of the family attested in thirteenth-century sources see *PLP* 23368 Pleures (and *PLP* 23367, *Pleurainas Nikolaos ho tes*) and *PLP* 23369 Pleures Constantinos.

18 See, e.g., Alexiou 2002: 168–69 see also 179, about the survival of this conventional invocation to the sun from Homer to Hellenistic times and modern folk laments in Greek.

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II.7.3 *Anthologia Marciana*, Sylloge B

Epigrams on the Tomb of Two Komnenian Aristocratic Ladies

FOTEINI SPINGOU

Ed.: I. F. Spingou, *Poetry for the Komnenoi*, no. B64 (cf. Lambros, “Ο Μαρκιανός κώδιξ 524,” no. 227, p. 150). Previous edition: W. Hörandner, *BF* 12 (1987), 243

II. F. Spingou, *Poetry for the Komnenoi*, no. B142. Previous edition: Lambros, “Ο Μαρκιανός κώδιξ,” no. 85, 47

MS.:¹ I. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus Z 524 (= coll. 308) (s. XIII ex.), f. 108v

II. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Graecus Z 524 (= coll. 308) (s. XIII ex.), f. 36v

Other Translations: None

Significance

The two epigrams provide information on the decoration of a tomb beyond the *arcosolium*. They demonstrate the subjectivity of the division of epigrams into groups, as they refer to works attached to a tomb's structure and thus can be read as both epigrams on works of art and tomb epigrams. The first poem is for a silver cross placed on the tomb and the second for a silver revetment framing the rim of tombstone.

The Author

See F. Spingou, I.3.3 in this volume.

Text and Context

The two epigrams have been written for the tomb of Sophia Komnene and her daughter Eirene Dokeiane Komnene, two aristocratic ladies who energetically supported the production of visual art and literature in twelfth-century Constantinople.²

According to a third tomb epigram also included in *Sylloge B* of the *Anthologia Marciana*, Eirene Dokeiane Komnene survived her husband and her mother³ and she had the funerary monument prepared (and so epigrams written).⁴ In that epigram, the poet

1 Consulted.

2 On common burials see F. Spingou, II.7.2 in this volume. About commissions of artworks from the two ladies see the three epitaphs on their tomb; epigrams on works of art (“On a golden cup having the Virtues depicted,” *AM* B73 = Lambros, “Ο Μαρκιανός κώδιξ 524,” nos. 236–239); an *ethopoia* on behalf of *sebaste* Eirene on her sufferings (*AM* B80 = Lambros, “Ο Μαρκιανός κώδιξ 524,” no. 246).

3 *AM* B104 = Lambros, “Ο Μαρκιανός κώδιξ 524 no. 271, vv. 45–49.

4 *AM* B104.

explicitly mentions that Eirene Dokeiane Komnene prepared a tomb for her mother and that she expected to share the same resting place.⁵ The three epitaphs were composed at some point between 1130 and shortly after 1143,⁶ that is between the approximate date of Sophia Komnene's death and the date when Eirene is last mentioned in the sources. Unfortunately, the only information about the location of the burial is that it was placed close to the tombs of Sophia's parents, Isaac Komnenos and Eirene of Alania.⁷ Constantine Varzos postulates that the tombs of Sophia and Eirene, and Isaac and Eirene of Alania, may be found in the Church of the monastery of Christ Evergetes, founded by Sophia's brother the *sebastokrator* John.⁸

The following epitaphs were written on a cross and on the silver gilded rim of the tomb. A third epitaph, that is also to be found in the same poetic collection (*Sylloge B* of the *Anthologia Marciana*) numbers fifty-five verses and refers to the lid (πλάξ) of the tomb.⁹ It is unclear, however, whether that third epitaph was written directly on to the stone or on a neighboring wall. That third epitaph (*AM*, B104) maintains a more traditional form and offers further information about the deceased than the two epitaphs below. The poet in the text not reproduced here first presents the form of the tomb and the expected reactions of the passer-by (vv. 1–11). Then, he speaks about the deceased, Sophia Komnene, and her vicissitudes (vv. 12–37) and about her daughter, Eirene, who also expects to be buried in the same monument (vv. 38–51). The final verses (vv. 52–56) are an invocation for the salvation of the souls of the two women. The two epigrams printed below refer to specific adornments on the tomb – a cross, perhaps inlaid into the tombstone,¹⁰ and the silver-gilt rim of the tomb. The similarity of v. 5 of Text I and v. 6 of Text II suggests that they both come from the pen of the same author.

5 *AM* B104, esp. vv. 50–56; cf. Text I, vv. 4–8 and Text II, vv. 7–8.

6 *AM* B80, vv. 60–61.

7 *AM* B104, vv. 12–13.

8 Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, I, p. 172; on *sebastokrator* John Komnenos see Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 23. Epitaphs for the *arcosolium* of the tomb of *sebastokrator* John (and, perhaps, his wife) survive also only in the *Anthologia Marciana*, B12–B13 = Lambros, “Ο Μαρκετιανός κῶδιξ 524,” nos. 50–51; according to the epigram, the monastery was built on the land of the former *oikos* of the family (*AM*, B50, 11–12). On Christ Evergetis monastery see Asutay 2001; Aran 1979; Schäfer 1977: 82–85; Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 140–43; Janin, *ÉglisesCP*, 143–45. Isaac Komnenos is also considered a major donor of the monastery of Theotokos *Petritzonitissa* in Bulgaria (Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, I, p. 78). However, it is unlikely that the tombs of this Constantinopolitan-bound branch of the imperial family were located outside the capital city.

9 *AM* B104, v. 11.

10 Similar interpretation by Hörandner 1987: 243.

Text

I. Εἰς Τίμιον Σταυρὸν τεθέντα ἐν τῷ τάφῳ τῆς σεβαστῆς κυρᾶς Σοφίας τῆς Κομνηνῆς καὶ τῆς σεβαστῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτῆς κυρᾶς Εἰρήνης

Τύπος παγέντος ἐν Λιθοστρώτῳ ξύλου,
 λίθῳ τάφου νῦν ἐνθεῖς ἐξ ἀργύρου
 δοίη μετασχεῖν ἐνθέου ζωῆς ξύλου
 τὰ ἐντὸς αὐτοῦ, τὴν Κομνηνὴν Σοφίαν
 5 καὶ παῖδα ταύτης πανσέβαστον Εἰρήνην
 καὶ συγκατοικεῖν τῆς Ἐδέμ χλόης μέσον
 τὰς συμπνόους πρὶν ἐξ ἀσυγκρίτου πόθου,
 σχούσας¹ τε κοινὸν ὀστέοις καὶ τὸν τάφον.

II. Εἰς περιφέρειον τοῦ τάφου ἀργυροῦν

Ὁ τύμβος οὗτος μητρὸς ἔστιν εὐτέκνου
 εὐμήτορός τε παιδὸς ἰσοκαρδίου·
 τὴν γὰρ Κομνηνὴν πανσέβαστον Σοφίαν,
 τὴν ἐν μοναχαῖς συγκαλύπτει Σωσάνναν
 5 σεβαστοκρατοῦς τέκνον Ἰσαακίου
 καὶ παῖδα ταύτης τὴν σεβαστὴν Εἰρήνην
 κοινὴ γὰρ ἀμφοῖν καὶ θανούσαις ἢ κόνις
 αἷς πρὶν ὑπὲρ σύγκρισιν ἢ συμψυχία.

TranslationI. On the Holy Cross Placed on the Tomb of *Sebaste kyra* Sophia Komnene² and her Daughter *Sebaste* Eirene.³

May the image⁴ of the Cross erected on the Pavement,
 now cast in silver and placed in a tombstone,
 allow those inside to share in the Holy Wood of Life,
 that is, Sophia Komnene
 5 and her daughter, the *pansebaste* Eirene,
 and [may it allow them] to live together in the pastures of Eden.⁵
 they who before lived united in incomparable love before,
 and now have a common tomb for their bones.

II. On the Silver Frame of a Tomb

This tomb is for a mother blessed with children
 and a child blessed with her mother and with a heart like hers.
 For it covers the *pansebaste* Sophia Komnene
 who has the monastic name Sosanna,
 5 the child of the *sebastokrator* Isaac,⁶
 along with her daughter the *sebaste* Eirene.
 They share the same dust even in death,
 [these two] whose unanimity in life was beyond comparison.⁷

Commentary

1. χεύσας Hörandner; χούσας cod.
2. Sophia Komnene was the child of the brother of Alexios I Komnenos (r.1081–1118) and of the Georgian Princess Eirene of Alania. According to the poetry in the *Anthologia Marciana*, Sophia Komnene was born around 1094 and married to Theodore Dokeianos, with whom they had two children.¹¹ Because of her relation to the reigning family, Sophia Komnene and her husband acquired the title of *pantsebastoi*. Dokeianos died prematurely; Sophia became a widow at a very young age, when she assumed the monastic habit and the name Sossana.¹² It is unclear whether she joined a monastic community or resided with her children until they married.¹³ Konstantinos Varzos estimated that Sophia died around the year 1130.¹⁴
3. Eirene Dokeiane Komnene is also known from the poetry of the *Anthologia Marciana*.¹⁵ In the *ethopoia* written on her behalf, Eirene mentions that she was entrusted to *paedagogues* and teachers from early in her life.¹⁶ When she reached the appropriate age, she was married to a nobleman,¹⁷ who died early; an event that led her to join her mother in the convent.¹⁸
4. The word τύπος can be translated equally as a form, a shape, or a carving. Its ambiguous meaning refers to the cross.
5. Ps. 22 (23):2. Cf. *AM*, B104, v. 55: σύναψον αὔθις ἐν τρυφῆς θείας χλόης (“[O Word] join them again in happiness of divine verdancy”).
6. *Sebastokrator* Isaac Komnenos was the brother of Alexios I Komnenos and a prominent man in the imperial military administration prior to the ascension of his brother to the throne.¹⁹ He was active in the dispute over the icons at the end of the eleventh century.²⁰
7. The close relationship of the two women is exalted in all three epigrams written for their tomb. The reference to their acquaintance is most appropriate for an inscription written on their common burial site.²¹

11 Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 29, vol. 1, p. 169–72. Dokeianos is mentioned by name only in the *ethopoia* written on behalf of Eirene (*AM*, B80, vv. 61–63), while in the long tomb epigram for Sophia’s and Eirene’s tomb he is referred as a “noble” man (*AM*, B104, 18). On the significance of the marriage see Magdalino, *Manuel*, 206.

12 The age is mentioned explicitly in B104, v. 20; on her monastic vocation see Text II, v. 4.

13 B104, vv. 22–26.

14 Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 29, vol. 1, p. 172.

15 An *ethopoia* (in *AM*, B80) and a longer epitaph (*AM*, B104); see Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 61, vol. 1, p. 301–03.

16 Vv. 83–85. Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 61, vol. 1, p. 301, suggests that this happened when Eirene was six or seven years old; however, there is no evidence in the poem suggesting a specific age.

17 Vv. 88–89. Again, Varzos’ reconstruction of Eirene’s life in *Γενεαλογία*, no. 61, vol. 1, p. 301 is hypothetical and based on the general fact that Byzantines could be betrothed at the age of fourteen at the earliest.

18 Vv. 92–109.

19 On his life see Varzos, *Γενεαλογία*, no. 12, vol. 1, p. 67–79; cf. *AM*, B80, vv. 50–55.

20 See C. Barber and D. Jenkins, I.1.1 in this volume.

21 See Text I, v. 7; cf. B104, vv. 50–51:

κάν τοῖς τάφοις ἔδειξε τὸν πάλαι πόθον

μητρὸς κόνει μίξασα τὴν ταύτης κόνιν.

She [Eirene] shows even in the tomb her old affection [for Sophia]

as she mixes her dust with the dust of her mother.

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II.7.4 Manuel Maximos Planoudes (c.1255–c.1305)

A Tomb Epigram for John Chameas

ILIAS TAXIDIS

Ed.: I. Taxidis, *Les épigrammes de Maxime Planude: introduction, édition critique, traduction française et annotation*, ByzArch 32 (Berlin and Boston, Mass., 2017), 77

MSS.:¹ Paris, BnF, Graecus 1211 (s. XIII ex./XIV in.) ff. 77v–78r²

Vatican City, BAV, Pal. gr. 141 (s. XIV [c.1320–30; f. 1: s. XV]), f. 140r³

Other Translations: I. Taxidis, as above, 78 (French)

Significance Planoudes laments the death of the otherwise unattested John Chameas in this verse monody. This poem consists of twenty-six dodecasyllables and is an excellent example of a text that follows the rhetorical conventions of the genre

The Author

Manuel Maximos Planoudes is one of the most significant scholars of the early Palaiologan Renaissance (last quarter of the thirteenth century).⁴ He had been in contact with important men of his era thanks to his manifold teaching activities. His peers considered him to be a scholar who was able to work in all fields of human knowledge. His students were prominent men of his time, such as the scholar Manuel Moschopoulos, George Lakapenos, John Doukas Zarides and his brother Andronikos Zarides, a certain Gregorios, a certain Merkourios, someone by the name of Kassianos and perhaps the renowned doctor–acturius John Zacharias. He had been a close acquaintance with Nikephoros Choumnos, a student of Gregorios Kyprios, while Alexios Dukas Philanthropenos, Melchisedek Akropolites, Theodora Raoulaina, Ioannes Glykys, and Theodore Voilas Mouzalon were close friends. Moreover, Planoudes had close connections with the emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (r.1282–1332). His proven knowledge of Latin allowed him to lead, together with Leon Vardales, a diplomatic mission to Venice at the beginning of 1297.

His writings include course books that he used for his teaching, critical editions and commentaries on many Classical, Hellenistic, and Late Antique works, 122 letters, translations of Latin texts, as well as other theological, rhetorical, scientific, and poetical works.⁵

1 Consulted.

2 For the description of the manuscript see Omont 1886: 266; Westerink 1966: 162.

3 For the description of the manuscript see Stevenson 1885: 71–73; Gallavotti 1987: 115–28.

4 For his personality and life see *PLP* 23308; Taxidis 2012: 17–29, with the older bibliography.

5 For Planoudes' work see Taxidis 2012: 28–29 (and n. 58).

Text and Context

Maximos Planoudes laments the death of John Chameas in a twenty-six dodecasyllable funerary verse that follows the conventions of the genre of the monody.⁶ Following the suggestion of the famous rhetorician Menander,⁷ the content and structure of a funerary epigram uses and harmonizes the past, present and, indirectly, the future. The epigram is also clearly structured, since the author divides his text in three distinct parts, the *prooimion*, the main part, and the epilog.

In the *prooimion* (vv. 1–4), the poet employs a rhetorical question to recall mortal values. In the main part of the poem (vv. 5–23), he refers to the mental and intellectual gifts of John Chameas, and praises him for, among other things, his fear of God, his *ethos*, and his skill in administrative tasks. Planoudes also mentions that Chameas died shortly after his wife's death and after he had taken monastic vows and the name Joseph. The epigram ends with a rather conventional three-verse epilog (vv. 24–26). In this epilog Planoudes addresses his audience. He exhorts the virtues of the dear departed and prays for the salvation of Chameas' soul, while highlighting the transitory nature and the futility of human affairs.

Being the sole source of information for the prosopography of John Chameas, the epigram is rather important also for the reconstruction of the micro-history of the Constantinopolitan court a few decades after the events of 1261. Chameas is called “a servant of the royal court,” βασιλικῆς ἐστίας ὑπηρέτης (v. 10) and thus he must have been an influential man of his time, who otherwise would have been lost to history. Due to the lack of further information about Chameas, the exact date of his death remains unknown and thus it is impossible to reconstruct fully his prosopography.

The aim of composing these verses remains similarly unclear. One may postulate that the epigram had a mere literary function and that it was purely written to honor and commemorate the deceased, without ever aiming to be inscribed on his tomb. Such a view is corroborated by the existence of the author's poetical voice (in the third-person singular), the absence of a first-person narrator (as would have been expected for an inscriptional epigram),⁸ and the absence of references to the location of the burial.⁹ That said, an inscriptional use is as possible as a performative one. The poet does not hesitate to address the beholder twice in order to remind him or her of the fragility of human life (vv. 24–26). Furthermore, the highly informative and brief character of the text makes it appropriate for a verse inscription.¹⁰ Still, whether the epigram ever became a verse inscription remains unclear.¹¹

6 See also *PLP* 30548; for the epigram's new critical edition, French transl., and commentary see Taxisidis 2017: 77–81.

7 *Menander Rhetor*, 204.16–29; see also Lauxtermann 1999: 25.

8 See Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 215–18; see also Opstall 2008: 34–39; Rhoby 2010: 324.

9 See also Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 221–27; Rhoby 2011b: 196–201.

10 See also Rhoby 2011a: 323–24; Rhoby 2011b: 201–02.

11 See also Garzya 1981: 263 (as it concerns the “littérature d'usage courant” or “Gebrauchstexte”).

Text

Τοῦ αὐτοῦ στίχοι ἐπιτάφιοι εἰς Ἰωάννην τὸν Χαμέαν

Τί σοι τὸ σεμνόν, ὦ βροτῶν φύσις, γένος,
 εἰ καὶ σὺ πρὸς γῆν καὶ κόνιν καταστρέφεις
 καὶ πρὸς τὸ μηδὲν ὡς τι πρὸς τέλος τρέχεις,
 ὡς καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ὑπὲρ γῆς ἐμψύχων;
 5 Ἴδου γὰρ ἀνὴρ οὗτος εὐκόσμου βίου,
 Θεοῦ φόβον σύνοικον ἐν ψυχῇ φέρων
 καὶ τῷδε πρᾶξιν πᾶσαν αὐτοῦ ρυθμίσας
 καὶ μέτριον φρόνημα καὶ χρηστὸν τρόπον,
 ἦθη τὲ χαρίεντα σὺν τούτοις ἔχων
 10 καὶ βασιλικῆς ἐστίας ὑπηρέτης,
 ἠδύς, προσηνής, πιστός, οἰκεῖος μένων
 καί, συνελόντα πᾶν ὃ χρῆ φᾶναι λέγειν,
 ἐπάξιος ζῆν μυρίου ἐτῶν κύκλους,
 ὡς ἀρετῆς πρόθυμος ὄντως ἐργάτης,
 15 ἀπῆλθεν ἔνθεν καὶ πρὸ γήρωσ ἠρπάγη,
 ἕξ ὀρφανῶν σύστημα πάντη τεκνίων
 λιπῶν, ἐπειδὴ θάνατον τῆς συζύγου
 φθάσας μικρῶ πρὶν ἢ θανεῖν ἠκηκόει.
 Πρὸς τῷ τέλει πλήν καὶ στολῆ μονοτρόπων
 20 πρόσεισι καὶ τὴν κλῆσιν ἀντ' Ἰωάννου
 πρὸς τὴν Ἰωσήφ ἐξαμείβει γνησίως,
 ὃ πᾶσι γνωστός Χαμέας Ἰωάννης
 καὶ πᾶσιν ἠδύς καὶ ποθεινός, εἴ γέ τις.
 Πᾶς οὖν ὁρῶν στέναζε τὸν θνητῶν βίον
 25 καὶ τῷ θανόντι ψυχικὴν σωτηρίαν
 εὐχου, τὰ κοινὰ τοῦ γένους μεμνημένος.

Translation

Of the Same [Author], Verses on the Tomb of John Chameas

What can modest men¹ offer you, (O) nature of the mortals,
 since even you return fully to earth and dust²
 and move towards nothingness, as if you are about to achieve a goal,
 the same [one] as the rest of the living creatures on earth?
 5 For, behold that man, with the decent life,
 who kept in his soul the fear of God,³
 who measured each of his actions according to this,
 modest in thought and decent in character.
 On the top of these, he also had courteous manners,
 10 and was a servant of the royal court;
 He was always pleasant, gentle, loyal [to the emperor], and friendly,⁴
 and, to say briefly all that needs to be said,
 he deserved to live thousands of years,⁵
 because he has indeed been an eager artisan of virtue.
 15 He deserted this world and was seized before growing old,⁶
 and he left behind him six orphans,
 because he experienced his wife's decease
 shortly before his own death.
 But, toward the end [of his life] he assumed the garment of the monks
 20 and, appropriately, he changed his name
 from John to Joseph,⁷
 he, who had been known as Chameas John to everyone
 and pleasing to all and more beloved than any other man.⁸
 So, beholder, bemoan the life of mortals,
 25 and pray for the salvation of the deceased's soul,⁹
 when you recall the common fate of men.¹⁰

Commentary

1. For “σεμνόν γένος” see also *Greek Anthology Appendix* 1, 81.7, ed. Cougny, III, 12; Procopius of Gaza, *Letter* no. 113, ed. Garzya-Loenertz 59.7. The poet refers here to men with prudence, moderation, and humility.
2. Cf. Gen 2:7: καὶ ἔπλασεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον, χοῦν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς, καὶ ἐνεφύσησεν εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ πνοὴν ζωῆς, καὶ ἐγένετο ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν/“then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature”; Gen. 3:19: ἕως τοῦ ἀποστρέψαι σε εἰς γῆν γῆν, ἐξ ἧς ἐλήφθης, ὅτι γῆ εἶ καὶ εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύση/“till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return”; Eccl. 12:7: καὶ ἐπιστρέψῃ ὁ χοῦς ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν, ὡς ἦν, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ἐπιστρέψῃ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, ὃς ἔδωκεν αὐτό/“then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”
3. The fear of God testifies to the true faith, piety, and devotion of the deceased and to the decent way he conducted his life.
4. Planoudes uses the rhetorical figures of *polysyndeton* and *asyndeton* in vv. 7–11 in order to achieve clarity in Chameas’ manifold talents.
5. A rhetorical *hyperbole* for praising the deceased further.
6. While Menander discusses the structure of the monody, he refers also to the author’s obligation of marking and stressing the premature death of the deceased, regardless of the latter’s age.¹²
7. The adverb *γνησίως* refers to Chameas’ success in assuming a fitting monastic name.
8. The detailed description of the life, personality, and special talents of the deceased extends between vv. 9 and 26 of the main part of the poem. Indeed, according also to the conventions for composing a funerary epigram, the special characteristics of the deceased should occupy the greatest part of the text.¹³
9. The extensive use of motifs regarding life after death and the salvation of the soul appears frequently in Byzantine funerary epigrams.¹⁴
10. The aim of the use of the imperative form in vv. 24–26 is twofold. First, it follows the standard manner for forming the epilog of an epigram. Second, it serves well the poem’s communicative context: the imperative emphasizes the poet’s address to the beholder and his warning about the mortality of the human race.

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¹² *Menander Rhetor*, 202.31–32.

¹³ See also Rhoby 2011b: 199–200.

¹⁴ See also Lauxtermann, *Poetry*, 228–31.

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II.7.5 Manuel Philes (c.1270 or slightly later–after 1332/34 or mid 1340s)

Epigram on the Cornice of the Chapel of St. Mary Pammakaristos Church

ANDREAS RHOBY

Ed. : A. Rhoby. Previous editions from the manuscript: Manuel Philes, *Poems*, E 223, ed.

Miller, I, 117f.; from the inscription: *BEIÜ* 3, TR76

MS.:¹ Escorial, Real Bibliotheca, X.IV.20 (Andrés 415) (s. XV/XVI), f. 71r–v

Other Translations: A. van Millingen, *Byzantine Churches in Constantinople: Their History and Architecture* (London, 1912 (repr. 1974), 158f.; A. Papalexandrou, “Text in Context: Eloquent Monuments and the Byzantine Beholder,” *Word and Image* 17 (2001), 276f. (vv. 16–23) (English); *BEIÜ* 3, TR76 (German)

Significance

This text is one of the few epigrams transmitted both in manuscripts and as a surviving inscription. A further example of epigrams that can be found both in manuscripts and *in situ* are the verses, a dedicatory epigram, and his tomb epigram, by George Bardanos (twelfth/thirteenth century).² The epigram’s text is full of stock phrases found in similar versions in other (tomb) epigrams by Philes;³ this demonstrates that the author worked with text templates which he adjusted to the circumstances of each of his poems;⁴ this technique also implies the production of verses in advance. Philes often composed different versions of poems on the same topic, especially tomb epigrams with generic remarks on death, to which he only had to adjust the name and other aspects of the deceased person.⁵

The Author

On Manuel Philes see A. Rhoby with additions by M. Bazzani, I.4.2 in this volume.

Text and Context

The epigram is attached to the cornice of the chapel of the St. Mary Pammakaristos church in Constantinople. Michael Tarchaneiotes Doukas Glabas († between 1305 and

1 Consulted. Further manuscripts containing the epigram are mentioned by Miller, Manuel Philes, *Poems*, Beyer 2006: 280; *BEIÜ* 3: p. 662 n. 1038.

2 *BEIÜ* 3: GR69, IT13.

3 *BEIÜ* 3: TR76 app.

4 Cf. Papadogiannakis 1984: 60.

5 Cf. Stickler 1992: 31.

1308)⁶ and his wife, both sponsors and benefactors of Manuel Philes, were responsible for the restoration of the Pammakaristos monastery, which had decayed during Latin rule.⁷ It has long been argued that the chapel was constructed by Michael's wife Maria, after she had assumed the monastic habit following the death of her husband.⁸ However, it has been recently suggested that the chapel was already on site at the beginning of the fourteenth century while Michael was still alive.⁹ Be that as it may, the contents of the epigram leave no doubt that the text was certainly inscribed on the cornice only after Michael's death. Furthermore, the different titles that appear in the manuscripts with the epigram (apart from the MS. Escorial, Scor. X.IV.20 the MS. Upsalla, University Library, gr. 633 [s. XIV med.]) also stress that the chapel was built by Maria (now the nun Martha) after the death of her husband.¹⁰

Nowadays only vv. 10–22 are still visible. The paleography of the carved letters is of high quality, and it is easy to imagine that the text was readily legible from the ground. Philes' verses are also of the same high quality, according to rhythm, prosody, rhetoric, and vocabulary. In addition, it is very likely that the verses were recited every year on the commemoration day of the church – as was the case for the twelfth-century epigram inscribed in the church of the Christ Pantokrator monastery in Constantinople.¹¹

The tomb epigram offers biographical details for the deceased.¹² Tarchaneiotēs is praised as a successful military commander in vv. 3–4 and 23. Mango argues that some of Tarchaneiotēs' military deeds may have been depicted somewhere in the Pammakaristos monastic complex.¹³ According to vv. 9–15, Tarchaneiotēs had become a monk before his death, as did his wife after she had become a widow.¹⁴

Most of the epigram (vv. 1–21) is a direct address from Maria–Martha to her deceased husband. She first states that the poem is a gift to him. She then discusses his military career before telling us that she had constructed a roof (στέγη) for him. Tarchaneiotēs is no longer equipped with military weapons, but with the armor given by God with which he does not have to fight profane rulers any more but with mental satraps. His death causes Maria–Martha a lot of tears, and it is her wish to soon rest next to her husband.

6 *PLP* 27504; most recently Marković 2014.

7 Kidonopoulos 1994: 80–86.

8 Kidonopoulos 1994: 84f.

9 Effenberger 2006–07; cf. *BEIÜ* 3: p. 661.

10 Beyer 2006: 280; *BEIÜ* 3: p. 664f.

11 Rhoby 2012: 745f.; Vassis 2013: 218; *BEIÜ* 3: p. 666.

12 Further sources on his life are listed in *PLP* 27504.

13 Mango in Belting *et al.* 1978: 12; Effenberger 2006–07: 79.

14 However, although Maria–Martha wished to be soon close to her husband, she still lived for many years, i.e. at least until 1330: cf. *PLP* 27511; Effenberger 2006–07: 80; *BEIÜ* 3: p. 666.

Text

Ἐκ προσώπου τῆς πρωτοστρατορίσσης, εἰς τὸν κοσμήτην τοῦ ναοῦ ὃν ᾠκοδόμησεν ἐπὶ
θανόντι τῷ ἀνδρὶ αὐτῆς.

Ἄνερ, τὸ φῶς, τὸ πνεῦμα, τὸ πρόσφθεγμά μου,
καὶ τοῦτό σοι τὸ δῶρον ἐκ τῆς συζύγου·
σύ μὲν γὰρ ὡς ἄγρυπνος ἐν μάχαις λέων
ὑπνοῖς ὑπελθὼν ἀντὶ λόχμης τὸν τάφον,
5 ἐγὼ δέ σοι τέτευχα πετραίαν στέγην,
μὴ πάλιν εὐρών ὁ στρατός σε συγχέη,
κἂν δεῦρο τὸν χοῦν ἐκτινάξας ἐκρύβης
ἢ τοῦ πάχους ρεύσαντος ἠρπάγης ἄνω,
πᾶν ὄπλον ἀφείς ἐκκρεμές τῷ παττάλω·
10 τὰς γὰρ ἐπὶ γῆς ἐβδελύξω παστάδας
ἐν εὐτελεῖ τρίβωνι φυγῶν τὸν βίον
καὶ πρὸς νοητοὺς ἀντετάξω σατράπας,
στερρὰν μετενδύς ἐκ Θεοῦ παντευχίαν·
ὡς ὄστρεον δ' οὔν ὄργανῶ σοι τὸν τάφον,
15 ἢ κόχλον ἢ κάλυκα κεντρώδους βάτου·
μάργαρέ μου, πορφύρα, γῆς ἄλλης ρόδον,
εἰ καὶ τρυγηθὲν ἐκπιέζη τοῖς λίθοις
ὡς καὶ σταλαγμοὺς προξενεῖν μοι δακρύων,
αὐτὸς δὲ καὶ ζῶν καὶ Θεὸν ζῶντα βλέπων
20 ὡς νοῦς καθαρὸς τῶν παθῶν τῶν ἐξ ὕλης
τὸν σὸν πάλιν θάλαμον εὐτρέπιζέ μοι·
ἢ σύζυγος πρὶν ταῦτά σοι Μάρθα γράφει,
πρωτοστράτορ κάλλιστε καὶ τεθαμμένων.

Translation

On behalf of the *protostratorissa*, on the cornice of the church which she built above (the tomb of) her deceased husband.¹

<O> husband, my light, my breath, my counterpart,²
 this is indeed a gift for you from your wife.
 For while you were previously like a sleepless lion³ in battles,
 you sleep now crouched in the grave instead of in the bushes;
 5 but I erected a stone roof for you.⁴
 The army may not find you once more and disturb you again,⁵
 even if you are hidden here having cast off your dust,
 or, since corporeality has dissolved, you were snatched to the heavens,
 after you had hung up every weapon on its peg.
 10 You abhorred the bridal chambers on earth
 and you fled from life in a thrifty cloak
 and you opposed the perceptible satraps,⁶
 after you had buckled on armor <given> by God.
 I construct for you a tomb like a pearl oyster⁷
 15 or like a snail shell or like a bud on a prickly shrub.
 <O> my pearl, my purple, my rose of another world,
 even if you have been reaped⁸ and you are pressed by the stones [<of the
 tomb>],
 so as to cause me the shedding of tears,
 although you yourself live and see the living God
 20 as a mind clean of material passions,
 prepare for me again your bedchamber.
 Your wife before, Martha <now> writes this to you,
 protostrator, greatest among the deceased.⁹

Commentary

1. Whereas most of the titles in the manuscripts of this epigram state that the verses were written ἐκ προσώπου (“on behalf”) of Michael Tarchaneiotēs’ wife, the fourteenth-century manuscript, Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo, Graecus R.I.19 does not mention Maria–Martha but reports that Philes’ verses on the tomb monument (κοιμητήριον) are attached around the church outside (κύκλω τοῦ ναοῦ ἔξωθεν).¹⁵ The expression κύκλω must not be understood *verbatim* because the cornice with the inscription consisted only on the west and south side of the chapel.
2. Of particular interest are the very personal terms with which Maria–Martha addresses her deceased husband: v. 1 “my light, my breath, my counterpart,”¹⁶ v. 16 “my pearl, my purple, my rose of another world.” A reference to the pearl is also given in v. 14 in which the tomb of Tarchaneiotēs is compared to the latter.
3. The “sleepless lion” is proverbial, cf., e.g., the description in the Physiologos: Ὅταν καθεύδῃ ὁ λέων ἐν τῷ σπηλαίῳ, ἀγρυπνοῦσιν αὐτοῦ οἱ ὀφθαλμοί.¹⁷ The passage may also allude to Cant. 5:2: Ἐγὼ καθεύδω, καὶ ἡ καρδία μου ἀγρυπνεῖ.
4. The Greek term στέγη can have different meanings: in this case it may serve as a synonym for “tomb” or “sarcophagus.”¹⁸ This can be further supported if considering Effenberger’s suggestion¹⁹ that the chapel (with the “roof”) was already built in Tarchaneiotēs’ lifetime.
5. The verse refers to Tarchaneiotēs’ former career. It might also refer to the translation of his relics from a different burial place; in this case the verb συγχέη could be better understood as it was often used in epitaphs for mingling someone’s ashes with something impure (like soil). However, there is no evidence that Tarchaneiotēs did not die as a monk in the Pammakaristos monastery which he had renovated.
6. The mention of the “satraps” (originally a term designating a Persian governor) is an allusion to the foreign leaders he had to fight in his military career (in the Balkans).²⁰
7. In v. 14 manuscript tradition and inscription differ from each other. Whereas the inscription reads δ’ οὔν, the Escorial manuscript (X.IV.20) offers οὔν which was corrected by Miller to γοῦν. More important, however, is the different reading at the end of the verse: the codex offers τὸν τάφον, the inscription has τὴν στέγην. This might be the result of a mistake on behalf of the stone-cutter who could have been confused by στέγην on v. 5.
8. τρυγηθὲν refers to ῥόδον at the end of v. 16.
9. According to this verse, the epigram was composed after Maria had assumed the monastic habit and been named Martha.

¹⁵ Beyer 2006: 280.

¹⁶ πρόσφθεγμα (“counterpart”) means the one to whom the verses are addressed.

¹⁷ Sbordone 1936 [1991]: 5.

¹⁸ Cf. *BEIÜ* 3: p. 665.

¹⁹ See p. 1559.

²⁰ Cf. *PLP* 27504.

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